

# **2024 Proceedings**

## **Baptist General Convention of Texas**

### **139<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SESSION**

#### **Waco**

#### **His Kingdom Agenda**

#### **November 10**

#### **Sunday Evening**

#### **Worship Session 1**

1. Pre-session music provided by First Woodway Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Waco and Waco Area Combined Choir under the director of Art Wellborn.
2. Video shown featuring HighGround.
3. Julio Guarneri, executive director, Texas Baptists, welcomed attendees and introduced Joe Hancock, Senior Vice President, HighGround Advisors.
4. Hancock extended a welcome and a word on the work of HighGround and opened in prayer.
5. Art Wellborn led in congregational worship.
6. First Woodway, First Baptist Church of Waco and the combined choirs brought special music.
7. Video on Texans On Missions was shown.
8. Guarneri introduced Albert Reyes, president and CEO of Buckner International.
9. Reyes spoke on offering the world “a kingdom of wholeness” that “offers peace, healing and justice,” referencing the Annual Meeting’s theme verse Luke 4:18-19, Luke 10:9 and John 14:27. Reyes concluded his message by encouraging attendees that “the church is the sign and the agent of the kingdom of God.”
10. Noe Trevino, Center for Missional Engagement director, Texas Baptists, highlighted an unreached people group that has benefitted from the Worldwide Offering and offered prayer for the offering to be collected for Worldwide Missions.
11. Video was shown highlighting Worldwide Missions.
12. Guarneri introduced Al Curley, III, executive pastor, Cornerstone Church, Arlington.

13. Curley spoke from the Annual Meeting's theme verse, Luke 4:18-19, and shared five gospel characteristics made clear by the passage: the source, system, strategy, subject and significance.
14. Guarneri invited everyone to attend Mondays' events.
15. Benediction led by Rene Maciel, Missions Pastor, First Woodway.

## **November 11**

### **Monday Morning**

#### **Business Session 1 and Worship Session 2**

16. Pre-session music provided by Lampsato Worship Band, East Texas Baptist University, under the direction of Chris Smith.
17. Video on Guardian Financial was shown.
18. President Ronnie Marriott declared the 139<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas come to order. Marriott recognized veterans in attendance and thanked them for their service.
19. Keely Rule, principal partner, gave an overview of Guardian Financial. He read from Psalm 133 and led in prayer.
20. Marriott reminded messengers the taking of votes during business meetings will be conducted by the chair by asking the messengers to raise and lower ballots unless a ballot vote is necessary.
21. Marriott recognized David Cozart, registration secretary, for a report.
22. Cozart reported they had received a written challenge to the seating of a messenger.
23. Marriott reported the Committee on Credentials is responsible for verifying the credentials of prospective messengers and investigating any contention arising out of the enrollment of messengers and reporting the findings to the Convention. Marriott recognized Ariel Martinez, chair, Committee on Credentials to report on the Committee's response.
24. Martinez reported the committee decided that because of our Baptist polity, ecclesiology and the autonomy of the local church, it is not within the purview of the Credentials Committee to investigate the individual beliefs of pre-registered or potential messengers prior to their seating as messengers. As long as a church is in harmonious cooperation with the Convention, all properly credentialed messengers will be seated.
25. Cozart announced as of 10:00 a.m., November 11, 2024, there were 1,094 messengers enrolled and 698 visitors duly registered. He moved that the messengers who have been enrolled and who are enrolling be seated. Motion was approved.
26. Marriott recognized David Lorenz, chair, Committee on Annual Meeting (COAM). Lorenz moved that the Standing Rules of the Convention, as printed on page 34 of the *Bulletin*, be approved as printed. Please note on page 36 To Propose A Resolution that the committee will be available in the Waco Room. All resolutions must be submitted to any member of the Resolutions Committee on Monday, November 11, by the close of the Monday Business session or 11:45 a.m. The Standing Rules were adopted.
27. Lorenz then moved that the Order of Business as printed on pages 8-12 of the Program be adopted for the Convention. Marriott mentioned the times stated were general orders and intended for guidance only. The Order of Business was adopted.

