

2026

ANNUAL  MEETING

ORLANDO

BOOK OF REPORTS



WALKING WORTHY

EPHESIANS 4:1-6



Book of Reports *of the* **2026 Southern Baptist Convention**

prepared for the

One Hundred Sixty-Eighth Session
One Hundred Eighty First Year

meeting in

Orlando, Florida
June 9-10, 2026

2026 CONVENTION OFFICERS

President

Clint Pressley

First Vice President

Daniel Ritchie

Second Vice President

Craig Carlisle

Recording Secretary

Nathan A. Finn

Registration Secretary

Don Currence

Treasurer

Jeff Iorg

FUTURE SBC ANNUAL MEETING SITES

Indianapolis, Indiana – June 15-16, 2027 | St. Louis, Missouri – June 13-14, 2028
San Antonio, Texas – June 12-13, 2029

FOREWORD

Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1–3, CSB)

In June, Southern Baptists will meet in Orlando, Florida for our Annual Meeting. Our theme this year is “Walking Worthy,” which is taken from Ephesians 4:1–3.

In his epistle, Paul urges the Ephesians to “walk worthy” of the calling they have received. This sounds lovely, but it could be understood merely as a pious platitude if Paul didn’t go on to explain what it looks like. Worthy walk is characterized by humility, gentleness, patience, lovingly forbearing other believers, striving for the sort of unity and peace that comes from the Holy Spirit. These are the sorts of virtues and priorities that should characterize a maturing group of believers. May it be said of Southern Baptists.

Brothers and sisters, when we convene in the “Theme Park Capital of the World,” we don’t want our meeting to be some well-choreographed floor show that lacks authenticity. We don’t want to put on costumes and pretend to be someone we aren’t. We definitely don’t want the meeting to be a roller coaster or haunted house! Rather, we want it to be a gathering marked by worthy walk, in all the ways Paul commends. In Orlando, let’s honor King Jesus in our worship, our witness, and the kingdom business we transact together.

This Book of Reports is a key resource for Southern Baptists as we prepare for the 2026 SBC Annual Meeting. It is tangible evidence of our twin commitments to confessional faithfulness and cooperative mission. Our various entities, boards, and commissions have shared reports about the kingdom work they’ve each engaged in over the past year. They’ve also provided Southern Baptists with helpful data, including financial reports. All this information enables messengers to “look under the hood” and see how our confessional commitments are operationalized and our Cooperative Program dollars and other contributions are stewarded by our various denominational ministries.

Since Jeff Iorg became President of the SBC Executive Committee, he has been reminding us that, while Southern Baptists are by no means a perfect people, by God’s grace, we are a force for good. I believe the Book of Reports bears this out. I trust you will find it to be both informative and edifying.

Nathan A. Finn

Recording Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention

*Copyright 2026 by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. All rights reserved.
The contents of this book may not be reproduced in any form in whole or in part without the consent
of the copyright holder except for uses which are permitted under federal copyright law.*

*Prepared and distributed by: Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, 901 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN 37203
Reviewed by: Nathan A. Finn, SBC Recording Secretary*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	5
Southern Baptist Foundation	50
GENERAL BOARDS	
GuideStone Financial Resources	53
International Mission Board	57
Lifeway Christian Resources	67
North American Mission Board	81
INSTITUTIONS	
Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention	102
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	107
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary	115
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary	121
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	130
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	139
Seminary Comparative Data	148
Seminary Extension (supplement to report of seminaries)	151
Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives	152
COMMISSION	
Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission	156
AUXILIARY	
Woman's Missionary Union	178
GOVERNING DOCUMENTS	
Charter and Constitution	185
Bylaws	189
Business and Financial Plan	204
ORGANIZATION MANUAL	209
LEGAL NAMES AND CURRENT ADDRESSES	220
BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE	221
NOTES	228

ORLANDO

ANNUAL  MEETING
2026

JUNE 9-10, 2026

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ninety-Ninth Annual Report



SBC

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

901 Commerce Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

ANTHONY L. (TONY) DOCKERY, Chairman
JEFF IORG, President and Chief Executive Officer

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention presents this ninety-ninth annual report. There are 86 persons from across the country who are elected as members of the SBC Executive Committee.

The SBC Executive Committee met as follows during 2025-26:

September 22-23, 2025	Nashville, TN
February 16-17, 2026	Nashville, TN
June 8, 2026	Orlando, FL

Officers of the SBC Executive Committee – The Officers of the SBC Executive Committee include its president, chair, vice chair, secretary, and the chairs of its four standing committees.

Jeff Iorg serves as president and chief executive officer and the other officers, as well as the chairs, vice chairs, and secretaries of the four standing committees are named below:

Chair: Anthony L. (Tony) Dockery, California

Vice Chair: Adam Wyatt, Mississippi

Secretary: Nancy W. Spalding, Michigan

Committee on Convention Events and Strategic Planning

Chair: Corey Cain, Tennessee

Vice Chair: Kathryn C. (Katie) Creery, Georgia

Secretary: Laura A. Jackson, Texas

Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development

Chair: David A. Twiddy, Florida

Vice Chair: Nick W. Sandefur, Kentucky

Secretary: Jana J. White, North Carolina

Committee on Convention Missions and Ministry

Chair: Sarah Rogers, South Carolina

Vice Chair: Landon G. Dowden, Georgia

Secretary: Lamar Morin, New Mexico

Committee on Southern Baptist Relations

Chair: Roger T. (Todd) Stiles, Iowa

Vice Chair: Thomas D. (Dean) Inserra, Florida

Secretary: Susan F. Bryant, Kentucky

SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS OF THE SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following actions of the SBC Executive Committee are reported for information.

During its September 22-23, 2025, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee approved the following actions one (1) through eleven (11).

1. Task Force to Study Resources for Disability Ministry (See Recommendations 1 and 2, pp. 43-46)

Members considered a 2025 motion and approved the appointment of a Disability Ministry Task Force, to be chaired by Tom Stolle.

2. Amendment to SBC Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees (See Recommendation 6, p. 48)

Members adopted amendments to SBC Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees and will recommend the amendment to the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026. This will require names of members appointed by the SBC president be released 60 days prior to the Convention rather than the current 45 days.

3. SBC Annual Meeting Future Site Consideration (See Recommendation 10, p. 49)

Members approved the convention site for 2034, to be New Orleans, Louisiana, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels and will recommend it to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for adoption. The date of the convention would be June 13-14, 2034.

4. North American Mission Board: Request to Form the Subsidiary, Send Relief Puerto Rico, Inc.

Pursuant to SBC Bylaw 33, members approved the request of the North American Mission Board to form Send Relief Puerto Rico, Inc., a nonprofit subsidiary, by filing Articles of Incorporation for same, conditioned upon the agreement of North American Mission Board to make available to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention the same financial reports for this subsidiary as are required of North American Mission Board for its own financial reports pursuant to the Business and Financial Plan of the Southern Baptist Convention. Executive Committee members authorized its chairman, president, or chief financial officer to execute a resolution, certificate of approval, or such other substantiating documentation as may be necessary to validate this Executive Committee approval as a prerequisite to filing the Articles of Incorporation for Send Relief Puerto Rico, Inc. with the proper authorities.

5. Distribution of Funds, Raymond Cutright Estate

Members adopted a recommendation to allocate income distributions from the estate of Raymond Cutright to the Montana Southern Baptist Convention, through 2030, in accordance with the last will and testament. The funds are to be utilized for “pioneer missions,” and distributed by the Southern Baptist Foundation, according to the Southern Baptist Foundation’s current distribution policies.

6. Credentials Committee Report and Recommendation

Upon recommendation of the Credentials Committee, members formally recognize the discontinued relationship of Fountain of Praise, Houston, Texas, with the Southern Baptist Convention as demonstrated by the church’s lack of reported financial participation for at least the last ten (10) years and its lack of intent to cooperate to resolve a question of faith and practice.

7. Conflict of Interest Forms

In accordance and compliance with the SBC Business and Financial Plan, Executive Committee members completed and submitted Conflict of Interest forms.

8. Executive Committee Standing Committee Assignments

Members considered and adopted new Executive Committee members' assignments to serve on standing committees, as recommended by Executive Committee Officers of the Board.

9. SBC Executive Committee Personnel Policies Manual Amendments

Members received as informatioun that the officers of the board amended portions of the Executive Committee's Personnel Policies Manual.

10. SBC Executive Committee Retirement Plan Changes

Members received as information that the Officers of the Board approved changes to the Executive Committee's retirement plan.

11. SBC Calendar of Activities Amendments

Members adopted amendments to the 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030 SBC Calendars of Activities as follows:

(Note: Addition of text is indicated by underline, and deletion of text is indicated by strikethrough)

AMENDED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2026**JANUARY - Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 4-11: January Bible Study Week
- January 18: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 1: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 15: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 22: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 1-8: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 22: Church Planting Emphasis Day

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 5: Easter
- April 12: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 3: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 7: National Day of Prayer
- May 17: Children's Ministry Sunday
- May 31: Disaster Relief Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 6: Crossover Orlando
- June 7-8: WMU Missions Celebration
- June 9-10: SBC Annual Meeting (Orlando, FL)
- June 28: Mission:Dignity Sunday

JULY - Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 5: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 2: Send Relief Sunday
- ~~August 9: SBC Serve Sunday~~
- August 23: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 19: Children's Missions Day
- September 27: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 4: CP Sunday
- October 18: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 25: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 1: Day of Prayer for Persecuted Church
- November 8: Orphans & Widows Sunday
- November 29-December 6: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- See end of November above
- December 25: Christmas

AMENDED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2027**JANUARY- Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 3-10: January Bible Study Week
- January 17: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 7: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 21: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 28: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 7-14: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 14: Church Planting Emphasis Day
- March 28: Easter

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 4: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 2: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 6: National Day of Prayer
- May 16: Children's Ministry Sunday
- May 30: Disaster Relief Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 5 ~~12~~: Crossover Salt Lake City Indianapolis
- June ~~6-7~~ 13-14: WMU Missions Celebration
- June ~~8-9~~ 15-16: SBC Annual Meeting (Salt Lake City, Utah Indianapolis, IN)
- June 27: Mission: Dignity Sunday

JULY- Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 4: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 1: Send Relief Sunday
- ~~August 8: SBC Serve Sunday~~
- August 22: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 18: Children's Missions Day
- September 26: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 3: CP Sunday
- October 17: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 24: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 7: Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
- November 14: Orphans & Widows Sunday
- November 28-December 5: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- See end of November above
- December 25: Christmas

AMENDED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2028**JANUARY - Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 2-9: January Bible Study Week
- January 23: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 6: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 20: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 27: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 5-12: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 19: Church Planting Emphasis Day

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 16: Easter
- April 23: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 4: National Day of Prayer
- May 7: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 21: Children's Ministry Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 4: Disaster Relief Sunday
- June 10: Crossover ~~Indianapolis~~ St. Louis
- June 11-12: WMU Missions Celebration
- June 13-14: SBC Annual Meeting (~~Indianapolis, IN~~ St. Louis, MO)
- June 25: Mission:Dignity Sunday

JULY - Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 2: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 6: Send Relief Sunday
- ~~August 13: SBC Serve Sunday~~
- August 27: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 16: Children's Missions Day
- September 24: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 1: CP Sunday
- October 22: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 29: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 5: Day of Prayer for Persecuted Church
- November 12: Orphans & Widows Sunday

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- December 3-10: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
- December 25: Christmas

AMENDED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2029**JANUARY - Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 7-14: January Bible Study Week
- January 21: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 4: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 18: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 25: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 4-11: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 18: Church Planting Emphasis Day

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 1: Easter
- April 22: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 3: National Day of Prayer
- May 6: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 20: Children's Ministry Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 3: Disaster Relief Sunday
- June 9: Crossover San Antonio
- June 10-11: WMU Missions Celebration
- June 12-13: SBC Annual Meeting (San Antonio, TX)
- June 24: Mission:Dignity Sunday

JULY - Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 1: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 5: Send Relief Sunday
- August 12: SBC Serve Sunday
- August 26: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 15: Children's Missions Day
- September 23: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 7: CP Sunday
- October 21: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 28: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 4: Day of Prayer for Persecuted Church
- November 11: Orphans & Widows Sunday

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- December 2-9: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
- December 25: Christmas

AMENDED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2030**JANUARY -Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 6-13: January Bible Study Week
- January 20: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 3: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 17: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 24: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 3-10: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 17: Church Planting Emphasis Day

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 21: Easter
- April 28: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 2: National Day of Prayer
- May 5: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 19: Children's Ministry Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 2: Disaster Relief Sunday
- June 8: Crossover
- June 9-10: WMU Missions Celebration
- June 11-12: SBC Annual Meeting
- June 23: Mission:Dignity Sunday

JULY - Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 7: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 4: Send Relief Sunday
- August 11: SBC Serve Sunday
- August 25: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 14: Children's Missions Day
- September 22: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 6: CP Sunday
- October 20: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 27: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 3: Day of Prayer for Persecuted Church
- November 10: Orphans & Widows Sunday

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- December 1-December 8: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
- December 25: Christmas

During its February 16-17, 2026, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee approved the following actions twelve (12) through twenty-five (25).

