

# Hardage wants Texas Baptists to launch ‘GC2’ movement

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Four words—“Share Christ; show love”—offer the guiding principles for Texas Baptists under a reorganization Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Director David Hardage unveiled in his report to Texas Baptists’ virtual annual meeting.

“We want to be known as a movement of God’s people—a GC2 movement—focused on fulfilling the Great Commission and carrying out the Great Commandment,” Hardage told viewers of the online event.

Hardage acknowledged the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presented in 2020 for pastors, churches and the BGCT.

“Yet, the good news is this. In spite of all the challenges we have faced, I am happy to report that 2020 has been a good and positive year for Texas Baptists,” he said.

The events of 2020 offered Texas Baptist leaders the opportunity to ask, “Where do we go next?” he said.

“We wanted to make sure that the work we’re doing, the ministry we’re providing, the missions that motivate us were all centered around the Great Commandment and the Great Commission,” he said.

## Internal reorganization

At Hardage’s request, Associate Executive Director Craig Christina closely examined the convention’s organizational structure to see if it aligned with those key principles. He also evaluated whether it provided “on ramps” for

the rising generation of leaders to become engaged in Texas Baptists' ministries and missions.

Out of that analysis, the BGCT reorganized its work into five centers:

- *Center for Church Health.* Phil Miller, who has been acting director of Texas Baptists' Great Commission Team, will direct the center. It will include evangelism, discipleship, music and worship, along with a new area devoted specifically to church health and revitalization.
- *Center for Ministerial Health.* Dowell Loftis, who has led the connections area that provides information for ministerial staff search committees, will direct the new center. In addition to connections, it will include counseling services and emergency financial assistance for ministers.
- *Center for Cultural Engagement.* Gus Reyes, director of the Christian Life Commission, will direct the center that includes not only the CLC, but also other areas focused on helping Texas Baptists engage the larger culture.
- *Center for Missional Engagement.* Josue Valerio, who has directed Texas Baptists' Missions Team, will direct this area. It will include church planting, River Ministry, Bounce student disaster recovery and the Missionary Adoption Program.
- *Center for Collegiate Ministry.* Mark Jones, a veteran leader in collegiate ministry, will direct the area that works with Baptist Student Ministries on college campuses throughout Texas.

Hardage noted the unique place Texas Baptists occupy and the important role they can fill in Baptist life. He pointed to verses such as 2 Kings 22:2 and 2 Chronicles 34:2, in which King Josiah was praised for "not turning aside to the right or to the left."

"I think it's a great place for Texas Baptists to be," Hardage said. "There is

something very healthy about being centered and being balanced, and I think that's who we are. I think that's what distinguishes us."