

Texas Baptists committed to finishing the task

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DALLAS—The global church is focused on “finishing the task” two millennia in the making, Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Director Julio Guarneri told the BGCT Executive Board.

In 2033, Christians will mark the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus’ resurrection, the giving of the Great Commission and the giving of the Holy Spirit.

Guarneri summarized the global Christian sentiment: “Shouldn’t it be time, after 2,000 years, that we get the task done, that we finish the homework that he left us to make disciples of all nations?”

He noted Acts 1:8 served as the outline for the rest of the book and his belief God’s people have an opportunity at this key time in history to step by faith into God’s mission.

Texas Baptists are poised to play a strategic role in finishing the task through strengthening and multiplying churches, connecting ministers and developing them, and partnering for missions through missional engagement, Guarneri said.

He continued, “While we want every church who cooperates with the BGCT to feel welcome, affirmed, valued, we must not get distracted from our mission. Our energy and our focus needs to be on the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.”

Boldness and risk taking required

In his president's address to the Executive Board, Ronny Marriott, pastor of First Baptist Church in Richardson, encouraged board members to look to Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego for insight into living as citizens in exile, asking, "What does it mean to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven?"

Marriott said doing something "God-sized" requires bold steps and a willingness to take risks to push back against the pressures to conform to the practices of the place of exile.

With Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, God saved them through the lion's den and through the furnace, not from them.

When "we do what God is calling us to do, there is going to be opposers," Marriott said. But "when you take a chance, you've got all these other churches (Texas Baptists) in this together with you."

"We're better together," he said. "Let's not play church. Let's be the church."