12. 2026-2027 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget (See Recommendation 3, p. 46)

Members adopted the 2026-2027 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget in the amount of \$186,000,000 and will recommend the budget to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for adoption. The action serves as a response to the recommendation from the Great Commission Resurgence Evaluation Task Force, June 11-12, 2024, “to increase CP Allocation designated to the IMB to 51% beginning with the 2026-27 budget.”

13. 2026-2027 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget (See Recommendation 4, p. 47)

Members adopted the 2026-2027 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget in the amount of \$10,919,000 and will recommend the budget to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for adoption.

14. Amendment to SBC Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business (See Recommendation 7, pp. 48-49)

Members adopted a recommendation to recommend the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, amend Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business to increase membership and term limits.

15. SBC Annual Meeting Future Site Considerations (See Recommendations 8, 9, 11, and 12, p. 49)

Members approved the convention sites for 2030, 2032, 2035, and 2037, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention centers and area hotels, and will recommend the convention sites to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for adoption. The recommended convention locations and dates are as follows:

- Houston, Texas June 11-12, 2030
- Anaheim, California June 8-9, 2032
- Indianapolis, Indiana June 12-13, 2035
- Anaheim, California June 16-17, 2037

16. Task Force to Study Resources for Disability Ministry (See Recommendation 1, pp. 43-45)

Members adopted the report of the Disability Ministry Task Force and will recommend the report and recommendations to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for adoption.

17. Credentials Committee Report and Recommendations

Upon the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, members adopted the following recommendations:

Zion Temple Baptist Church, O’Fallon, Illinois

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February 16-17, 2026, meeting that the Executive Committee formally recognize the discontinued relationship of Zion Temple Baptist Church, O’Fallon, Illinois, with the Southern Baptist Convention as demonstrated by the church’s lack of intent to cooperate to resolve a question of faith and practice.

The Crossing Church, Tampa, Florida

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February 16-17, 2026, meeting that the Executive Committee discontinue the Convention's relationship with The Crossing Church, Tampa, Florida, based the church's lack of intent to cooperate to resolve a question of faith and practice.

18. SBC Committee on Nominations

Members acted ad interim for the Convention to remove Emily Wise, West Virginia, from her position as a member of the 2025-26 SBC Committee on Nominations.

19. Election of Southern Baptist Foundation Trustees

Members directed its president, as the agent designated to represent it as the Member of the Southern Baptist Foundation, to elect Ronn Bagge, Murfreesboro, TN, and Chris Kelly, J.D., Murfreesboro, TN, as directors of the Southern Baptist Foundation, for terms of office expiring 2029 and until their successors are elected, the terms to begin immediately upon their election during the Southern Baptist Foundation's annual members' meeting to be held in June 2026.

20. Executive Committee Audit

Members received as information the fact that the Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development received and reviewed the 2024-25 audited financial statements of the Executive Committee as prepared by the firm of Batts Morrison Wales & Lee, P.A. and acknowledged these audited financial statements were made a part of the official records of the Executive Committee.

21. SBC Parliamentarian Contracts

Members received as information the fact that the Executive Committee would secure the full execution of a contract with C. Barry McCarty to serve as the chief parliamentarian and with Al Gage to serve as assistant chief parliamentarian during the next annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026.

22. Meeting Hall Expenses of the SBC Pastors' Conference

Members requested the SBC Pastors' Conference reimburse the Executive Committee \$150,000 for the year 2026 for its use of meeting space and the meeting hall and facilities at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. The staff continues to provide significant indirect support through the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget to help offset the facility and production costs of the SBC Pastors' Conference which are approximately \$450,000 annually.

23. Trustee Training Course

Jeff Iorg, president and CEO of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, announced the availability of an SBC Trustee Training Course launched by the Executive Committee. Course content, created in partnership with entity leaders, includes six videos, reading materials, and tutorials. Completing the course is not a prerequisite for trustee service, but entity leaders are encouraged to use the course in trustee orientation and training. Non-trustees may also use the course to learn more about trustee service.

24. Recognitions

Members recognized for the following for the contributions to the Southern Baptist Convention:

- Morris H. Chapman, former president and chief executive officer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1992-2010, who died on October 20, 2025.
- Ruth Ann Williams, Executive Committee staff member, who retired December 31, 2025.
- Connie Dixon, president of the Women's Missionary Union, was recognized at her final Executive Committee meeting.

25. 2031 SBC Calendar of Activities

Members approved the 2031 SBC Calendar of Activities as follows:

ADOPTED SBC CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES 2031**JANUARY - Focus on Christian Discipleship**

- January 5-12: January Bible Study Week
- January 19: Sanctity of Life Sunday

FEBRUARY - Focus on Christian Unity

- February 2: George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Sunday
- February 16: Focus on WMU Sunday
- February 23: Racial Reconciliation Sunday

MARCH - Focus on North American Missions

- March 2-9: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- March 16: Church Planting Emphasis Day

APRIL - Focus on Christian Evangelism

- April 13: Easter
- April 27: Baptism Sunday

MAY - Focus on Christian Education

- May 1: National Day of Prayer
- May 4: SBC Seminary Sunday
- May 18: Children's Ministry Sunday

JUNE - Focus on Local & State Missions & Ministries

- June 1: Disaster Relief Sunday
- June 7: Crossover Indianapolis
- June 8-9: WMU Missions Celebration
- June 10-11: SBC Annual Meeting (Indianapolis, IN)
- June 22: Mission:Dignity Sunday

JULY - Focus on Christian Citizenship

- July 6: Religious Liberty Sunday

AUGUST - Focus on Christian Service

- August 3: Send Relief Sunday
- August 24: Global Hunger Sunday

SEPTEMBER - Focus on Next Generation Ministries

- September 13: Children's Missions Day
- September 21: Caring Well Sunday

OCTOBER - Focus on Cooperative Program

- October 5: CP Sunday
- October 19: Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
- October 26: Student Baptism Sunday

NOVEMBER - Focus on Christian Compassion

- November 2: Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
- November 9: Orphans & Widows Sunday
- November 30-December 7: Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

DECEMBER - Focus on International Missions

- See end of November
- December 25: Christmas

CONVENTION STATISTICAL REPORT

Cooperative Program Giving - The giving record of Southern Baptists during the fiscal year October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025, is as follows:

	<u>2024 - 2025</u>	<u>2023 - 2024</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Total CP as a % of			
Undesignated Gifts ²	4.58%	4.67%	(1.93%)
Total Undesignated Gifts	\$ 9,639,343,162	\$ 9,558,032,631	0.85%
Total Cooperative Program ²	\$ 441,220,439 ³	\$ 446,641,957	(1.21%)
State Convention Share			
of Total CP ²	\$ 257,111,695 ³	\$ 259,170,327	(0.79%)
SBC Share of Total CP ²	\$ 181,701,389	\$ 187,471,630	(3.08%)

Trends in Giving – The following five-year record of gifts to Southern Baptist churches and through the Cooperative Program is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Undesignated Gifts</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>Total Cooperative Program</u>	<u>% Change</u>
2020-21	\$ 9,774,807,128	2.56%	\$ 457,928,996	0.52%
2021-22	\$ 9,962,910,482	1.92%	\$ 457,417,314	(0.11%)
2022-23	\$ 10,027,338,119	0.65%	\$ 449,039,992	(1.83%)
2023-24	\$ 9,558,032,631	(4.68%)	\$ 446,641,957	(0.54%)
2024-25	\$ 9,639,343,162	0.85%	\$ 441,220,439	(1.21%)
Average 1980s		7.58%	\$ 292,454,267	6.74%
Average 1990s		5.42%	\$ 398,347,224	2.67%
Average 2000s		4.12%	\$ 513,322,447	1.21%
Average 2010s		(0.21%)	\$ 475,893,930	(1.27%)
Average Last 5		(0.28%)	\$ 450,449,740	(0.94%)

<u>Year</u>	<u>SBC \$ Share of Total CP²</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>SBC % Share of Total CP² as a % of Total CP² Undesignated Gifts</u>
2020-21	\$187,775,922	(0.02%)	41.01%
2021-22	\$195,900,993	4.33%	42.83%
2022-23	\$188,505,808	(3.77%)	41.98%
2023-24	\$187,471,630	(0.55%)	41.97%
2024-25	\$181,701,389	(3.08%)	41.18%
Average 1980s	\$110,216,622	7.81%	37.47%
Average 1990s	\$147,313,870	2.03%	37.04%
Average 2000s	\$190,471,122	1.46%	37.16%
Average 2010s	\$187,362,581	0.16%	39.34%
Average Last 5	\$188,271,148	(0.82%)	41.79%

Notes:

1. Due to a change Lifeway made in the ACP information it requested for 2011, Total Gifts were not calculable. Therefore, Total Receipts are reported above for 2012-13 through 2024-25 for comparative purposes.
2. For 2012-13 through 2024-25, in keeping with the Convention approved definition of The Cooperative Program, the Total Cooperative Program category does not include church contributions given directly to the national convention that are directed only to the national SBC CP Allocation budget.
3. These totals reflect the amounts received and used for state ministries during FY2025. Variances from the reported FY2025 National Cooperative Program Allocation Budget reflect differences in reporting periods and remittance timing to the SBC Executive Committee.

[^] Sections 2 and 3 were prepared by the SBC Executive Committee based on information from the 2025 ACP Statistical Summary which was prepared by Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources (April 30, 2026).

Cooperative Program Distribution – Cooperative Program funds received by the Southern Baptist Convention were distributed in keeping with the action of the Southern Baptist Convention when the 2024-2025 Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program Allocation Budget was approved. The 2024-2025 SBC Cooperative Program funds distributed include funds received from state conventions and identified by them as Cooperative Program Allocation Budget funds.

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>
International Mission Board	\$ 93,682,472.42	\$ 96,277,700.46
North American Mission Board	\$ 42,353,174.91	\$ 43,526,459.00
Gateway Seminary	\$ 3,730,373.68	\$ 3,590,075.64
Midwestern Seminary	\$ 8,548,320.44	\$ 8,307,108.53
New Orleans Seminary	\$ 6,320,156.69	\$ 6,518,707.35
Southeastern Seminary	\$ 6,130,247.70	\$ 6,673,189.29
Southern Seminary	\$ 9,897,359.20	\$ 10,378,909.42
Southwestern Seminary	\$ 6,109,900.07	\$ 6,396,862.06
Historical Library and Archives	\$ 446,018.50	\$ 458,374.33
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	\$ 3,066,377.32	\$ 3,151,323.26
<u>SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating</u>	<u>\$ 5,806,647.33</u>	<u>\$ 5,960,579.73</u>
Grand Totals	<u>\$ 186,091,048.26</u>	<u>\$ 191,239,289.07</u>

2025 Southern Baptist Convention Statistical Summary⁽¹⁾ – A summary of the statistical record for the Southern Baptist Convention for 2024–25 is as follows:

(See the page 18 for chart of Southern Baptist Statistics by State Convention.)