28. Marriott asked anyone planning to make a nomination for president, first vice president or second vice president to come to the stage.
29. Marriott stated anyone desiring to make a motion should refer to page 35 in the *Bulletin*, calling attention to the note on page 36. He noted that a motion will not be considered by the Convention until a messenger has submitted it to the delegates during the Annual Meeting.
30. Marriott recognized students from San Marcos Academy for serving as pages at the microphones.
31. Marriott stated a Resolution is an “expression of opinion” as opposed to a motion calling for action. Additional information can be found in the *Bulletin* on page 36. Any resolution must be received by the Committee of Resolutions no later than at the close of this Business Session. The Resolutions Committee will be available in the Waco Room until the close of this business session.
32. BGCT First Vice President Debbie Potter announced the time for the election of the BGCT president for the year 2024 – 2025. Potter recognized David Lowrie, pastor and messenger, First Baptist Church, Decatur.
33. Lowrie nominated Ronnie Marriott, pastor, First Baptist Church, Richardson. The nomination was seconded. There were no other nominations for president. Marriott was elected by acclamation for the 2024 – 2025 term.
34. Marriott called for nominations for candidates for first vice president.
35. Marriott recognized Dennis Wiles, pastor and messenger, First Baptist, Arlington.
36. Wiles nominated Debbie Potter for first vice president for the 2024 – 2025 term. Nomination was seconded. There were no other nominations for first vice president. Potter was elected by acclamation for the 2024 – 2025 term.
37. Marriott called for nominations for candidates for second vice president.
38. Clint Davis, messenger, First Baptist Church, Mt. Pleasant, nominated Joseph Adams, second vice president for the 2024 – 2025 term. Nomination was seconded.
39. Jason Burden, messenger, First Baptist Church, Lubbock, nominated Adam Pardue for second vice president for the 2024 – 2025 term. Nomination was seconded.
40. Marriott recognized Ward Hayes to explain the ballot procedure.
41. Marriott recognized Bobby Contreras, BGCT Executive Board chair, for a report from the Executive Board.
42. Contreras reported highlights of the year, including the approved recommendation to elect Julio Guarneri as executive director of Texas Baptists, approved a recommendation to endorse a resolution affirming the succession of BGCT officers, heard a report from the newly appointed Texas Baptist Sexual Task Force, approved an accommodation to Valley Baptist Mission and Education Center to borrow an amount greater than 20% of the net assets of the center and approved recommendations to fill vacancies on various institutional boards and BGCT committees. The Executive Board also followed through on the motion from the 2023 Annual Meeting instructing the board to provide resources for women in ministry.
43. Marriott recognized Ward Hayes, treasurer/CFO, Texas Baptists, to present the financial report.

44. Hayes presented the Treasurer's Report for 2023. Assets and investments totaled \$248 million, which was an increase of \$22 million over 2022. Texas Cooperative Program was \$26.5 million, with a total Cooperative Program at \$36.9 million, which was 98% of the prior year. Lottie Moon and Texas Baptists Hunger Offering were up, while Mary Hill Davis, Designated Funds and Worldwide were slightly down. Cooperative Program budget expenditures were below budget thanks to the good stewardship of Texas Baptists staff. For 2024 ending September 30, cash and liquidity remain steady with investments up 10%. Texas Cooperative Program is 101% of prior year, Mary Hill Davis is 103% of prior year and Texas Baptist Hunger Offering is at 87% of 2023.
45. A video featuring PAVE was shown.
46. Hayes presented the 2025 Proposed Budget. CP gifts are expected to be \$27.8 million, with investment income expected at \$7.4 million and donor-designated revenue at \$6.6 million for a total budgeted revenue of \$45.3 million, which is 102% of the 2024 budget.
47. A video featuring Pastoral Health Network was shown.
48. Marriott called on Contreras to make a recommendation to adopt the 2025 budget in the amount of \$36.7 million, as found on page 53 of the *Bulletin*. Motion passed.
49. Contreras made a recommendation for the adoption of the Adopted Giving Plan as 79% for BGCT and 21% for Worldwide Missions with each church selecting the recipients of the Worldwide portion. Motion passed.
50. Contreras presented a recommendation from the Executive Board to approve the 2025 Texas World Missions Initiative and Partnership Allocation in the amount of \$1.1 million, as shown on page 54 of the *Bulletin*. Motion passed.
51. Contreras moved to approve the adoption of the recommendation for the Texas Baptists Insurance Program, as found on page 55 of the *Bulletin*. Motion passed.
52. Contreras moved to approve the adoption of the Recommendation to adopt the Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Valley Baptist Missions and Education Center, as found on page 56 of the *Bulletin*. Motion passed.
53. Smith and the Lampsato Worship Band led in congregational worship.
54. Meghan Hendrickson, Baptist Student Ministry director, Dallas Baptist University, gave a message. Hendrickson spoke from Matthew 13:1-23 on hearing God's Word. She encouraged attendees that "everything that God pours into us, he desires to pour out through us," and challenged them to consider who they are helping understand God's word.
55. Guarneri presented a prayer emphasis on Your Kingdom Come – College Campuses.
56. Marriott introduced the time for miscellaneous business and opened the floor for messengers to make motions that were germane to Convention business. Motions may be made on any topic except those issues that were otherwise delegated by the Constitution or Bylaws. Further information can be found on page 35 of the *Bulletin*. Motions to amend the Constitution and Bylaws could also be made at this time. Motions made today will not be acted upon until the second Business Session tomorrow. They will be referred to the Committee on the Annual Meeting for review and they will be taken up in the order in which they were presented.
57. Jeff Williams, messenger from First Baptist Church, Denton, brought the following motion: "I move that the Baptist General Convention of Texas affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message."

