

Julio Guarneri nominee for reelection as BGCT president

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Julio Guarneri, incumbent president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and lead pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen, will be nominated for a second one-year term as Texas Baptists' president.

Michael Evans, senior pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mansfield and a former BGCT president, will nominate Guarneri at Texas Baptists' Family Gathering, July 16-18 in McAllen.

"In times of transition, we need the kind of steady leadership that Julio Guarneri provides," said Evans. "We need a praying man of God leading the convention at a time like this."

A [search committee currently is accepting nominations](#) for the next executive director of the BGCT. David Hardage retired at the end of last year after more than a decade in that role.

Evans praised Guarneri as a man of "honesty and integrity" who can provide consistency and stability during a period of change, Evans noted.

"Julio Guarneri has a steady and calming spirit that makes people around him feel comfortable," Evans said.

"He doesn't hesitate to speak his mind and his heart to help you know where he stands. At the same time, he is conscientious and respectful of other people's opinions. He listens well to others and allows God to lead."

Guarneri—who served two years as first vice president before his election as BGCT president last November—acknowledged the search for a new executive director was a factor in his decision to allow his nomination for a

second presidential term.

“Continuity is good during a year of transition in our executive leadership,” he said.

Beyond that, since this year’s annual meeting falls in mid-summer to accommodate the once-every-five-years Family Gathering schedule, Guarneri’s first term as president will last only eight months rather than a full year.

“There are things that I think are important to continue,” he said, pointing particularly to the challenge of responding to changing demographics in Texas.

He specifically emphasized Texas Baptists’ GC2 focus on fulfilling the Great Commission and Great Commandment Christ gave to his followers.



Julio Guarneri (right), president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, urges the BGCT Executive Board to lead their churches in seven weeks of prayer from Easter to Pentecost. (Photo / Ken Camp)

While churches generally understand their role in sharing the gospel and showing love in Christ’s name, he said, Texas Baptists can continue to grow

in their understanding of how the convention and the institutions they support work cooperatively to achieve those goals.

Guarneri has [called on Texas Baptists](#) to “practice Pentecost” and join in seven weeks of prayer. Specifically, from Easter to Pentecost Sunday on May 28, he is urging Texas Baptists to follow the example Jesus set in the Model Prayer, by praying “your kingdom come.”

“We cooperate together as a convention because we are about the business of the kingdom,” he said.

Guarneri has served Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen—a multicultural congregation in the Rio Grande Valley—since 2010. Previously, he was pastor of Iglesia Bautista Getsemani in Fort Worth.

He also served on staff at Segunda Iglesia Bautista in Corpus Christi, was founding pastor of Shalom Baptist Mission in Corpus Christi, and was pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista in Taft.

He was born in Mexico but graduated from high school in South Texas and earned an undergraduate degree from Texas A&I University in Kingsville. He also holds a Master of Arts in Religious Education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in leadership studies from Dallas Baptist University.

Guarneri chairs the board of Buckner International.

He and his wife Monica have four children—Josh, Rachel, Mia and Stevan—and two grandchildren—Daniel and Antares.