<u>Item/Statistic</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Numeric Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
State Conventions	41	41	0	0.00%
Associations	1,064	1,067	-3	-0.28%
Churches	46,608	46,876	-268	-0.57%
Church-type Missions Operating ⁽²⁾	2,227	2,321	-94	-4.05%
Additional Campuses	765	746	19	2.55%
Total Members	12,331,954	12,722,266	-390,312	-3.07%
Total Baptisms	263,075	250,643	12,432	4.96%
Ratio of Baptisms: Total Members	1:47	1:51	--	--
In Person Weekly Worship				
Average Attendance	4,460,910	4,304,625	156,285	3.63%
In Person Sunday School/Bible Study/				
Small Group Average Attendance	2,650,291	2,567,048	83,243	3.24%

Other 2025 Items – Not Asked by All State Conventions⁽³⁾

Item/Statistic	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Other Additions ⁽⁴⁾	168,649	173,156
Vacation Bible School Enrollment ⁽⁵⁾	1,664,838	1,524,775
Undesignated Receipts ⁽⁶⁾	\$9,639,343,162	\$9,558,032,631

Notes:

1. Data reported for the 2025 statistical year include adjustments to the totals for some non-reported items (from individual congregations) using data reported in prior years. Similar actions occurred in 2024.
2. Some state conventions no longer use the designation of church-type mission to categorize congregations that are not self-determining, self-sustaining and self-propagating. This practice has impacted the number of churches and church-type missions.
3. Totals for items in this table have incomplete data for 2025 due to the fact that not all state conventions asked the item. Thus comparisons between the two years may not be appropriate. See the Notes in the 2024 SBC Statistical Summary for specific details to determine if a comparison is desirable.
4. Florida Baptist Convention did not ask this item.
5. Baptist State Convention of North Carolina did not ask this item.
6. Florida Baptist Convention did not ask this item.

Prepared by: Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources, 200 Powell PI Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027, April 30, 2026

Church Plants, Replants, New Affiliates, and Campuses for 2025, SBC: 951

Source: Reports from State Directors of Missions compiled by the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, GA (see page 101); new SBC IDs created in SBC Workspace.

Note: 2010 was the first year a SBC ID # was required for each reported congregation. In 2019, there was a methodology change to capture new plants, affiliates, and campuses; they are now identified at the time the SBC ID is created in SBC Workspace. In 2025, partners reported 699 new church plants, 93 replants, 127 new affiliates, and 32 new campuses.

Missionary Totals

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
International Missionaries	3,515	3,566	-51	-1.4%
North American Missionaries	2,898 ⁽¹⁾	3,299 ⁽¹⁾	-401	-12.2%*
— Chaplains ⁽²⁾	3,094	3,300	-206	-6.2%

⁽¹⁾ NAMB's missionary count fluctuates because most are church planters who rotate out five years after their church launches.

⁽²⁾ NAMB-endorsed chaplains serve in the military, hospitals, law enforcement, prisons, disaster relief, corporate workplaces, and other settings. NAMB provides ministry guidelines, training resources, and pastoral care for chaplains serving throughout North America and the world.

Special Missions Offerings – Southern Baptists contributed a special missions offering total of \$189,744,716 through the SBC Executive Committee for North American and International Missions in 2024-2025. The record is as follows:

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>Amount Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions	\$ 129,299,271	\$ 131,145,910	\$(1,846,639)	-1.41%
Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions	\$ 60,445,445	\$ 59,635,508	\$ 809,937	1.36%
Total	<u>\$ 189,744,716</u>	<u>\$ 190,781,418</u>	<u>\$(1,036,702)</u>	<u>-0.54%</u>

Note: As noted above, these totals reflect what was received only through the SBC Executive Committee for both mission offerings. These totals, along with what was directly received by the mission boards, resulted in the following complete totals: Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions - \$207.2 million; Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions - \$71.3 million.

Global Hunger Relief Funds – Southern Baptists contributed a total of \$1,491,331.65 for global hunger relief in 2024-2025. The record is as follows:

	<u>2024-2025</u>
Total Received by the SBC Executive Committee	\$ 1,491,331.65
Forwarded to the International Mission Board	\$ 1,225,513.11
Forwarded to the North American Mission Board	\$ 265,818.54

2025 ETHNIC PARTICIPATION DASHBOARD

Southern Baptist Congregations by Ethnicity and Race

Ethnicity/Race	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2024
Asian	649	881	1,271	1,551	1,747	1,936	2,108	2,100
Black	1,007	1,489	2,322	3,038	3,534	3,747	3,895	3,818
Hispanic	1,189	1,587	2,195	2,827	3,361	3,429	3,361	3,338
Other	668	914	1,109	1,300	1,562	1,735	1,923	1,838
Anglo	35,937	37,203	39,268	40,168	40,738	40,597	39,408	36,948
Unknown	2,349	1,353						1,155
Total	41,799	43,427	46,165	48,884	50,942	51,444	50,695	49,197

Source: Southern Baptist Ethnic Research Network, BaptistResearch.com, Lifeway Research

Ethnic Participation on SBC Committees and Trustee Boards

SBC Committee	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Other	Anglo
Committee on Committees	2	4	1	2	59
Committee on Resolutions	0	2	1	0	7
Registration Committee	<i>This information was not collected in 2025</i>				
Committee on Nominations	5	3	1	2	56
Committee on Order of Business	1	0	0	0	6
Credentials Committee	1	2	0	1	5
Total	9	11	3	5	133

Note: Committees appointed by the SBC President: Committee on Committees, Committee on Resolutions, and Registration Committee.

SBC Trustee Board	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Other	Anglo
Executive Committee*	3	10	0	2	70
ERLC*	1	2	1	1	24
GuideStone	0	4	1	0	33
IMB	3	4	2	3	65
Lifeway	2	5	0	0	37
NAMB	2	4	0	1	36
Gateway Seminary	7	1	0	1	29
Midwestern Seminary	4	2	0	0	26
New Orleans Seminary	2	6	0	0	26
Southeastern Seminary	1	4	1	1	22
Southern Seminary	0	4	1	0	35
Southwestern Seminary	3	4	2	0	29
Total	28	50	8	9	432

* = Committee members who declined to answer or did not list their ethnicity are not included in these reports.

Note: SBC entity boards are nominated for service by the Committee on Nominations as outlined in SBC Bylaw 15, and elected by the messengers to the SBC Annual Meeting.

2025 SBC STATISTICS BY STATE CONVENTION 1

NOTES:

- All information as of April 19, 2026.
- Some state conventions no longer use the designation of church-type mission to categorize congregations which are not self-determining, self-sustaining, and self-propagating. This practice has impacted the number of churches and church-type missions.
- Some state conventions have incomplete data from some state conventions. See body of table and notes for details. Care should be exercised in comparing SBC totals to previous years.
- Florida Baptist Convention did not ask Other Additions and Adjustments Receipts.
- Adjustments were made to state convention totals as detailed in footnote 10. Prior year totals for this state convention include 10. Prior year totals should be reviewed in comparing totals to previous years.
- Baptist State Convention of North Carolina did not ask VBS Enrollment.
- Two state conventions exist within the state of Texas. The Texas summary line does not show the arithmetic sum of the two state conventions. The arithmetic sum of the two state conventions is related to both state conventions. Their numbers are reflected in the totals for both state conventions.
- Two state conventions exist within the state of Virginia. The Virginia summary line does not show the arithmetic sum of the two state convention figures because some congregations are in the totals for both state conventions. Their numbers are reflected in the totals for both state conventions.
- This line includes four types of adjustments to the data:
 - The removal of duplicate data caused by 970 congregations that are related to more than one state convention.
 - The removal of data from 292 congregations affiliated with the state convention but not related to the SBC.
 - The removal of 146 congregations affiliated with the SBC but not related to a state convention.
 - The addition of data carried forward from previous ACP reporting cycles for 19,038 congregations that did not report an item in 2025.
- Adjustments to the national totals (and some state convention totals) were made forward for non-reported items from data reported in prior years.
 - Totals include carried forward Total Membership from the last year the congregation reported it.
 - Totals include carried forward In Person Weekly Worship Average Attendance and In Person Sunday School/Bible Study/Small Group Average Attendance from the most recent reported year.
 - Totals include carried forward Unregistered Receipts from the most recent reported data from the prior 4 years.

Prepared by Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources, 200 Powell Pl., Ste. 100, Brentwood, TN 37027, April 30, 2026.

SBC Conventions	Associations	Churches ^(a)	Church-type Missions ^(a)	Baptists	Other Additions ^(a)	Total Membership	In Person Weekly Attendance	Online Weekly Participation ^{(a)(b)}	In Person Sunday School Average Attendance ^{(a)(b)}	Unregistered Receipts ^(a)
Alabama	73	3,119	17	13,332	910,961	273,432	181,774	152,990	\$698,800,554	
Alaska	4	86	16	208	9,734	5,535	3,570	2,035	\$13,631,573	
Arizona	13	450	1	3,245	70,300	44,290	23,946	10,001	\$87,244,403	
Arkansas	48	1,347	86	8,541	382,689	127,257	79,624	33,946	\$339,256,223	
California	28	1,807	611	12,258	5,241	169,006	64,766	22,064	\$250,432,573	
Colorado	11	318	4	1,649	382	29,173	18,071	7,041	\$48,726,978	
Dakota	6	79	3	329	3,165	4,487	2,835	1,543	\$8,654,833	
Florida ⁽⁴⁾	47	2,644	--	33,123	760,058	426,232	242,436	134,659	\$1,057,965,074	
Georgia	84	3,252	75	26,049	1,122,485	386,887	248,705	285,613	\$1,079,965,074	
Hawaii-Pacific	7	125	6	439	11,394	8,295	4,363	2,750	\$17,495,055	
Illinois	33	812	37	3,879	149,319	62,234	35,505	25,992	\$97,944,430	
Indiana	14	378	32	1,404	781	17,056	8,719	4,096	\$58,136,496	
Iowa	1	114	9	2,149	1,271	30,702	17,445	6,009	\$62,099,018	
Kansas-Nebraska	12	288	111	2,362	1,309	48,087	23,455	10,251	\$93,538,505	
Kentucky ⁽⁵⁾	66	2,288	157	8,988	7,940	197,497	113,109	97,261	\$396,746,246	
Louisiana ⁽⁶⁾	56	1,343	1	1,781	6,444	143,409	71,332	33,500	\$350,973,239	
Maryland-Delaware	11	501	--	1,820	889	70,868	19,103	11,125	\$82,864,565	
Michigan	13	265	--	1,959	599	35,684	15,003	4,846	\$44,609,126	
Minnesota-Wisconsin	7	191	11	860	245	16,688	10,550	1,877	\$29,031,039	
Mississippi ⁽⁵⁾	64	1,999	2	9,923	575,925	180,974	130,439	87,378	\$505,042,602	
Missouri	56	1,692	20	7,771	6,920	397,265	92,685	71,041	\$341,279,876	
Montana	5	119	630	250	6,667	9,205	5,144	4,053	\$15,717,420	
Nevada ⁽⁵⁾	3	154	8	1,610	1,058	30,687	11,602	5,611	\$49,808,201	
New England	7	384	2	2,799	1,689	33,105	18,514	19,166	\$15,850,688	
New Mexico	12	318	7	1,437	977	46,644	15,847	12,784	\$54,349,562	
New York ⁽⁵⁾	10	530	--	1,861	628	42,388	13,821	2,101	\$24,489,870	
North Carolina ⁽⁶⁾	77	4,295	--	18,461	20,481	833,748	206,502	8,635	\$905,158,130	
Ohio	15	625	32	4,915	1,418	44,647	31,638	8,635	\$65,129,868	
Oklahoma	40	1,666	22	9,860	6,590	481,754	103,149	58,004	\$388,562,510	
Oregon	1	259	14	1,654	1,322	33,412	12,165	6,031	\$91,763,291	
Penn.-South Jersey	1	53	91	2,348	2,400	295	1,163	295	\$1,645,537	
Puerto Rico	42	1,980	--	7,218	880,039	240,948	137,493	84,266	\$544,967,825	
South Carolina	4	2,955	105	19,277	12,867	1,036,601	334,852	153,003	\$847,375,256	
Tennessee	93	4,575	584	26,734	19,077	2,353,814	322,285	155,456	\$1,617,029,211	
Texas ⁽⁷⁾	88	4,537	584	17,934	12,691	1,802,495	229,704	104,354	\$1,181,455,037	
BGCT	93	2,821	1	17,869	11,722	1,129,489	202,894	98,079	\$957,948,959	
Utah-Idaho	9	134	33	780	602	14,328	6,721	4,028	\$19,045,299	
Virginia ⁽⁸⁾	35	1,874	24	8,689	5,784	493,204	103,441	51,595	\$380,960,532	
BGAV	35	1,114	21	1,428	294,599	50,573	31,872	16,678	\$164,511,072	
SBCV	--	857	3	7,410	4,885	228,235	78,518	39,168	\$245,861,459	
West Virginia	9	93	4	416	24,970	9,878	5,527	4,007	\$8,547,645	
Wyoming	--	192	1	450	112	7,185	2,049	2,095	\$8,547,645	
Sub-Total	1,065	46,636	2,115	275,997	175,793	12,874,749	4,663,907	2,770,960	\$10,221,882,920	
Adjustments ^(a)	-1	-28	112	-12,022	-7,144	-542,795	-202,997	-120,669	-54,154	-\$582,539,738
Total for SBC⁽¹⁰⁾	1,064	46,608	2,227	263,075	168,649	12,331,954	4,460,910	2,650,291	1,664,838	\$9,639,343,162