58. Steve Vernon, messenger from First Baptist Church, Belton, brought the following motion:  
“I move that the Baptist General Convention of Texas authorize the Executive Board to review and act on its behalf regarding the change of the Baptist University of the Americas’ status from a single-member corporation to a nonmember corporation as registered with the Secretary of State through its Certificate of Formation.”
59. Marriott recognized Stacy Conner, chair, Committee on Committees, who moved for the election of the persons nominated by this committee found on page 42 of the *Bulletin*. The persons nominated were elected.
60. Marriott recognized Jase Waller, chair of the Committee to Nominate Executive Board Directors, who moved for the election of the persons nominated by the committee found on page 42 of the *Bulletin*. The persons nominated were elected.
61. Marriott recognized Ryan Chandler, chair, Committee on Nominations for Boards of Affiliated Ministries, who moved for the election of the persons nominated by the committee found on pages 43-46 of the *Bulletin*. The persons nominated were elected.
62. Marriott announced the results of the vote for second vice president. Adam Purdue received 290 votes and Joseph Adams received 446. Joseph Adams was elected second vice president for 2024 – 2025.
63. Jeff Warren, pastor, Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas, led the benediction.

## **November 11**

### **Monday Evening**

#### **Worship Session 3**

64. Pre-session music provided by DBU Chapel Worship.
65. Video shown featuring VisionBridge.
66. Guarneri welcomed everyone and recognized veterans in attendance. He introduced Cal Todd, consulting director, VisionBridge.
67. Todd read Psalm 27:1 and led in prayer.
68. Guarneri introduced Tamiko Jones, executive director, WMU of Texas, and John-Travis Smith, associate executive director, Texans On Mission.
69. Jones reported that in 2023, the leaders and volunteers of Christian Job Corps sites across Texas served 1,420 participants, with 621 graduates, 66 professions of faith and over 600,000 volunteer hours. Jones said through the Mary Hill Davis Offering, Texas Baptists was able to support 88 ministries with over \$3.2 million in gifts.
70. Smith reported that “this has been one of the busiest years on record,” with over 120,000 volunteer hours since January and 210,000 meals served in that same amount of time. Smith also reported 1,200 new believers as a result of disaster relief, discipleship and water impact efforts worldwide.
71. Katie Frugé, director, Center for Cultural Engagement, Texas Baptists, introduced Rachel Wiles, deputy chief of staff, Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission. Wiles presented Frugé with the Partner for Life Award in recognition for the contribution Texas Baptists have made in conjunction with the Psalm 139 Project.

