

Routine business marks BGCT annual meeting

November 13, 2017

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article originally was posted Nov. 13. It was updated Nov. 14 to reflect additional action taken in the second business session.

WACO—Messengers re-elected incumbent officers to second terms, approved a 2018 budget and introduced no items of miscellaneous business at the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting.

Texas Baptists re-elected pastors from Corsicana, Lewisville and Bryan to office by acclamation and approved a \$37 million budget during an extraordinarily routine business session at the Nov. 12-14 meeting in Waco.

Officers—who will serve an abbreviated term through the annual meeting in Arlington next summer—are President Danny Reeves, pastor of First Baptist Church in Corsicana; First Vice President Joe Fields, pastor of New Beginnings Church in Lewisville; and Second Vice President Jim Heiligman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bryan.

Bobby Bell, a district judge and member of First Baptist Church in Edna, nominated Reeves. When Reeves was pastor at First Baptist Church in Edna, he demonstrated “incredible abilities, talents and spiritual gifts,” Bell said.

“Danny truly has the heart of a servant,” he said. “He invests himself in the lives of others.”

Craig Christina, pastor of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church in Dallas, nominated Fields, saying he possesses “a passion for the fulfillment of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.”

René Maciel, community life pastor at First Woodway Baptist Church in Waco, nominated Heiligman, describing him as “a passionate servant of Christ” with “a great love for the church.”

Messengers also re-elected Bernie Spooner of Plymouth Park Baptist Church in Irving as secretary of the corporation and Doug Powell of First Baptist Church in Garland as registration secretary.

Budget allows for slight increase

Convention messengers also approved a 2018 budget proposal that projects flat Cooperative Program receipts but a slight increase in funds available through investment income and other sources.

Messengers approved a net budget of \$34.25 million, up \$250,000 from the current spending plan. It depends on \$29.6 million in Cooperative Program receipts from churches, equal to the amount in the 2017 budget. However, the recommended budget anticipates \$4.65 million in investment income, compared to the projected \$4.4 million this year.

The budget includes more than \$2.8 million in additional revenue from the North American Mission Board, conference and booth fees, product sales and other miscellaneous sources, bringing the total budget to \$37,135,129, compared to \$36,638,274 this year.

Messengers approved \$1,161,000 for Texas worldwide missions initiatives and partnerships, compared to \$1.3 million in 2017, and they authorized continued division of undesignated receipts from affiliated churches, with 79 percent allocated for the BGCT and 21 percent for worldwide causes. Each church determines the recipient or recipients of its worldwide giving.

Other business

In other business, messengers approved a change in relationship between the convention and [Baptist Community Services of Amarillo](#), allowing the ministry to move from an affiliated institution to a relationship with the BGCT by special agreement. The agreement allows the organization to obtain its own tax-exempt status and gives it greater flexibility in developing programs and electing its directors.

Messengers also elected individuals to [committees, boards and commissions](#) as nominated by the Committee on Committees, the Committee to Nominate Executive Board Directors and the Committee on Nominations for Boards of Affiliated Ministries.

Texas Baptists recognized nine congregations as statewide leaders in giving to the Cooperative Program—four as top churches among various ethnic affinity groups and five in categories based on average worship attendance.

They included The Church Without Walls-Brookhollow in Houston, African-American Fellowship; Chinese Baptist Church of Houston, Chinese Fellowship; Northside Baptist Church in San Antonio, Hispanic Fellowship; and Christ the King Vietnamese Baptist Church in Hewitt, Vietnamese Fellowship.

Other top churches are South Seminole Baptist Church in Seminole, congregations with 99 or fewer worshippers; Central Baptist Church in Carthage, congregations with 100 to 199 in worship; Field Street Baptist Church in Cleburne, congregations with 200 to 499 in worship; Pioneer Drive Baptist Church in Abilene, congregations with 500 to 999 in worship; and Green Acres Baptist Church, congregations with 1,000 or more in worship.

The 2017 BGCT annual meeting drew 1,183 registered messengers and 602 visitors.