2024-2025 Disbursements
Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee

	Cooperative Program Allocation Budget	Percent of CP	Designated Gifts	Percent of Designated	Total Gifts	Percent of Total
International Mission Board	\$ 93,682,472.42	50.41%	\$135,923,993.65	67.83%	\$ 229,606,466.07	59.45%
North American Mission Board	\$ 42,353,174.91	22.79%	\$ 62,854,823.42	31.36%	\$ 105,207,998.33	27.24%
Gateway Seminary	\$ 3,730,373.68	2.01%	\$ 69,139.66	0.03%	\$ 3,799,513.34	0.98%
Midwestern Seminary	\$ 8,548,320.44	4.60%	\$ 156,066.77	0.08%	\$ 8,704,387.21	2.25%
New Orleans Seminary	\$ 6,320,156.69	3.40%	\$ 129,287.34	0.06%	\$ 6,449,444.03	1.67%
Southeastern Seminary	\$ 6,130,247.70	3.30%	\$ 128,296.64	0.06%	\$ 6,258,544.34	1.62%
Southern Seminary	\$ 9,897,359.20	5.33%	\$ 206,762.47	0.10%	\$ 10,104,121.67	2.62%
Southwestern Seminary	\$ 6,109,900.07	3.29%	\$ 131,459.61	0.07%	\$ 6,241,359.68	1.62%
Historical Library and Archives	\$ 446,018.50	0.24%	\$ 5,805.28	0.00%	\$ 451,823.78	0.12%
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	\$ 3,066,377.32	1.65%	\$ 29,807.18	0.01%	\$ 3,096,184.50	0.80%
GuideStone Financial Resources	\$ -	0.00%	\$ 49,959.25	0.02%	\$ 49,959.25	0.01%
SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating	\$ 5,556,647.33	2.99%	\$ 716,332.93	0.36%	\$ 6,272,980.26	1.62%
Subtotal	\$ 185,841,048.26	100.00%	\$ 200,401,734.20	100.00%	\$ 391,863,637.70	100.00%
SBC Executive Committee - Vision 2025	\$ 250,000.00		\$ -		\$ 250,000.00	
TOTAL	\$186,091,048.26	100.00%	\$200,401,734.20	100.00%	\$ 386,492,782.46	100.00%

COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET

	<u>2026-2027*</u>	<u>2025-2026*</u>	<u>2024-2025*</u>
SBC Executive Committee & SBC Operating Budget	\$ 10,919,000	\$ 12,218,000	\$ 10,675,904
International Mission Board	317,960,000	314,066,700	296,707,397
North American Mission Board	148,300,000	148,300,000	181,908,233
Lifeway Christian Resources	320,600,000	305,712,000	301,537,000
GuideStone Financial Resources	144,000,000	135,000,000	123,000,000
Gateway Seminary	14,540,000	13,560,000	12,900,000
Midwestern Seminary	38,718,000	37,475,000	35,340,000
New Orleans Seminary	27,170,000	25,925,000	24,896,500
Southeastern Seminary	37,682,004	35,300,004	33,177,000
Southern Seminary	58,428,845	56,031,464	53,514,707
Southwestern Seminary	36,100,000	37,550,000	35,600,000
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	3,251,570	3,141,910	3,270,337
Historical Library and Archives	509,100	509,100	486,488
TOTAL OF ALL BUDGETS	<u>\$1,158,178,519</u>	<u>\$1,124,789,178</u>	<u>\$1,113,013,566</u>

*Actual budget years will vary within each convention year

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SBC OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

I. REVENUE	Proposed Budget	Budget	Actual
	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Cooperative Program	\$ 4,929,000	\$ 5,591,300	\$ 5,556,647
Allocated Revenue			
Annual Meeting	2,650,000	2,355,000	2,960,479
Revenue & Sponsorships			
Pastors' Conference Reimbursement	150,000	100,000	100,000
Designated Receipts	400,000	300,000	440,074
Designated Abuse Prevention & Response Funds Used	500,000	500,000	469,480
Investment & Other Revenue*	290,000	372,000	999,249
Priority Allocation	-	3,000,000	250,000
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 8,919,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,218,300</u>	<u>\$ 10,775,929</u>
II. OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$ 10,919,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,218,300</u>	<u>\$ 10,675,904</u>
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)**	<u>\$ (2,000,000)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 100,025</u>
Utilization of reserves and loan proceeds	<u>\$ 2,000,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>--</u>
Net after utilization of reserves and loan proceeds	<u>\$ --</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 100,025</u>

* Unusual investment market conditions in 24-25 that do not currently exist and cannot be relied on.

** SBC & EC Budget deficit due to estimated \$2 million of otherwise unfunded SBC legal expenses.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

STATEMENT OF INCOME	2027 ⁽³⁾	2026 ⁽²⁾	2025 ⁽¹⁾
Cooperative Program	\$ 94,200,000	\$ 94,266,700	\$ 93,682,472
Lottie Moon	213,180,000	209,000,000	207,224,022
Other Income	4,080,000	4,300,000	3,546,237
Investment Income	<u>6,500,000</u>	<u>6,500,000</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$317,960,000</u>	<u>\$314,066,700</u>	<u>\$304,452,731</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	29.63%	30.01%	30.77%

⁽¹⁾ Amounts based on unaudited financials for unrestricted contributions, LMCO designated, investment income, and other income.

⁽²⁾ Amounts based on budget plus undesignated state foundation income.

⁽³⁾ Amounts based on estimates.

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	2027 ⁽³⁾	2026 ⁽²⁾	2025 ⁽¹⁾
Personnel Support	\$ 236,469,000	\$ 227,374,248	\$ 226,529,001
Global Engagement	41,051,000	39,975,400	36,780,190
President's Office	4,828,000	4,701,422	3,684,901
U.S. Engagement	5,001,000	4,870,000	4,213,293
Conferences and Events	13,605,000	13,248,876	8,384,917
Technology Solutions	9,414,000	9,167,000	7,013,675
Global Business Services	12,445,000	12,119,454	7,904,159
Human Resources	<u>2,680,000</u>	<u>2,610,300</u>	<u>2,197,261</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$325,493,000</u>	<u>\$314,066,700</u>	<u>\$296,707,397</u>

⁽¹⁾ Amounts based on unaudited financials.

⁽²⁾ Amounts based on budget.

⁽³⁾ Amounts based on estimates.

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

STATEMENT OF INCOME	FY 2027*	FY 2026**	FY 2025***
Cooperative Program	\$ 42,600,000	\$ 42,600,000	\$ 42,353,175
Annie Armstrong	71,500,000	71,500,000	70,119,318
Unrestricted Gifts	9,870,000	9,870,000	9,285,201
Investment & Interest	14,430,000	14,430,000	22,924,699
Other	7,400,000	7,400,000	6,653,033
Donor Restricted Gifts	<u>2,500,000</u>	<u>2,500,000</u>	<u>27,795,327</u>
Total Income	<u>\$148,300,000</u>	<u>\$148,300,000</u>	<u>\$179,130,753</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	29%	29%	24%

* Estimates provided for FY27

** Approved budget for FY26

*** Audited actuals for FY25

Total AAEO revenue plus Annie Projects included in Contributions totaled \$71,298,000 for FY25

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	FY 2027*	FY 2026**	FY 2025***
Church Planting	\$ 78,400,000	\$ 78,400,000	\$ 85,960,841
Evangelism & Relief	24,300,000	24,300,000	48,581,688
Mission Ed. & Opportunities	14,500,000	14,500,000	13,305,842
Sending & Leadership	10,000,000	10,000,000	12,354,057
Administration	<u>21,100,000</u>	<u>21,100,000</u>	<u>21,705,805</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$148,300,000</u>	<u>\$148,300,000</u>	<u>\$181,908,233†</u>

* Estimates provided for FY26

** Approved budget for FY25

*** Audited actuals for FY25

† In FY25 expenses exceeded income by \$2.8 million as the number of church plants grew. NAMB trustees authorized the use of reserves to fund this strategic growth.

Church Planting represents over 58% of total operating expenses for FY25.

GUIDESTONE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Statement of Income	2026*	2025**	2024
Operating Revenue	\$ 158,000,000	\$ 167,000,000	\$ 123,000,000
Net Investment Income			
Insurance	4,000,000	6,000,000	5,000,000
Mission:Dignity	5,000,000	9,000,000	6,000,000
Other Reserves & Benefits Trust	<u>41,000,000</u>	<u>57,000,000</u>	<u>50,000,000</u>
Total Income	<u>\$ 208,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 239,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 184,000,000</u>
Entity Summary Operating Budget			
Retirement Servicing	\$ 89,000,000	\$ 83,000,000	\$ 76,000,000
Insurance	53,000,000	50,000,000	45,000,000
Mission:Dignity	<u>2,000,000</u>	<u>2,000,000</u>	<u>2,000,000</u>
Total	<u>\$ 144,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 135,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 123,000,000</u>

* Projected

** Unaudited

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

	2026-2027 ⁽¹⁾	2025-2026 ⁽²⁾	2024-2025 ⁽³⁾
Revenue			
Product Sales	\$ 244,966,000	\$ 232,562,000	\$ 234,415,000
Events & Services Sales	59,741,000	57,661,000	52,817,000
Other Operating Revenue	<u>15,893,000</u>	<u>15,489,000</u>	<u>14,305,000</u>
Total Revenue From Operations ⁽³⁾	<u>\$ 320,600,000</u>	<u>\$ 305,712,000</u>	<u>\$ 301,537,000</u>
Costs and Expenses			
Product Costs/Operating Expenses	<u>\$ 318,600,000</u>	<u>\$ 304,712,000</u>	<u>\$ 299,537,000</u>
Total Costs and Expenses	<u>318,600,000</u>	<u>304,712,000</u>	<u>299,537,000</u>
Funds Provided From Operations	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 2,000,000
	0.6%	0.3%	0.7%
Net Realized/Unrealized Reserve Fund Income	\$ 0	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 11,015,000
Pension/Postretirement Credit/Other	0	0	22,302,000
Other Adjustments	<u>0</u>	<u>(81,000)</u>	<u>402,000</u>
Inc (Dec) in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 1,919,000	\$ 35,719,000
Inc (Dec) in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>49,000</u>
Inc (Dec) in Net Assets	<u>\$ 2,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,919,000</u>	<u>\$ 35,768,000</u>

⁽¹⁾ Amounts are preliminary as the 2026-2027 budget has not yet been developed.⁽²⁾ Information is based on 2025-2026 budget which was approved by trustees (August 2025).⁽³⁾ From audited financial statements.