72. Congregational worship led by DBU Chapel Worship.
73. Video shown featuring BWA.
74. Guarneri brought Executive Director's Report. Guarneri announced a new missional theme, which is "strengthening a multiplying movement of churches to live out the Great Commandment and Great Commission in Texas and beyond."
75. Tomás Mackey, president, Baptist World Alliance, brought greetings from Baptist World Alliance.
76. Guarneri introduced a time of signing GC2 Partnership Agreements and introduced Sergio Ramos, director, GC2 Initiative, Noe Treviño, director, Center for Missional Engagement, Texas Baptists, Ray Malone, associate director, GC2 Initiative, Craig Christina, associate executive director, Texas Baptists.
77. Ramos introduced the signing by Constatino Varas De Valdez on behalf of the National Baptist Convention of Mexico.
78. Treviño introduced the signing by Milton Monte on behalf of the Brazilian Home Mission Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention.
79. Treviño introduced the signing by Joao Marcos Soares on behalf of the Brazilian International Mission Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention.
80. Christina introduced the signing by Alexander Genychenko on behalf of Baptist Union of Ukraine.
81. Malone introduced the signing by Samuel Tolbert on behalf of the National Baptist Convention of America.
82. Treviño introduced the signing by Mirta Palmitano on behalf of Confederación Evangélica Bautista de Argentina.
83. Christina introduced the signing by Werth Mayes of Cowboy Church of Erath County on behalf of Baptist Union of Scotland.
84. Malone introduced the signing by Tomás Mackey on behalf of the Baptist World Alliance.
85. Your Kingdom Come – Prayer Emphasis on partnership ministries by Guarneri.
86. Frugé introduced the time for offering for Texas Baptist Hunger Offering. A video was shown.
87. Guarneri introduced Joel Gregory, professor of Preaching, George W. Truett Theological Seminary. Guarneri presented an award to Gregory in recognition of over 50 years as a Texas Baptist preacher and professor.
88. Gregory spoke from Mark 1. He shared that the kingdom of God is a gift, is invisible, has inherent power and is still coming.
89. Closing remarks from Guarneri.
90. Benediction led by Dennis Young, pastor, Missouri City Baptist Church, Missouri City.

## **November 12**

### **Tuesday Morning**

#### **Business Session 2 and Worship Session 4**

91. Presession music by 317 Collective led by Michael Glenn, First Baptist, Burleson.
92. Video of Hardin-Simmons University was shown.
93. Marriott called the meeting to order.

94. Marriott recognized Eric Bruntmyer, President of Hardin-Simmons University to read scripture and bring the opening prayer.
95. Bruntmyer read Jeremiah 29:9 and led in prayer.
96. Michael Glenn and 317 Collective led in congregational worship.
97. Marriott recognized Cozart to bring the final report of the 2024 Annual Meeting. Cozart announced as of 10:00 a.m. today, November 12, 2024, there were 1,236 messengers registered and 794 visitors registered.
98. Marriott recognized David Butts, chair, Memorials Committee, for a report. Julia Butler, First Baptist, Waco, read I Thessalonians 4:13-14 and Becky Rodriguez, First Baptist, Mission, read Matthew 25:23. A video was shown of Texas Baptists who have gone to be with the Lord since last Annual Meeting. Sharon Guthrie, First Baptist, Stephenville, read Psalm 116:15 and prayer was led by Chris Wright, Redemption Church.
99. Marriott recognized Wesley Shotwell, chair, Committee on Resolutions for a report from the committee.
100. Shotwell introduced Jordon Villanueva, First Baptist, Blanket, to read the Resolution.

## **Resolution**

On the Celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cooperative Program

WHEREAS, Texas Baptists are firmly committed to the Great Commission and Great Commandments given by Christ in Scripture; and

WHEREAS, Texas Baptists recognize that the work of the Great Commission and Great Commandments is too big for any one local church and are grateful to God for the past 100 years of partnership mission through the Cooperative Program since 1925; and,

WHEREAS Texas Baptists have enjoyed the benefits of partnering together in the ministries of missions, evangelism, church planting, and church strengthening through the funding from the Cooperative Program in Texas Baptist and Southern Baptist Life and,

WHEREAS Texas Baptists have historically remained committed to the most effective method of collaboration, recognizing we can do more together; and,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Texas Baptists messengers gathered at the Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas give thanks to God for His blessing through the past 100 years of partnership through the Cooperative Program; and,

BE IT RESOLVED that Texas Baptists commit to continue standing on the shoulders of those who have come before us to continue giving through the Cooperative Program; and,

BE IT RESOLVED that Texas Baptists will continue to partner together in the work of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission through the Cooperative Program; and,

BE IT RESOLVED that Texas Baptists will teach their church family and generations to come about the importance of partnership mission through the Cooperative Program; and,

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED that we ask Almighty God to lead and bless our efforts to pursue His Kingdom Agenda for His glory through the Cooperative Program until our Lord Jesus Christ returns.

