

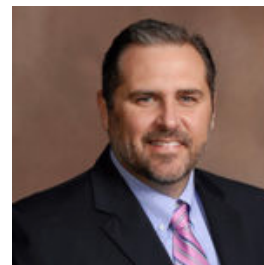
# Millennial and Gen Z task force at work

July 1, 2022

A 12-member task force is drafting a report and finalizing its recommendations on ways to increase Millennial and Generation Z involvement in the Baptist General Convention of Texas and its churches.

Demographers generally define Millennials as individuals born between 1981 and 1996, and they typically describe those born between 1997 and 2015 as belonging to Generation Z.

The task force will report its findings and recommendations to the BGCT Executive Board in mid-September and to Texas Baptists' annual meeting Nov. 13-15 in Waco.



Jason Burden

BGCT President Jason Burden, pastor of First Baptist Church in Nederland, appointed the task force early this year in response to a [motion presented by Chris McLain](#), pastor of First Baptist Church in Bandera, at Texas Baptists' 2021 annual meeting in Galveston.

In addition to McLain, others on the task force are David Adams and Ray Malone from Texas Baptists' staff; Jason Atchley, pastor of Greenwood Baptist Church in Midland; David Foster, groups and connections pastor at

Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church in Dallas; Scott Swingler, associate pastor of students at Sugar Land Baptist Church; Clint Followell, youth and college pastor at First Baptist Church in San Marcos; Nebiye Kelile, pastor of Pathway Church and Orchard Hills Baptist Church in Garland; Ryan Jespersen, executive director of Dallas Baptist Association; Meghan Hendrickson, minister to women at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas; Nathan Mahand, Baptist Student Ministries director at Houston Baptist University; and Nataly Mora Sorenson of Edinburg.

## **More young leaders ‘in decision-making spaces’**

The task force held several Zoom meetings prior to an in-person April gathering in Waco, which both Burden and McLain characterized as “fruitful.”

The task force has demonstrated a “shared aspiration” to see more Millennial and Gen Z church leaders involved “in decision-making spaces” in Texas Baptist life, Burden noted.

At Texas Baptists’ annual meeting, Burden said, he anticipates the task force not only will present its report and “probably three to five” recommendations to the general session, but also likely will offer a breakout session about Millennials and Gen Z.

Burden applauded the “enthusiasm” and “passion” of young leaders who want to become more involved in strategic ways in Texas Baptist life.



Chris McLain

McLain's motion at the 2021 annual meeting called on the BGCT president to "appoint a task force to study and recommend ways to increase involvement of Millennial and Gen Z Baptists in the life of the convention and its cooperating churches. The task force will have a budget of up to \$10,000 to cover the expenses of the committee. The task force will report its findings and recommendations at the September 2022 Executive Board meeting for review, and to the 2022 annual meeting of the convention for consideration."

At the time, McLain spoke of the importance of Texas Baptists having "younger leaders in the pipeline" and creating "on-ramps for them to get involved."

"We may be the only Baptist state convention blessed to be grappling with the issue of younger folks wanting to be more involved" in denominational and congregational leadership, Burden noted.