GATEWAY SEMINARY

	Proposed*		
	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
INCOME			
Educational and General:			
Tuition and Fees	\$ 4,246,958	\$ 4,227,335	\$ 4,289,652
Endowment and Investment	3,053,600	2,975,900	3,006,400
Cooperative Program	3,937,599	4,010,160	3,813,856
Student Aid Gifts & Income	777,100	501,400	-
Other Gifts	886,460	886,461	882,600
Other Income	<u>191,363</u>	<u>136,972</u>	<u>136,972</u>
Total Educational & General	13,093,080	12,738,228	12,129,480
Auxiliary Enterprises	<u>769,920</u>	<u>671,772</u>	<u>677,520</u>
Total Unrestricted & Auxiliary Revenue	13,890,000	13,410,000	12,807,000
Restricted Transfers	650,000	150,000	93,000
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 14,540,000</u>	<u>\$ 13,560,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,900,000</u>
CP as Percent of Total Income	27.1%	29.6%	29.6%
EXPENSE			
Educational and General:			
Instruction	\$ 5,544,637	\$ 5,015,089	\$ 4,847,267
Academic Support	635,722	711,301	628,712
Student Services	1,303,374	1,256,562	1,171,758
Institutional Support	4,173,750	3,877,233	3,446,144
Libraries	786,354	735,206	734,963
Plant Operations & Maintenance	<u>1,745,440</u>	<u>1,644,662</u>	<u>1,764,068</u>
Total Educational & General	14,189,277	13,240,053	12,592,912
Auxiliary Enterprises	<u>350,723</u>	<u>319,947</u>	<u>307,088</u>
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 14,540,000</u>	<u>\$ 13,560,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,900,000</u>

* Budget Pending Approval by Board of Trustees

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
INCOME			
Cooperative Program	\$ 9,199,000	\$ 9,070,000	\$ 8,697,000
Student Fees	21,594,000	20,760,000	20,615,000
Other Gifts	2,470,000	2,445,000	1,600,000
Auxiliary Enterprises	4,333,000	4,078,000	3,256,000
Other Income	<u>1,122,000</u>	<u>1,122,000</u>	<u>1,172,000</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$38,718,000</u>	<u>\$37,475,000</u>	<u>\$ 35,340,000</u>
CP as Percent of Total Income	24%	24%	25%
OPERATING AND CAPITAL EXPENSES			
Instruction	\$ 11,726,359	\$ 11,314,773	\$ 10,428,721
Administrative and General	8,812,209	8,360,839	7,728,297
Student Services	3,437,801	3,324,859	3,181,226
Operations and Maintenance	2,960,842	2,814,178	2,689,782
Auxiliary Enterprises	2,030,789	1,910,351	1,561,973
Capital Expenses & Reserves	<u>9,750,000</u>	<u>9,750,000</u>	<u>9,750,000</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>38,718,000</u>	<u>\$ 37,475,000</u>	<u>\$35,340,000</u>

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2026-2027*</u>	<u>2025-2026*</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Student Fees	\$ 13,100,000	\$ 12,200,000	\$ 11,600,000
Cooperative Program	6,450,000	6,400,000	6,450,000
Other Gifts	1,550,000	1,500,000	1,425,000
Endowment Income	275,000	275,000	275,000
Other Income	2,885,000	2,785,000	2,521,500
Auxiliary Income	2,910,000	2,765,000	2,625,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 27,170,000	\$ 25,925,000	\$ 24,896,500

CP as a Percent of Total Income 23.74% 24.69% 25.91%

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2026-2027*</u>	<u>2025-2026*</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Academic	\$ 8,675,767	\$ 8,112,088	\$ 7,751,995
Administrative and General	4,392,793	4,004,313	3,876,145
SUBTOTAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL	13,068,560	12,116,401	11,628,140
Maintenance/Auxiliary Expenses	14,101,440	13,808,599	13,268,360
TOTAL	\$ 27,170,000	\$ 25,925,000	\$ 24,896,500

* Projected

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Tuition & Fees	\$ 19,732,992	\$ 17,819,220	\$ 15,815,808
Housing & Other Auxiliary Income	6,456,180	6,426,936	5,811,480
SBC Cooperative Program	5,981,616	6,006,024	6,478,428
Development Gifts	2,005,008	1,940,004	1,880,016
Investment Income & Designated Releases	2,578,188	2,483,484	2,559,936
Other Income	928,020	624,336	631,332
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 37,682,004	\$ 35,300,004	\$ 33,177,000

CP as a Percent of Total Income 15.87% 19.53% 19.53%

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Education	\$ 14,391,936	\$ 13,708,344	\$ 13,228,836
Administration	6,717,132	6,050,676	5,707,824
Institutional Advancement	3,881,472	3,754,968	3,525,612
Student Life	1,805,808	1,684,200	1,559,868
Facilities	3,840,996	3,651,372	3,386,580
Capital Projects & Discretionary	1,550,004	1,550,004	1,450,008
Auxiliary Enterprises	5,494,656	4,900,440	4,318,272
TOTAL	\$ 37,682,004	\$ 35,300,004	\$ 33,177,000

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2026-2027*</u>	<u>2025-2026**</u>	<u>2024-2025**</u>
Educational and General:			
Tuition and Fees	\$ 29,067,287	\$ 27,640,818	\$ 25,369,197
Cooperative Program	9,200,000	9,500,000	9,800,000
Other Gifts	4,500,000	4,200,000	3,800,000
Endowment and Other Investment Income	5,467,033	4,894,994	5,487,905
Other Income	<u>1,728,083</u>	<u>1,664,442</u>	<u>1,717,420</u>
Total Educational and General	50,016,403	47,900,254	46,174,522
Auxiliary Enterprises	<u>8,412,442</u>	<u>8,131,210</u>	<u>7,340,185</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 58,428,845</u>	<u>\$ 56,031,464</u>	<u>\$ 53,514,707</u>
CP as Percent of Total Income	15.7%	17.0%	18.3%

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET *	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Educational and General:			
Institutional Support	\$ 17,769,941	\$ 18,199,166	\$ 17,091,985
Instruction	13,211,276	12,051,890	11,235,462
Academic Support	2,307,360	2,163,816	2,120,955
Student Services	6,875,493	6,175,427	6,042,601
Student Financial Aid	1,656,626	1,566,093	1,549,326
Operation and Maintenance of Physical Plant	<u>7,882,478</u>	<u>7,690,107</u>	<u>7,286,223</u>
Total Educational and General	49,703,174	47,846,499	
Auxiliary Enterprises	4,665,671	4,139,965	3,877,747
Debt Service and Capital Appropriations	<u>4,060,000</u>	<u>4,045,000</u>	<u>4,310,408</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$ 58,428,845</u>	<u>\$ 56,031,464</u>	<u>\$ 53,514,707</u>

* Projected Budget

** Approved Budget

THE SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Revenue			
Tuition and Fees (minus scholarships)	\$ 11,500,000	\$ 13,900,000	\$ 14,100,000
Cooperative Program	5,900,000	6,200,000	6,000,000
Other Gifts	3,400,000	2,400,000	2,600,000
Endowment	9,000,000	6,200,000	5,900,000
Auxilliary Enterprises	5,300,000	8,100,000	6,600,000
Other Income	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>750,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 36,100,000</u>	<u>\$ 37,550,000</u>	<u>\$ 35,600,000</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	16.3%	16.5%	17%
Expenses			
Instruction	\$ 6,600,000	\$ 6,650,000	\$ 6,750,000
Academic Support	2,300,000	2,200,000	2,270,000
Student Services	2,600,000	1,800,000	1,890,000
Campus Technology	4,800,000	4,600,000	4,380,000
Institutional Support	9,500,000	9,100,000	8,760,000
Facilities Operations and Maintenance	4,100,000	4,100,000	4,250,000
Auxiliary Enterprises	3,500,000	5,700,000	5,600,000
Contingency	400,000	300,000	-
Depreciation	<u>2,300,000</u>	<u>3,100,000</u>	<u>1,700,000</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 36,100,000</u>	<u>\$ 37,550,000</u>	<u>\$ 35,600,000</u>

ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

	<u>2026-2027</u> <u>Projected</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2024-2025</u> <u>Actual</u>
STATEMENT OF INCOME			
Cooperative Program	\$ 3,050,400	\$ 2,940,740	\$3,059,662.15
Other Support	50,000	50,000	58,503.39
Project And Other Related Income	34,480	34,480	35,690.87
Interest from Cash and Reserves	<u>116,690</u>	<u>116,690</u>	<u>116,480.92</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 3,251,570</u>	<u>\$ 3,141,910</u>	<u>\$3,270,337.33</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income (not counting reserves)	93.8%	93.6%	93.6%

	<u>2026-2027</u> <u>Projected</u>	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2024-2025</u> <u>Actual</u>
SUMMARY OF OPERATING BUDGET			
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 2,170,800	\$ 2,061,140	\$2,147,604.65
Travel	222,800	222,800	146,287.73
Executive Office	82,910	82,910	309,801.08
Church Engagement	186,880	186,880	-
Business & Finance	191,020	191,020	147,850.02
Communications/External Affairs	315,610	315,610	265,117.42
Public Policy	23,700	23,700	19,994.46
Research	<u>57,850</u>	<u>57,850</u>	<u>34,444.45</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 3,251,570</u>	<u>\$ 3,141,910</u>	<u>\$3,072,099.81</u>

HISTORICAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2026-2027</u>	<u>Budgeted</u> <u>2025-2026</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2024-2025</u>
STATEMENT OF INCOME			
Cooperative Program	434,000	\$ 447,000	\$ 443,233
Interest/Investment Income	64,300	52,500	43,066
Microfilm/Duplication	3,000	4,500	2,453
Designated & Miscellaneous	<u>7,800</u>	<u>5,100</u>	<u>7,664</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 509,100</u>	<u>\$ 509,100</u>	<u>\$ 496,416</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	88%	89%	89%
SUMMARY OF OPERATING BUDGET			
Personnel	\$ 366,000	\$ 360,900	\$ 290,897
Office Expenses/Equipment	65,200	62,800	92,927
Outreach/Promotion	10,500	5,500	8,968
Acquisitions	4,300	4,200	8,225
Preservation/Microfilm	20,000	5,000	33,669
Travel/Employee Development	6,100	6,200	5,145
Information Services/Digitization	34,000	59,500	43,717
Contingency/Miscellaneous	3,000	2,500	2,055
Advisory Board	<u>-</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>885</u>
TOTAL BUDGET/EXPENSES	<u>\$ 509,100</u>	<u>\$ 509,100</u>	<u>\$ 486,488</u>

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ENTITIES OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
AND THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION OPERATING BUDGET
(Total Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets for Fiscal Year ended 2025)**

As required under the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, the audited financial statements reflected in this report have been submitted for the most recent fiscal year. These reports and accompanying schedules have been received and compiled in accordance with the Convention's reporting guidelines, with the intent to provide transparency, stewardship, and assurance to our churches and constituents. The full audits will be printed in the SBC Annual and are available at SBC.net/audits.

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

as of September 30, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	13,732,949
Investments - Available for General Operations		2,567,460
Investments - Held for Long-Term Purposes		3,382,899
Property and Equipment		1,953,358
<u>Other Assets</u>		<u>1,453,572</u>
Total Assets	\$	23,090,238

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	760,939
Undistributed gifts payable		9,693,085
Note payable		3,000,000
Postretirement benefit obligation		2,615,960
Other liabilities		1,191,430
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		2,881,211
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>2,947,613</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	23,090,238

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

as of September 30, 2025

Assets

Cash	\$	9,204,000
Total Investments		550,277,000
Unrestricted		85,897,000
Designated by Board:		422,700,000
Designated by Donors:		41,680,000
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		3,530,000
Amounts Receivable from Missions		-
Property and Equipment, net		11,969,000
Contributions Receivable from Trusts		17,131,000
<u>Beneficial Interests in Perpetual Trusts</u>		<u>203,623,000</u>
Total Assets	\$	795,734,000

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$	16,519,000
Amounts Appropriated to Missions		4,027,000
Post-Retirement Benefit Liability		95,774,000
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		416,980,000
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>262,434,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	795,734,000

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

as of September 30, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	18,916,887
Investments		101,295,660
Investments – Restricted		5,487,009
Church Loans, net		75,332,044
Beneficial Interest in Trusts		75,134,815
Property and Equipment		122,065,855
<u>Other Assets</u>		<u>15,772,157</u>
Total Assets	\$	414,004,427

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$	7,315,764
Lease Liability		1,400,120
Post-retirement Benefit Liability		31,153,578
Net Assets without donor restrictions		278,253,518
<u>Net Assets with donor restrictions</u>		<u>95,881,447</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	414,004,427

**GUIDESTONE FINANCIAL RESOURCES
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

as of December 31, 2025 (unaudited)

Assets

Investment in Funds, at fair value		
Target Date Funds	\$	8,039,000,000
Target Risk Funds		3,802,000,000
Select Funds		7,100,000,000
Non-registered Funds		3,071,000,000
Cash		5,000,000
Notes Receivable from Participants		126,000,000
<u>Other Assets, net</u>		<u>90,000,000</u>
Total Assets	\$	22,233,000,000

Liabilities and Net Assets

Restricted Insurance Reserves	\$	87,000,000
Other Liabilities		89,000,000
<u>Participant Accumulations & Fund Balances</u>		<u>22,057,000,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	22,233,000,000

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

as of September 30, 2025

Assets

Current Assets	\$	113,794,000
Reserve Funds, at Fair Value		148,984,000
Fixed Assets, net		12,208,000
Software Development Costs,, net		6,590,000
Goodwill, net		3,524,000
Tradenames		2,610,000
Operating Lease Right-of-Use Assets		20,659,000
<u>Other Long-Term Assets</u>		<u>2,720,000</u>
Total Assets	\$	311,089,000

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$	31,257,000
Pension and Post-Retirement Benefit Obligations		78,014,000
Deferred Gain on Sale-Leaseback		3,618,000
Operating Lease Liabilities		19,989,000
Other Long-Term Liabilities		798,000
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		177,139,000
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>274,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	311,089,000

GATEWAY SEMINARY

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	2,435,182
Accounts Receivable - net of Allowance of \$127,549		204,140
Prepaid Expenses		553,535
Real Estate Held for Sale		14,644,367
Assets Held in Trust		498,591
Notes Receivable		1,842,500
Investments Held for Long-term Purposes		69,189,815
Land, Buildings, and Equipment		40,050,242
<u>Beneficial Interest in Split Interest Agreements</u>		<u>9,390,143</u>
Total Assets	\$	138,808,515

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	\$	402,514
Accrued Liabilities		471,895
Performance Obligation Liabilities		674,363
Trust Liabilities		154,116
Post Retirement Benefit Obligation		4,129,687
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		91,069,209
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>41,906,731</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	138,808,515

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, INC.

