

Waco church voluntarily cuts ties with BGCT

May 31, 2019

WACO—A Waco church that recently announced it will permit same-sex marriages voluntarily ended its relationship with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

University Baptist Church in Waco [announced](#) in mid-May it will allow its building to be used for same-sex weddings and grant its ministerial staff freedom to choose whether to perform LGBTQ marriages.

At the November 2016 BGCT annual meeting in Waco, Texas Baptists approved a motion establishing affirmation of same-sex marriage as grounds for declaring a church outside the bounds of cooperation with the state convention.

The BGCT Executive Board subsequently carried out that policy by declaring three churches—Lake Shore Baptist in Waco, First Baptist in Austin and Wilshire Baptist in Dallas—“outside of harmonious cooperation” with the BGCT.

‘End the formal relationship peacefully’

University Baptist did not press the issue with the BGCT but chose instead to “end the formal relationship peacefully,” Pastor Josh Carney said.



Josh Carney

“We have been grateful for our partnership with the BGCT, but decided that since UBC developed a position that differs from that of the convention, it was in both parties’ best interest to end the formal relationship peacefully,” Carney wrote in a May 30 email.

“I know God will continue to do great things through BGCT, and UBC will celebrate that work. Dr. (David) Hardage (the BGCT executive director) has been gracious through this process, and I look forward to our continued friendship.”

Joshua Minatrea, BGCT communications director, confirmed in a May 31 email the BGCT “received and accepted a letter of voluntary withdrawal” from University Baptist.

“We appreciate the church’s historical relationship with the convention, and the nature of Pastor Carney’s respectful withdrawal,” Minatrea said.

“We continue to value the autonomy of the local church, and maintain a longstanding and often reaffirmed biblical position on marriage and human sexuality, as we move forward sharing Christ and showing love through cooperative missions and ministry in Texas and beyond.”