

# Executive director announces new organizational structure

February 24, 2015

DALLAS—The [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) Executive Board staff is preparing for “a reset” to serve an ever-changing state and Texas Baptist churches, Executive Director David Hardage told the BGCT Executive Board.

The past year produced big changes as the Executive Board [agreed last May](#) to sell the Baptist Building in Dallas, signed a lease on new office space last December and finalized the sale of the building in January 2015.

## **New structure starting May 1**

The staff will begin to operate under a new structure, effective by May 1, Hardage announced. The reorganization is based on two priorities for the BGCT and its Executive Board staff—help the local church be and do church in the community, and do collectively what no single church can do alone, he explained.

Staff will be realigned into five groups—the Great Commission Team, the Missions Team, the Christian Life Commission, the Church Connections Team and the Center for Collegiate Ministries.

The Great Commission Team will include evangelism and discipleship, working in collaboration.

The Missions Team will specialize in and work with associations and churches for community impact through urban, rural, city, state, regional, national and international missions.

## **Connections Team**

The Connections Team will lead in establishing relationships with ministers and laity in churches as Texas Baptists seek to reach a changing and spiritually lost society, he explained.

The Christian Life Commission—which has moved to Austin—will retain its focus on public policy issues, ethical living, the Texas Baptist Hunger Offering and community ministries.

The Collegiate Ministries Team will continue ministering to and reaching students.

Helping local churches more effectively will require nurturing their connection with the BGCT, Hardage said. Area representatives, church starters and other BGCT staff will seek to have at least one personal contact with every church each year.

“In order to collaborate with someone, each partner must know the other well and share a common goal and purpose,” he said. “As we begin to know one another better, our collaborative, God-directed work will enhance its reach around the state and world, creating a vast network of connected churches working together to spread the love of Christ.”

### **Cooperative Program Office**

The reorganization re-establishes a Cooperative Program Office, dedicated to speaking about and teaching the power of cooperation. Chris Liebrum, current director of Church Ministry Resources, will lead the office.

“Cooperative Program has long been and continues to be the lifeblood of Baptist work,” Hardage said. “This new office will work with churches to promote missions giving among the congregation, as well as speak to church leadership on the importance and benefits of being linked together through a unified missions funding stream.”

In addition, the BGCT will experiment with regional offices that will help coordinate the efforts among Baptist churches, associations and institutions to maximize collaboration and community change, Hardage said. The test area will be South Texas, with an office in San Antonio, effective in June. The region is home to 26 Baptist Student Ministries, eight human care institutions, six schools and universities, three camps, 16 associations and thousands of churches, he noted.

### **Partnership with Matryoshka Haus**

Hardage also announced Texas Baptists will enter a partnership with [Matryoshka Haus](#), a London-based ministry founded by former BSM Director and Church Planter Shannon Hopkins, to design creative solutions for social change. Through this partnership, the BGCT will explore new opportunities for engaging churches, communities and emerging generations as believers and non-believers collaborate to see the power of God at work in their community, he explained.

While some reporting structure has changed, Hardage said the new reset of the organization has a zero net effect on the approved 2015 annual budget.

The new structure is designed to be strategic, better focused and more agile, as the BGCT continually improves ministries and approaches to assist the church that is ministering in an ever-changing environment and reaching out to an ever-increasing lost world, Hardage said.

“Amidst this new structure, we are positioning ourselves for flexibility to enable continual and strategic adjustments in what we do and how we serve the local church in a changing world,” Hardage said. “We will constantly adjust for the future to meet the needs of the church and the state.”