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	3,223,985
Student Accounts Receivable, net of Allowance of \$400,000		338,397
Contributions Receivable		500,000
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		807,445
Inventory		244,939
Total Investments		57,380,382
Financing Lease Right-of-use Asset		105,148
Operating Lease Right-of-use Asset		95,003
Property, Plant, and Equipment—net		51,812,258
Collections		3,442,646
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts		401,428
Total Assets	\$	118,357,077

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	\$	934,732
Accrued Expenses		1,379,344
Finance Lease Liability		110,130
Operating Lease Liability		89,913
Performance Obligation Liabilities		2,439,993
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		90,507,371
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>22,895,594</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	118,357,077

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	583,698
Accounts Receivable, Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts of \$60,000		1,352,680
Grants Receivable		-
Accounts Receivable - Related Organizations		1,712,686
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		1,460,718
Investments		91,298,849
Property and Equipment, net		27,519,997
<u>Funds Held in Trust by Others</u>		<u>3,489,045</u>
Total Assets	\$	127,417,673

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$	2,422,712
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		44,218,634
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>80,776,327</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	127,417,673

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	5,347,371
Student Accounts Receivable (net of allowance of \$255,338)		362,962
Government Funds Receivable		1,305,559
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		1,905,592
Operating Lease Right-of-use Assets		7,705,018
Investments		68,412,869
Beneficial Interest in Trusts Held by Others		6,356,733
<u>Property, Plant and Equipment—net</u>		<u>36,369,590</u>
Total Assets	\$	127,765,694

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	\$	300,647
Accrued Expenses and Other Liabilities		3,125,241
Performance Obligation Liabilities		1,397,515
Operating Lease Right-of-use Liabilities		8,083,833
Post-retirement Benefit Obligation		10,451,938
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		46,937,320
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>57,469,200</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	127,765,694

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Current Assets	\$	40,269,705
Accounts and Notes Receivable (net allowance of \$33,000)		929,542
Student Loans Receivable (net allowance of \$33,000)		22,115
Inventory, Prepaid Expenses and Other		1,814,724
Land, Buildings and Equipment (net of accumulated depreciation)		63,956,889
Right of use Asset – Operating Leases		178,384
Long-term Investments		92,464,717
Funds Held in Trust by Others		27,609,068
<u>Real Estate Held for Sale and Other</u>		<u>497,510</u>
Total Assets	\$	227,742,654

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$	6,467,563
Deferred Revenue, Deposits and Other Liabilities		1,789,783
Annuity Obligations		658,778
Lease Obligation – Operating Leases		181,800
Notes Payable		1,421,656
Accrued Postretirement Benefit Cost		4,672,418
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		99,856,996
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>112,693,660</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	227,742,654

THE SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	11,646,094
Accounts Receivables, net		694,547
Other Assets		531,935
Notes Receivable		5,362
Endowment Funds		163,403,053
Split Interest Funds, net		5,832,792
<u>Property, Plant, and Equipment, net</u>		<u>125,655,095</u>
Total Assets	\$	307,768,878

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	\$	1,033,856
Accrued Salaries and Benefits		1,282,000
Deposits and Agency Funds		546,330
Deferred Income		69,817
Notes Payable		14,236,934
Operating Lease Obligations		187,836
Postretirement Benefit Obligation		229,624
Postemployment Benefit Obligation		216,106
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		107,760,819
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>182,205,556</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	307,768,878

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

as of July 31, 2025

Assets

Current/Other Assets	\$	175,286
Investments		1,190,853
<u>Property and Equipment</u>		<u>963,393</u>
Total Assets	\$	2,329,532

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$	36,008
Long-Term Liabilities		211,489
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		2,000,528
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>81,507</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	2,329,532

ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

as of September 30, 2025

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$	849,395
Investments		2,827,469
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets		18,899
<u>Property and Equipment</u>		<u>361,335</u>
Total Assets	\$	4,057,098

Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$	101,971
Post-Retirement Benefit Liability		330,902
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions		3,533,132
<u>Net Assets with Donor Restrictions</u>		<u>91,093</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$	4,057,098

Contributions by State

Cooperative Program Allocation Budget Receipts
 Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee
 October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025

Contribution Sources	2024-2025	2023-2024	% Change
Alabama	\$ 19,533,343.04	\$ 19,452,320.07	0.42
Alaska	93,043.04	122,823.36	-24.25
Arizona	1,457,494.11	1,454,893.96	0.18
Arkansas	8,330,438.16	9,246,722.20	-9.91
California	1,772,468.72	1,664,485.36	6.49
Colorado	573,784.45	669,781.86	-14.33
Dakota	81,040.64	100,181.10	-19.11
Florida	13,379,537.94	13,969,682.95	-4.22
Georgia	13,969,228.04	14,544,996.18	-3.96
Hawaii-Pacific	211,533.98	209,893.34	0.78
Illinois	1,919,858.05	1,953,099.41	-1.70
Indiana	521,625.87	567,518.99	-8.09
Iowa	845,562.83	763,841.47	10.70
Kansas-Nebraska	721,998.53	826,122.69	-12.60
Kentucky	10,077,228.72	10,231,304.94	-1.51
Louisiana	6,340,388.78	6,384,911.91	-0.70
Maryland-Delaware	1,090,624.84	1,184,054.16	-7.89
Michigan	412,749.07	461,023.06	-10.47
Minnesota-Wisconsin	125,486.12	126,071.39	-0.46
Mississippi	12,176,932.85	12,008,725.22	1.40
Missouri	4,923,585.28	4,658,572.44	5.69
Montana	157,455.82	160,658.05	-1.99
Nevada	182,317.90	341,436.32	-46.60
New England	100,607.00	106,397.86	-5.44
New Mexico	705,074.40	921,079.54	-23.45
New York	207,388.72	221,882.00	-6.53
North Carolina	13,658,233.06	13,869,242.33	-1.52
Northwest	429,725.76	469,030.85	-8.38
Ohio	2,360,081.08	2,402,507.47	-1.77
Oklahoma	9,716,299.53	10,113,106.88	-3.92
Pennsylvania-South Jersey	380,401.47	382,773.67	-0.62
Puerto Rico	18,026.63	17,400.00	3.60
South Carolina	10,198,207.02	10,315,526.23	-1.14
Tennessee	15,487,428.56	16,255,746.24	-4.73
Texas - BGCT	8,791,458.61	9,255,936.79	-5.02
Texas - SBTC	14,664,116.86	15,174,310.80	-3.36
Utah-Idaho	201,316.76	212,843.89	-5.42
Virginia - BGAV	530,371.82	802,106.49	-33.88
Virginia - SBCV	4,811,723.42	4,767,629.96	0.92
West Virginia	505,726.65	506,276.02	-0.11
Wyoming	37,474.53	38,924.97	-3.73
Subtotal	\$ 181,701,388.66	\$ 186,935,842.42	-2.80
Churches & Individuals	\$ 4,389,659.60	\$ 4,303,446.65	2.00
Grand Total	\$ 186,091,048.26	\$ 191,239,289.07	-2.69

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, the Convention referred the following motions to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention for consideration, action, and report. The disposition of each referral is noted following its description in an adherence to SBC Bylaw 26B which states, in part, as follows:

“On all matters referred by the Convention, entities shall respond in writing at the close of their report in the Book of Reports and Annual, giving specific information on:

- (1) how the matter referred was considered;
- (2) how it was reported to the constituency; and
- (3) any actions on the matter taken by the entity or action proposed to the Convention.”

1. SBC Referral: To Amend SBC Bylaw 20. Committee on Resolutions

Motion: Chad Gilbert, Louisiana (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 16, p. 53, Item 54, p. 58)

“That the messengers of the Convention amend Bylaw 20 concerning the Committee on Resolutions by adding the following rule, “Properly submitted resolutions once presented to the Convention by the Committee on Resolutions in the first day’s Bulletin cannot be amended and must be adopted by a two-thirds vote.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to recommend amending SBC Bylaw 20. Committee on Resolutions to limit amendments to resolutions as printed in the daily *Bulletin*. Limiting amendments in this way is contrary to the Convention’s parliamentary rules and would preclude corrections to unintended errors.

2. SBC Referral: To Amend the Current Business and Financial Plan

Motion: Erik Smith, Georgia (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 17, p. 53, Item 54, p. 58)

“That the Business and Financial Plan be amended as follows:

Financial reports, paragraph 3, be added to state: ‘In addition to the foregoing, within six months of the close of each financial year, each entity and the Executive Committee will publish information in the same detail, scope, and quality required to be disclosed to the public in the informational Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax, or Form 990, and all applicable schedules and attachments thereto. An officer of the entity must attest that the information is true, accurate, and complete to the best of its knowledge. Unless otherwise provided, the entity or committee will use the definitions applicable by law. This does not require any entity or committee to file a 990 with the IRS or to disclose information that is not normally available to the public, such as Schedule B. An entity or committee may use pseudonyms or note the withholding of information to the extent the majority of its trustees or committee members determines that disclosing such information would pose a threat to the life, safety or effectiveness of international missionaries.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to recommend the amendment because the motion refers to the previous version of the SBC Business and Financial Plan, which was revised during the 2025 Annual Meeting, and that a similar amendment made during the 2025 Annual Meeting failed to receive approval from the messengers.

3. SBC Referral: To Amend the Ministry Assignment of The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

Motion: J.D. Strouth, Indiana (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 19, p. 53, Item 54, p. 58)

“That the second ministry assignment of The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission be revised as follows:

‘Assist churches in the public arena through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in alignment with the Baptist Faith and Message or resolutions approved by the Southern Baptist Convention.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it recognizes the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission is in a time of leadership transition leading to new initiatives and therefore declines to amend the ministry assignments of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

4. SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee to Evaluate the Establishment of a K-12 Accreditation Program

Motion: Tim Overton, Indiana (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 20, p. 53, Item 66, p. 59)

“In light of several states providing tax funding opportunities for Christian schools, that the Executive Committee be requested to:

- 1. Evaluate whether the Cooperative Program would be strengthened by the establishment of a K-12 accreditation agency, modeled after those of the Missouri Synod Lutherans, Catholic Church and Seventh-day Adventists;*
- 2. Examine how such an accreditation agency might enable Baptist schools to qualify for public school voucher programs in states with laws similar to Indiana;*
- 3. If a K-12 accreditation agency is deemed beneficial to discipleship and fulfilling the Great Commission, identify the appropriate SBC entity to oversee and house this new ministry service.”*

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to create a K-12 accreditation program for Southern Baptist schools or recommend any other entity take on this responsibility.

5. SBC Referral: To request the Chairman of the Executive Committee to Appoint a Committee to Review and Propose Changes to Convention Governing Documents

Motion: Derek Allen, Alabama (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 21, p. 54, Item 66, p. 59)

“That the messengers of this annual meeting request that the chairman of the Executive Committee appoint a committee to review and propose changes to the Convention’s governing documents.

Though it may be more expansive, it should include a review of Article III of the Constitution and Bylaw 8, specifically related to:

- the criteria and processes by which a church may be deemed not in friendly cooperation with the Convention;*
- the process by which a church may appeal such a determination; and*
- the procedures by which the Convention, through its messengers, serves as the final arbiter of such matters.*

The report of the committee, including proposed changes, should be made public no later than 30 days prior to the 2026 annual meeting, with appropriate time given for the messengers to the annual meeting to debate and adopt said proposals.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to appoint a committee to review and propose changes to the Convention’s governing documents, stating SBC Bylaw 8.C.2 currently describes the process messengers have approved related to deciding whether a church is a cooperating church.

6. SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee to Evaluate the Process of Assigning SBCID Numbers

Motion: Jordan Nelson, Alabama (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 22, p. 54, Item 66, p. 59)

“That in keeping with Article VI of the Baptist Faith and Message which states, ‘A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation,’ that the messengers to this Convention request the Executive Committee either

- 1. Codify and implement a policy of assigning SBCID numbers only to individual local autonomous churches in friendly cooperation with this Convention, as opposed to assigning separate SBCID numbers to various campuses of that individual local autonomous church, or*
- 2. Bring to this Convention’s next annual meeting recommended changes to either Article III of our Constitution or Article VI of the Baptist Faith and Message to allow the Convention to treat non-autonomous campuses as separate New Testament churches,*

So that in either case there may be consistency between our faith and our practice. And that the decision of the Executive Committee as to which option it has chosen be reported by its February 2026 meeting, if possible, but by no later than next year’s annual meeting.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to recommend changes to the SBCID assignment process since assigning these numbers does not impact messenger participation, which is determined by church identification, not by campus designation. The current process of assigning SBCIDs to both churches and their campuses has provided valuable insight for the North American Mission Board, state conventions, and local churches when determining locations for new church plants or new campuses of existing churches.

7. SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee to Form a Task Force to Study Resources for Special Needs Ministry Available to SBC Churches

Motion: Benjamin Hankin, New Jersey (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 23, p. 54, Item 66, p. 59)

“That on behalf of the 1.3 billion individuals with special needs and disabilities in the U.S. and around the world that the Executive Committee create a task force or study group that would be charged to study these three items:

- 1. The current availability and accessibility of resources for special needs ministries across SBC churches.*
- 2. How SBC churches are presently engaging in ministry to individuals and families affected by special needs including best practices, challenges, and models of care.*

3. *How the SBC and its churches can better come alongside and support families who have loved ones that are special needs or disabled.*

Further, I move that the findings of this study be compiled into a report with recommendations and presented to the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention at the next annual meeting in 2026 in Orlando along with suggestions for equipping churches and encouraging greater inclusion, outreach, and discipleship among those with disabilities, especially their families.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it formed the requested task force, appointed by the Chairman, and the task force’s report and recommendations will be recommended to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, for consideration. (See Recommendation 1, page 43)

8. SBC Referral: To Amend SBC Constitution Article VI. The Boards, Institutions, and Commissions – Their Constitution and Powers by Adding Section 9

Motion: Ethan Jago, Florida (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 26, p. 55, Items 54, 58, 61, 62, 63, p. 58)

“That Article VI of the SBC Constitution be amended by adding a Section 9, which shall read as follows:

‘Section 9. Financial Independence. No individual shall be eligible to serve as a trustee or director of any board, institution, or commission, nor as a member of the Executive Committee, if they are simultaneously receiving compensation — whether by salary, contract, or recurring stipend — from another Southern Baptist Convention entity, commission, or the Executive Committee.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to amend Article VI of the SBC Constitution. It affirms the language in SBC Bylaw 15. F, which states, “No person and no person’s spouse shall be eligible to serve on the board of any one of the above entities (1) from which the person receives, directly or indirectly, any form of payment or financial benefit except for reimbursements for reasonable and authorized expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of a trustee, or, (2) which provides funds for which he/she has a duty of administration. When such conditions become applicable, that person or that person’s spouse shall be considered as having resigned and such vacancy shall be filled in accordance with established Convention procedure.” The Executive Committee finds this language sufficient for providing guidelines to the Committee on Nominations for selecting individuals to serve on SBC boards and committees. The Business and Financial Plan states that, “The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will obtain annual conflict-of-interest statements completed by its respective members, trustees, and applicable employees.” Trustees should recuse themselves on any issues where a conflict of interest exists.

9. SBC Referral: To Amend the Ministry Assignment No. 2 of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

Motion: Andrew Hebert, Texas (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 69, p. 59, Item 107, p. 71)

“That the messengers to this Annual Meeting amend ministry assignment #2 of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission in the SBC organization manual to read:

‘Represent Southern Baptist in communicating the moral and ethical positions of the Southern Baptist Convention to the public and to the public officials, limiting policy advocacy to positions articulate by the Convention’s statement of faith and informed by resolutions adopted by the Convention.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it recognizes the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission is in a time of leadership transition leading to new initiatives and therefore declines to amend the ministry assignments of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

10. SBC Referral: To Amend Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees to Extend Notification Time to 90 Days

Motion: Riley Prather, Connecticut (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 70, p. 59, Item 107, p. 71)

“That the Convention request the Executive Committee to consider and report back to the 2026 Annual Meeting on an amendment to Bylaw 19 to extend the time frame for the SBC president to appoint the Committee on Committees and release the names to Baptist Press from 45 days to 90 days in order to allow for a more thorough vetting process of committee members for our Committee on Nominations.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it will recommend the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, amend SBC Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees. (See Recommendation 6, page 48)

11. SBC Referral: To Form a Study Committee to Clarify Women’s Roles in Ministry Leadership

Motion: Jared Long, Georgia (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 71, p. 59, Item 108, p. 71)

“That the Southern Baptist Convention form a study committee to draft a confessional statement for consideration and potential adoption as a stand-alone confession at the 2026 SBC Annual Meeting. This statement is distinct from the latest proposed Law Amendment and shall serve as a theological and pastoral resource to bring clarity to the role of women in ministry leadership within and beyond the local church, building upon the foundations laid by the Baptist Faith & Message (2000) and previous Convention actions.

The committee shall be tasked with producing a document that offers clear, Scripture-based positive and negative affirmations, addressing but not limited to:

- *The biblical definition and responsibilities of a pastoral office,*
- *What distinguishes the office of pastor from other ministry roles and the nature of a chaplain, as well as spiritual authority pertains to the issue at hand,*
- *Whether women may teach mixed-gender classes or preach under pastoral authority,*
- *Whether women may serve as entity presidents, trustees, seminary professors, endorsed chaplains, or denominational leaders,*
- *The roles of women on the mission field, including the appropriateness of serving as single team leaders or in positions of spiritual authority,*
- *And related questions concerning women’s leadership in formal ministry contexts.”*

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to form the requested study committee.

12. SBC Referral: To Direct SBC Legal Counsel to File a Countersuit to Recover Legal Fees in a Pending Litigation

Motion: Benjamin Cole, North Carolina (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 75, pp. 60-61, Items 108, 111, and 113, p. 71)

“That the messengers of the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting instruct our legal counsel, whomever they may be, to file countersuit at the earliest appropriate time and in every appropriate jurisdiction against Johnny M. Hunt of the State of Georgia to recover legal fees incurred by this convention as we have defended ourselves and continue to defend ourselves against his multi-million dollar frivolous claim that caused us and our churches countless resources.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to file a countersuit as described in this motion.

13. SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee to Consider Adding Disability Ministry Sunday to the SBC Calendar of Activities

Motion: Sandra Peoples, Texas (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 78, p. 61, Item 107, p. 71)

“That the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention consider adding disability ministry Sunday to the SBC national calendar of activities. Currently the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware have this celebration on their calendars for the second Sunday in July.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it declines to add Disability Ministry Sunday to the SBC *Calendar of Activities*. It requests the Disability Ministry Task Force consider this calendar addition as a part of their report. (See Recommendation 1, page 43)

14. SBC Referral: To Request All SBC Entities and the Executive Committee to Report on Actions Taken to Elevate Qualified Biblical Leaders from Diverse Backgrounds

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 82, p. 62, Item 108, p. 71)

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 Annual Meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention considered the motion and reports it has taken the following actions to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds in a manner consistent with the *Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) and the biblical vision of Revelation 7:9. The Executive Committee’s Office of

Convention Partnerships was moved under the direction of the Executive Committee president's office to strengthen cooperation and messaging to diverse ethnic churches and leaders on pathways to service on committees and trustee boards. This office is in constant dialogue with ethnic fellowships and ethnic leaders across the Convention to better inform, educate, and identify leaders for service in the Convention. Additionally, the Executive Committee has, since 2011, reported on its efforts to increase ethnic participation and ethnic leadership in the Convention in its Annual Ministry Report. Finally, the Executive Committee now publishes a dashboard of reporting data in the SBC *Annual* regarding ethnic participation on trustee boards, committees, and standing committees.

15. SBC Referral: To Establish an Auxiliary to Support and Ministry to Pastors' Wives

Motion: Tiffany Helms (2025 SBC *Annual*, Item 84, p. 62, Item 108, p. 71)

“That the president of the Southern Baptist Convention should establish a committee to form an auxiliary for the Convention for support of and ministry to pastors' wives.

This auxiliary should:

- 1. Identify materials both written and video to train new pastors' wives and current pastors' wives on biblical ways to manage church life, children, marriage, personal needs, outside activities, church activities and all other matters related to life and ministry.*
- 2. Set up confidential counseling for pastors' wives by other pastors' wives*
- 3. Host retreats for pastors' wives in order for them to be loved on, network with other Pastor's wives and undergo a time of refreshing*
- 4. Encourage this auxiliary to function on the associational, state and national levels*
- 5. Encourage all SBC churches to show appreciation for their pastor's wife during the month of March.*
- 6. Establish prayer networks for pastors' wives to pray together regularly.”*

SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention reports it declines to form a committee to create an auxiliary to support pastors' wives, as it is not appropriate for the Executive Committee to create auxiliaries. It affirms the support provided for ministry spouses by state convention partners, associational initiatives, and SBC entities

The following was originally referred to the SBC Executive Committee for consideration by the 2024 Southern Baptist Convention.

16. Great Commission Resurgence Evaluation Task Force Recommendation 4: To strongly request the Executive Committee to increase the Cooperative Program percentage to International Mission Board to 51 percent

GCREFTF Recommendation 4 (2024 SBC *Annual*, Item 107, pp. 73-74, 118-136)

“We recommend and move that the messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Indianapolis on June 11-12, 2024, strongly request the Executive Committee to increase the CP Allocation Percentage designated to the IMB to 51% beginning with the 2026-27 budgeted year. This will bring the International Mission Board and Executive Committee CP allocation budget percentages into alignment with the vote of the messengers at the 2010 Annual Meeting. This will finally correct the Executive Committee's lack of responsiveness to the will of the messengers.”

2025 SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention reports it continues to work toward proposing an SBC Cooperative Program budget in 2026-27 that includes a 51% allocation of national Cooperative Program receipts for the International Mission Board. (2025 SBC Annual, p. 153)

2026 SBC Executive Committee Action: The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention reports it has responded to this referral in its current 2026-2027 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget recommendation. (See Recommendation 3, p. 46)

*Note: The motion made by Andy Harrison, Oklahoma, during the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting, **To Request the Trustees of Seminaries to Consider a Dedicated Course of Prayer**, was incorrectly listed in the 2025 Annual as referred to all seminaries and the Executive Committee. The motion was referred to all seminaries, and a response from the Executive Committee is not needed.*

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

Recommendation 1: Disability Ministry Task Force Report and Recommendations

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, adopt the report and recommendation of the Disability Ministry Task Force as follows:

Disability Ministry Task Force Report - January 2026

In response to a motion by Benjamin Hankin, New Jersey (2025 SBC Annual, Item 23, p. 54, Item 66, p. 59)

“That on behalf of the 1.3 billion individuals with special needs and disabilities in the U.S. and around the world that the Executive Committee create a task force or study group that would be charged to study these three items:

- 1. The current availability and accessibility of resources for special needs ministries across SBC churches.*
- 2. How SBC churches are presently engaging in ministry to individuals and families affected by special needs including best practices, challenges, and models of care.*
- 3. How the SBC and its churches can better come alongside and support families who have loved ones that are special needs or disabled.*

Further, I move that the findings of this study be compiled into a report with recommendations and presented to the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention at the next annual meeting in 2026 in Orlando along with suggestions for equipping churches and encouraging greater inclusion, outreach, and discipleship among those with disabilities, especially their families.”

