

Letters: Keller ISD removal of Bible, GC2 pause

August 24, 2022

RE: Removal of the Bible from Keller ISD

My question and concern centers around the constant issue of having the Holy Bible in school libraries. A Texas independent school district has removed the Bible for review, along with a book on Anne Frank.

Are we, as a Baptist group, doing anything about these things? I'm not a proponent of any religion other than Christianity, but if it means allowing Muslims to have access to the Quran at school for us to have ours there, I can concede.

I do feel we need to provide information to our children on other religions, rather than just have them listen to negative things they hear from Baptists and others, and we need to allow them to research with guidance.

I am a Freemason, and I sit in Lodge with many different Christians, as well as Muslims and Jews. I have witnessed a Muslim assisting a Jew. That shows we can get along.

Sharing our faith in respectful ways is not possible if we remove important information from kids' access. If Christians don't stand up and address this, we will not only lose access to religious information for kids in what may be the only place they can read, but we will be leaving many for a doomed eternity.

Paul Munsel
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To our knowledge, Keller Independent School District is the only district in Texas that has pulled the Bible and the graphic adaption of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. They have done so because [each book was challenged by a parent](#), and both books were under review. The challenge to the Bible was not for its religious content, but for its sexual and violent content.

On August 19, [Dallas Morning News quoted Keller ISD Superintendent Rick Westfall](#)'s response to questions about the Bible being pulled: "I want to assure you that Keller ISD is not banning the Bible or the diary of Anne Frank, as has been suggested in some headlines and shared on social media, but I want to explain where this miscommunication came from."

"Under the new [policy], books that have been challenged by community members as being inappropriate for schools are required to be removed from shelves and held in a parental consent area until the challenge process is complete. Previously challenged books are also being removed to a parental consent area to determine if those books meet the new standards in the policy and the guidelines that will soon be considered by the [school] Board."

RE: [Hardage acknowledges 'missteps'](#)

regarding GC2

The recent story of David Hardage suggesting Texas Baptist press the “pause” button on the GC2 statement is significant to me for two reasons.

First, as one who actively participated in the Baptist General Convention of Texas until I retired from pastoral ministry in 2008, I know firsthand the persistent, pervasive efforts we took to hold on to the Baptist Faith and Message 1963, rejecting the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

The GC2 is an end run around that settled stance, attempting to drag Texas Baptists into the pseudo-culture wars. I am profoundly glad Hardage received push back. Hopefully, this will be the death of GC2 in Texas.

Second, with the retirement of Bill Pinson as BGCT executive director in 2000, Texas Baptists have suffered through seasons of inadequate executive leadership that have atrophied a once effective state convention, leaving it a shell of what it once was.

Perhaps the upcoming change of executive directors will give the BGCT what it needs to step back into a bold and visionary heritage of leading to meet the challenges of the times.

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