

# Debbie Potter nominee for Texas Baptists' president

April 28, 2025

Debbie Potter, incumbent first vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, will be nominated as BGCT president at Texas Baptists' annual meeting, Nov. 16-18 in Abilene.

Incumbent president Ronny Marriott, pastor of First Baptist Church in Richardson, announced his plans to nominate Potter, children's pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio.

Marriott praised Potter as a proven leader who understands Texas Baptists, having served as second vice president and first vice president of the state convention.

## 'Brings a lot to the table'

He described Potter as "a people magnet" who others enjoy being with because they are "comfortable around her and feel valued by her."



Incumbent First Vice President

Debbie Potter presides during a session of the 2024 BGCT annual meeting. (Texas Baptists Photo)

“She brings a lot to the table,” Marriott said.

He pointed to her denominational service and her more than two decades of experience in ministry to children at Trinity Baptist Church.

“She understands the need to reach the next generation,” he said, adding she has written books, curriculum, articles, children’s sermons and other resources for ministry to children and their families.

Potter is “a champion for children and a champion for women in ministry” who is “secure in her call,” Marriott said.

If elected, Potter will be the third woman to serve as BGCT president and the first woman who serves in a pastoral role on a church staff to become president.

Joy Fenner, a former missionary and longtime executive-director treasurer of Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas, was BGCT president in 2007-2008. Kathy Hillman, director of Baptist collections and library advancement at Baylor University and director of Baylor’s Keston Center for Religion, Politics and Society, was BGCT president in 2014-2015.

Potter said she wants to encourage and support women in ministry at a time in Baptist life when some have experienced a “glass ceiling” preventing them from assuming key leadership roles and fulfilling their potential.

“These are women who just want to serve their churches and do what God has called them to do and given them the gifts to do,” she said.

# **‘Strengthen and help families that need help’**

Potter expressed appreciation for the ministries to children and families offered by agencies and institutions related to the BGCT, as well as those provided by Texas Baptist churches.

At the same time, she would like to see a more coordinated and focused effort, particularly to serve children and families in crisis.

“We need to strengthen and help families that need help,” she said.

As a volunteer chaplain with Child Protective Services in San Antonio, Potter also pointed to the need to support and encourage social services personnel who are “on the front lines.”

Potter has ministered to children and families since 1997, serving six years at Parkhills Baptist Church in San Antonio before joining the Trinity Baptist Church church staff.

She was licensed to the gospel ministry at Parkhills Baptist in 1998 and ordained by Trinity Baptist in 2005.

After completing her undergraduate degree from Southern Nazarene University and a master’s degree from the School of Education at the University of Texas at San Antonio, she earned a Ph.D. in educational leadership from Andrews University.

She is an adjunct professor at Baptist University of the Americas, where she has mentored international students and preached in chapel.

She is a trustee of Buckner International, and she previously served on the Texas Baptists’ Committee to Nominate Boards of Affiliated Ministries.

She and her husband Robert have two adult children, Chelsea and Chase.