

What is Texas Baptists Committed?

Our Mission Statement sums it up:

*Texas Baptists Committed is dedicated to **reaching** people for Christ through local churches; **promoting** and defending historic Baptist principles; **spreading** an understanding of Baptist heritage and distinctives through education; and **cooperating** with the mission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and its related institutions.*

Texas Baptists Committed (TBC) stands firm for the historic purpose and principles set forth by the founders of the first Baptist churches in the early 17th century and adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) at its founding in 1845. The churches forming the SBC were independent and diverse, but united in cooperation for missions.

Until 1979, SBC-affiliated churches essentially agreed on the major guiding principles of personal relationship with Jesus Christ expressed in the priesthood of the believer; the authority of Scripture; the freedom and responsibility of each believer to interpret Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; the autonomy of the local church; the separation of church and state; voluntary cooperation for biblically-based missions; and the Convention's role as a resource and support network rather than a hierarchical authority.

In 1979, everything changed. An organized political effort was launched, led by Paul Pressler and Paige Patterson. Recognizing that the SBC president had total power to appoint the convention committees responsible for electing trustees of all SBC agencies and institutions, they devised a method designed to gain control.

The successful election – for the next 12 consecutive years – of presidential candidates endorsed by this political machine became known as the "Fundamentalist takeover." The result? Since then, only those who agreed to submit to the authority and doctrinal positions of top SBC leadership have been allowed to serve in SBC leadership positions. In recent years, such requirements have even been extended to include SBC missionaries, who have been forced to sign their agreement to a creed as a condition of their service.

After taking over the SBC, the Fundamentalists set their sights on the state conventions, especially the largest state convention – the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT). Following the 1994 BGCT meeting in Amarillo, one of the two major architects of the Fundamentalist takeover of the SBC stated, "We will destroy the BGCT."

However, despite their success in taking over the SBC, the Fundamentalist leaders did *not* succeed in their attempt to take control of the BGCT. Why? Because of the vigilance of Texas Baptists Committed, an organization formed in 1987 to defend the freedom of the BGCT, its institutions, and its affiliated churches.

In 1998, the Fundamentalists in Texas – frustrated at their inability to take control of the BGCT – formed a new convention: the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. This convention's primary goal – the purpose of its existence – is to draw Texas Baptist churches, one by one, away from the BGCT, and exercise the same control over them that the SBC exercises over its affiliated churches.

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Why Texas Baptists Committed in 2014?

Texas Baptists Committed exists to resist any control of our state convention – *or Texas Baptist churches* – by those who have abandoned our historic Baptist roots of God-given freedom and voluntary cooperation, centered on spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We want to stay true to our historic purpose and principles, and thus keep the main thing – missions and evangelism – the main thing.

We are a voluntary organization, funded by persons who choose to identify with this cause by paying for a yearly membership in the organization and, in some cases, donations beyond that, as they feel led by the Holy Spirit.

To keep Baptists informed, we publish the ***TBC Weekly Baptist Roundup*** e-newsletter, which provides links to Baptist news, opinion, and analysis articles from the past week, from Texas and beyond. Since its inception in May 2011, the ***Roundup*** has continued to add to its numbers of people who open it regularly; as of June 2014, over 890 people are opening it every week.

We also inform Pastor Search Committees about the track records and positions of potential pastors. Through secrecy and deception, Fundamentalists are trying to take over Texas Baptist churches by positioning their adherents as pastors of those churches. We make sure that Pastor Search Committees are fully informed.

We are also working to involve young ministers in Texas Baptist life so that they are not drawn into Fundamentalism. We strive to provide them with a support system to help them to deal with the pressures involved in pastoring.

Doing all of this sometimes involves “politics.” But, after all, politics is a reality in all of life. If TBC doesn’t work on the politics of Baptist life, then you can be sure that individual churches and their members will have to deal with the politics on their own. TBC handles the “politics” so that churches can concentrate on worshipping and sharing Jesus.

As Christians, we must live in the real world. The reality is that an organized movement is essential to counter the Fundamentalist political machine in our midst and prevent it from taking our state convention – *and our Texas Baptist churches* – down the same road as the SBC.

We invite you to join Texas Baptists Committed in supporting the ministry of the BGCT; keeping the focus of the state convention on missions and evangelism; and standing firm for historic principles unique to what it means to be called a Baptist.

To join, go online to our Web site at **www.txbc.org**, and click the **Join/Renew/Donate** button; or mail your check to our finance manager, Jill Faragher:

Jill Faragher
Texas Baptists Committed
4100 Main Street
Houston, TX 77002

If you or your church can ever use TBC’s help, or you want to ask questions or discuss your concerns, please call me at **214-986-7136**.

Warm regards,

Bill Jones
Executive Director, Texas Baptists Committed