

# Lewisville pastor nominee for BGCT 1st VP

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LEWISVILLE—Joseph Fields, founding pastor of New Beginnings Baptist Church in Lewisville, will be nominated for first vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas at its annual meeting, Nov. 13-15 in Waco.

“Joe Fields has a heart for the Great Commission and the Great Commandment,” said Craig Christina, pastor of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church in Dallas, when he announced his intention to nominate Fields.



Joe and Shanta Fields Fields grew New Beginnings from a group of six people who met in his living room in 2009 to a congregation of 900 members and an average attendance of 400, Christina noted.

“He focused on the Great Commission—reaching people for Christ, not just transfer growth through sheep-shifting” from one church to another,

Christina said.

Fields, an African-American, possesses the ability “to reach across ethnic lines, to bridge that gap and relate well to people of all ethnicities,” he said.

New Beginnings gives generously to missions, including both Denton Baptist Association and the Texas Baptist Cooperative Program, and Fields has “a passion for church planting,” Christina added.

If elected, Fields wants to support Texas Baptists’ cooperative ministries.

“I am excited about the direction we are going and about the possibilities that lie ahead,” he said. “I want to see us reach even more people around the state.”

Leaders of churches from varied backgrounds need a place at the table as the BGCT makes its plans, he noted.

“We need honest, open dialogue about where we have been, where we are and where we are hoping to go,” he said.

That involves a spirit of unity around a shared mission, but that does not require conformity in all ways, he added.

“It’s not about uniformity; it’s about unity,” he said. “We do not have to all look alike or act alike in the way we express ourselves in worship to be unified. ... Together, can do more for the Great Commission and the Great Commandment than we could do separately.”

In particular, Fields noted, he would like the BGCT to do more to support congregations by providing resources.

“I would like to see the BGCT offer more biblical and spiritual resources for churches of all ethnicities and sizes,” he said.

Before he started New Beginnings, Fields was youth minister at Westside Baptist Church in Lewisville, and he was director of Camp Exalted, a BGCT-sponsored camp for African-American youth.

He earned both a diploma in theology and an advanced diploma in theology from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He and his wife, Shanta, have two children, Austen and Courtney.