101. Marriott called for vote to accept the Resolution. Resolution accepted.
102. Marriott recognized David Lorenz, chair, Committee on Annual Meeting, for a report.
103. Lorenz moved on behalf of the committee that the 2027 Annual Meeting be held in Tyler at Green Acres Baptist Church November 14-16. Motion passed.
104. Marriott introduced the miscellaneous business portion of the meeting and recognized Lorenz.
105. Lorenz stated parliamentary rules allows the motions to be discussed in any order. After discussion with the committee it was decided the second motion would be discussed first. Lorenz read the motion made by Steve Vernon, messenger, First Baptist, Belton. "I move that the Baptist General Convention of Texas authorize the Executive Board to review and act on its behalf regarding the change of the Baptist University of the Americas' status from a single-member corporation to a nonmember corporation as registered with the Secretary of State through its Certificate of Formation."
106. Vernon spoke in favor of the motion.
107. Marriott called for vote. Motion passed.
108. Lorenz read the second motion made by Jeff Williams, messenger, First Baptist, Denton. "I move that the Baptist General Convention of Texas affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message."
109. Williams spoke for the motion.
110. Randall Everett, messenger, First Baptist, Waco, spoke against the motion.
111. Pete Pawelek, messenger, Cowboy Fellowship of Atascosa County, spoke for the motion.
112. Brent Gentzel, messenger, First Baptist Kaufman, spoke against the motion.
113. Taylor Lassiter, messenger, College Heights, Plainview, spoke in favor of the motion.
114. David Lowrie, messenger, First Baptist, Decatur, spoke against the motion.
115. Daniel Perez, messenger, First Baptist, Los Fresno, spoke for the motion.
116. Pawelek spoke to keep the debate on the discussion to the motion.
117. Ross Chandler, messenger, First Baptist, Marble Falls, spoke against the motion.
118. Question was called for vote. Question defeated.
119. Matt Snowdon, messenger, First Baptist, Waco, spoke against the motion.
120. Jordon Velazco, messenger, Lone Oak Baptist, Lone Oak, spoke for the motion.
121. Bruce Webb, messenger, First Baptist, The Woodlands, spoke against the motion.
122. Marriott asked for someone to speak for the motion. Seeing none that ends debate and vote is called for. Motion defeated.
123. Marriott announced the time for election of the secretary of the corporation.
124. Steve Vernon, messenger, First Baptist, Belton, nominated Bill Arnold. There were no other nominations for secretary of the corporation. Arnold was elected by acclamation.
125. Marriott announced the time for election of the registration secretary.
126. Marriott called on Edward Wagner, Cornerstone Baptist, Harker Heights, nominated Michael Evans, Sr. as registration secretary. There were no other nominations for registration secretary. Evans was elected by acclamation.



127. Congregation worship was led by 317 Collective.
128. Marriott brought the president's challenge. Marriott spoke on establishing the kingdom of God by having "unity amidst diversity and the radical love of Jesus," referencing John 17:21 and Jeremiah 29:7. Marriott concluded his president's address by telling attendees that both are required to impact God's kingdom through the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.
129. Guarneri asked for prayer for Your Kingdom Come – Among The Nations.
130. Marriott recognized Guarneri to introduce the incoming institutional leaders and officers of the Convention.

Incoming Institutional Leaders:

Dr. Donna Hedgepath, President, Wayland Baptist University

Dr. Chris Lancaster, Baylor Scott & White, Hillcrest

Incoming Officers of the Convention:

Registration Secretary - Michael Evans, Sr.

Secretary of the Corporation - Bill Arnold

Second Vice President - Joseph Adams

First Vice President - Debbie Potter

President - Ronny Marriott and wife, Robin

131. Guarneri, Bruntmyer and Jacob West invited everyone to Abilene for the 2025 Annual Meeting November 16-18.
132. Guarneri invited everyone to lunch at the close of the session and the panel discussion on Biblical perspectives on women in ministry.
133. Lester Leonares, teaching elder, First Philippine Baptist Church, Missouri City, led the benediction.
134. Marriott declared the 139<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas adjourned.