

# **Leighton Flowers named Texas Baptists' evangelism leader**

April 5, 2018

DALLAS—The Baptist General Convention of Texas named Leighton Flowers leader of its evangelism team, effective April 2.

Flowers has served on staff with the state convention since 2003, overseeing evangelistic ministry initiatives including Super Summer, Youth Evangelism Conferences, Hot Hearts, See You At the Pole and (un)Apologetic conferences.

“Leighton Flowers is the right person to lead Texas Baptists in evangelism at this time,” BGCT Executive Director David Hardage said. “I’m excited about his heart for the lost and his ability to communicate the gospel. I’m grateful for the leadership Dr. Delvin Atchison, Great Commission Team director, has shown in filling this vital role for our BGCT family.”

## **Two decades of ministry experience**

Flowers has two decades of ministry experience across Texas Baptist life. He was student minister at University Baptist Church in Abilene, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Era and student minister at Colonial Hills Baptist Church in Cedar Hill.

He served in interim preaching roles at Hunters Glen Baptist Church in Plano, The Oaks Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, Culleoka Baptist Church in Princeton and First Baptist Church of Richardson. He has been a frequent speaker at camps, retreats and training events.

In his new role, his vision is to challenge, equip and train Texas Baptists to

fulfill God's call to reach all people with the gospel.

## **'Pride of our past ... promise of our future'**

"Leighton is one of the brightest stars in Texas Baptist life," said Delvin Atchison, director of the Great Commission Team. "He grew up in the BGCT. He is the pride of our past and the promise of our future. We are fortunate to have him as our evangelism lead."

A LifeWay Research study in 2012 revealed 61 percent of Christians had not shared their faith in the previous six months. Two years later, that number rose to 78 percent.

"The reason so many people see their churches as being evangelistic, despite the facts, is that there are programs, themes, slogans and talk on the stage about evangelism and the need for it, but there is very little practice of personal evangelism," Flowers said.

"The focus has to shift back to the individual—calling the individual to compassion for the lost, to connection with the lost and to a long-term commitment to see the lost come to know Christ."

## **Share truth in a persuasive way**

Under Flowers' direction, Texas Baptists' evangelism team will connect with churches to provide evangelism consultation, encouragement and training including Super Summer, Congreso, Pray 4 Every Home and Take the 4xFour Challenge.

Flowers also views apologetics as an indispensable aspect of evangelism. Just as the Apostle Paul engaged in persuasion throughout much of the

New Testament, Flowers noted, 21st-century believers should engage in similar strategies.

“Sometimes we can over-spiritualize things, saying it’s our job to proclaim the truth and let God do the rest,” he said. “That’s not what Paul thought, because he didn’t act that way. He acted as if it depended on him being persistent and committing himself to sharing that truth in a persuasive way and helping win people over.

“The concept of ‘winning the lost’ versus ‘proclaiming the truth to the lost’ is a really important aspect that needs to drive how we do evangelism.”

As an adjunct professor at Dallas Baptist University, Flowers has noticed students come alive when the doctrine of salvation is discussed in class. Several students have asked for additional resources, and he has made them available through online learning platforms. At a student’s urging, Flowers turned some of the course materials into a podcast titled “Soteriology 101.” The weekly YouTube and iTunes podcast averages 10,000 downloads per episode.

Flowers earned a bachelor’s degree from Hardin-Simmons University, a master’s degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a doctorate from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Laura, and their children live in Garland