A 2020 study by Lifeway Research reported that 99 percent of evangelical pastors believe individuals with disabilities would feel welcome in their churches. However, many people with disabilities and their families have expressed surprise and skepticism at this finding, citing the persistent physical, social, and relational barriers they encounter when visiting congregations. Recent census data indicate that approximately two in seven U.S. families include a member with a disability, yet this proportion is not reflected in church participation. This disparity suggests that barriers to inclusion remain significant, as evidenced by estimates that only 15-20 percent of evangelical churches in the United States have any form of disability ministry.

How are Southern Baptist churches responding to the need for more accessibility for people with disabilities and their families? Many Southern Baptist churches across the country have thriving special-needs ministries that focus on evangelism and discipleship. The churches most likely to offer accommodations and specific programming for people with disabilities are large churches in metro and suburban areas. Because of the vast need, an increasing number of churches of all sizes are making progress toward accessibility for families impacted by disability in their communities with the hope of the gospel.

These churches are supported by resources provided by Convention entities. The SBC has a rich history of providing training resources in disability ministry and discipleship material for people with disabilities. Lifeway began publishing dated Sunday school materials for special-needs ministry in 1979. They now offer curriculum for adults and children with disabilities—including adaptations for their annual VBS theme. They have employed four disability ministry consultants—beginning in 1967. NAMB also had a disability ministry consultant, as did state conventions including Tennessee and Virginia. Currently, neither Lifeway nor NAMB has a specific person on their team as a disability ministry consultant. Two state conventions do have independent contractors who serve as disability ministry consultants—the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware.

Although we can be thankful for the resources available and the churches using these resources, the need is still great in order to reach special-needs families with the gospel and include them in our local church families. In order to meet the goals in the motion from the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting, the Disability Ministry Task Force appointed by the SBC Executive Committee and chaired by Tom Stolle makes the following requests to our Southern Baptist organizations:

Lifeway

- Add a disability ministry specialist to the team
- Increase the disability ministry resources and training material offered and actively promote these resources
- Make the special-needs ministry resource page on the Lifeway website easier to find and navigate
- Assess the most utilized curriculum in Southern Baptist churches and add accessibility options and modifications to the most popular options
- Create resources for churches for Disability Ministry Sunday

State Conventions

- Identify or establish a disability ministry consultant or catalyst
- Build network partnerships within the state convention or with neighboring state conventions to minister to the disability community
- Provide an up-to-date list of trusted parachurch organizations and consultants that churches and local associations can contact (the task force will provide an initial list of organizations and consultants)
- Offer grants for churches who want to start or expand special-needs ministries (for example: to create a sensory room or purchase a universal-sized changing table)
- Provide training opportunities for churches at state convention conferences and through video options

Seminaries

- Offer certificate programs, classes, and degrees in disability ministry
- Add disability-related content to courses in each field of study to prepare pastors and ministry leaders to care for special-needs families and include people with disabilities in worship, discipleship, fellowship, and service opportunities within the church

NAMB

- Develop and provide evangelism tools to reach people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Expand the reach of current training tools on caring for adoptive and foster care families impacted by trauma
- Develop and provide special-needs ministry resources tailored to church plants and replants

IMB

- Review and assess “Team Member Qualifications and Preclusions,” specifically the current exclusion of families that have a member diagnosed with autism
- Develop and deliver training material on sharing the gospel with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Evaluate the care and counseling families on the field receive following a child’s diagnosis

ERLC

- Produce resources to help churches navigate disability-related ethical issues, including gene editing, physician-assisted suicide, and the high correlation between autism and transgender identification.

Guidestone

- Expand financial assistance or grant opportunities for Mission:Dignity applicants who serve as caregivers

WMU

- Continue to produce resources to teach children with special needs and disabilities about missions, expanding on the All in for Kids suggested adaptations in the *Mission Journey Kids* curriculum.

Southern Baptist Churches and Church Leadership

- Understand that 15-20% of the population has a disability, but they are underrepresented in our churches, making this an opportunity to reach families with the hope of the gospel.
- Identify key church leaders and families in the congregation impacted by disability to help address potential physical and social barriers that may be preventing special-needs families from attending church.
- With help from Southern Baptist entities and/or parachurch organizations, develop a plan for inclusion for children, teens, and adults with disabilities that includes evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, and service opportunities.
- Build trust within your communities to reach families affected by disability by meeting practical needs and pointing them to Jesus, who meets their deepest need.

We recommend adding Disability Ministry Sunday to our Convention calendar on the 2nd Sunday in July. This meets the request in the motion made by Sandra Peoples at the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting. Lifeway will provide resources for churches to celebrate this focus Sunday.

In addition, we recommend keeping the task force committee together as an advisory team that is available as a resource to our Southern Baptist entities and state conventions through December of 2027.

Task Force Members: Tom Stolle (chair, DE), Marci Campbell (OR), Shannon Deihl (MD), Amy Meekins (VA), Gus Pacheco (NC), Sandra Peoples (TX), Christa Smith (FL), Cody Watson (FL), and entity representatives Jana Magruder (Lifeway), Ray Clark (NAMB), John Brady (IMB), RaShan Frost (ERLC).

Recommendation 2: Amended SBC Calendar of Activities

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, add Disability Ministry Sunday to the SBC Calendar of Activities on the second Sunday of July, beginning with the 2027 calendar. The dates would be:

- July 11, 2027
- July 9, 2028
- July 8, 2029
- July 14, 2030
- July 13, 2031

Recommendation 3: 2026-2027 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, adopt the 2026-2027 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget in the amount of \$186,000,000 as follows:

2026-2027 SBC CP ALLOCATION BUDGET PROPOSAL

	2026-2027 Budget Allocation	2026-2027 % of Total Allocation
<u>World Mission Ministries</u>		
International Mission Board	\$ 94,860,000	51.00%
North American Mission Board	<u>42,110,400</u>	<u>22.64%</u>
Total: World Missions Ministries	<u>136,970,400</u>	<u>73.64%</u>
<u>Theological Education Ministries</u>		
Seminaries:		
Gateway	3,937,599	2.12%
Midwestern	9,211,833	4.95%
New Orleans	6,481,526	3.48%
Southeastern	5,838,385	3.14%
Southern	9,312,777	5.01%
Southwestern	<u>5,821,680</u>	<u>3.13%</u>
Total Seminaries	40,603,800	21.83%
Historical Library and Archives	<u>446,400</u>	<u>0.24%</u>
Total: Theological Education Ministries	<u>41,050,200</u>	<u>22.07%</u>
<u>Christian Ethics & Religious Liberty Ministries</u>		
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	<u>3,050,400</u>	<u>1.64%</u>
<u>Facilitating Ministries</u>		
SBCEC & SBC Operating Budget	<u>4,929,000</u>	<u>2.65%</u>
Total: 2025-2026 Program Allocation Budget	<u>\$ 186,000,000</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

Any overage of gifts received above the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget will be distributed to the distributees in accord with the percentages approved for them in the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, and that such a distribution of overage continue until duly amended.

Recommendation 4: 2026-2027 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, adopt the 2026-2027 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget in the amount of \$10,919,000 as follows:

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SBC OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

I. REVENUE	Proposed Budget	Budget	Actual
	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
Cooperative Program	\$ 4,929,000	\$ 5,591,300	\$ 5,556,647
Allocated Revenue			
Annual Meeting	2,650,000	2,355,000	2,960,479
Revenue & Sponsorships			
Pastors' Conference Reimbursement	150,000	100,000	100,000
Designated Receipts	400,000	300,000	440,074
Designated Abuse Prevention & Response Funds Used	500,000	500,000	469,480
Investment & Other Revenue*	290,000	372,000	999,249
Priority Allocation	-	3,000,000	250,000
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 8,919,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,218,300</u>	<u>\$ 10,775,929</u>
II. OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	<u>\$ 10,919,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,218,300</u>	<u>\$ 10,675,904</u>
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)**	<u>\$ (2,000,000)</u>	<u>\$ --</u>	<u>\$ 100,025</u>
Utilization of reserves and loan proceeds	<u>\$ 2,000,000</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>
Net after utilization of reserves and loan proceeds	<u>\$ --</u>	<u>\$ --</u>	<u>\$ 100,025</u>

* Unusual investment market conditions in 24-25 that do not currently exist and cannot be relied on.

** SBC & EC Budget deficit due to estimated \$2 million of otherwise unfunded SBC legal expenses.

Recommendation 5. Amendment to SBC Constitution Article XIV. Amendments

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, adopt for the final of two consecutive years an amendment to SBC Constitution Article XIV. Amendments as follows:

(Note: Addition of text is indicated by underline, and deletion of text is indicated by ~~strikethrough~~)

Article XIV. Amendments: Any alterations may be made in these Articles or in the Convention's adopted statement of faith at any annual meeting of the Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the messengers present and voting at the time the vote is taken, provided that an amendment shall be so approved by two (2) consecutive annual meetings of the Convention.

The final amended version would read as follows:

Article XIV. Amendments: Any alterations may be made in these Articles or in the Convention's adopted statement of faith at any annual meeting of the Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the messengers present and voting at the time the vote is taken, provided that an amendment shall be so approved by two (2) consecutive annual meetings of the Convention.

Recommendation 6. Amendment to SBC Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, adopt an amendment to SBC Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees as follows:

(Note: Addition of text is indicated by underline, and deletion of text is indicated by ~~strikethrough~~)

Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees

Committee on Committees: A Committee on Committees, composed of two (2) members from each qualified state or defined territory, shall be appointed by the president, in conference with the vice presidents, of whom one (1) shall be designated as chairperson. Persons named to the Committee on Committees shall have been resident members for at least three (3) years of Southern Baptist churches either geographically within the states or affiliated with the conventions of the states from which they are appointed. Members so named shall be notified by the president in writing, at least ~~45~~ 60 days before the meeting of the Convention. Their names shall be released by the president to Baptist Press no later than ~~45~~ 60 days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention, and their names shall be published in the first issue of the Convention Bulletin. The president may fill any vacancies on the committee when those originally named do not attend the Convention. This committee shall nominate all special committees authorized during the sessions of the Convention not otherwise provided for. All special Convention committees shall transfer, upon their discharge, all official files to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The final amended version would read as follows:

Bylaw 19. Committee on Committees

A Committee on Committees, composed of two (2) members from each qualified state or defined territory, shall be appointed by the president, in conference with the vice presidents, of whom one (1) shall be designated as chairperson. Persons named to the Committee on Committees shall have been resident members for at least three (3) years of Southern Baptist churches either geographically within the states or affiliated with the conventions of the states from which they are appointed. Members so named shall be notified by the president in writing, at least 60 days before the meeting of the Convention. Their names shall be released by the president to Baptist Press no later than 60 days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention, and their names shall be published in the first issue of the Convention Bulletin. The president may fill any vacancies on the committee when those originally named do not attend the Convention. This committee shall nominate all special committees authorized during the sessions of the Convention not otherwise provided for. All special Convention committees shall transfer, upon their discharge, all official files to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Recommendation 7. Amendment to SBC Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve amendments to SBC Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business as follows:

(Note: Addition of text is indicated by underline, and deletion of text is indicated by ~~strikethrough~~)

Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business

The Committee on Order of Business, a standing committee, shall consist of ~~seven (7)~~ nine (9) members – the president of the Convention and ~~six (6)~~ eight (8) other members, two

(2) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of ~~three (3)~~ four (4) years and ~~two (2)~~ three (3) of whom shall be persons not employed ~~full-time~~ by (or retired from) a church or denominational entity. The committee shall elect its own chair.

The final amended version would read as follows:

Bylaw 21. Committee on Order of Business

The Committee on Order of Business, a standing committee, shall consist of nine (9) members – the president of the Convention and eight (8) other members, two (2) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of four (4) years and three (3) of whom shall be persons not employed by (or retired from) a church or denominational entity. The committee shall elect its own chair.

Recommendation 8. SBC Annual Meeting Future Convention Site for 2030

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve Houston, Texas, as the site for the 2030 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels. The convention dates would be June 11-12, 2030.

Recommendation 9. SBC Annual Meeting Future Convention Site for 2032

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve Anaheim, California, as the site for the 2032 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels. The convention dates would be June 8-9, 2032.

Recommendation 10. SBC Annual Meeting Future Convention Site for 2034

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve New Orleans, Louisiana, as the site for the 2034 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels. The convention dates would remain June 13-14, 2034.

Recommendation 11. SBC Annual Meeting Future Convention Site for 2035

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve Indianapolis, Indiana, as the site for the 2035 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels. The convention dates would remain June 12-13, 2035.

Recommendation 12. SBC Annual Meeting Future Convention Site for 2037

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, approve Anaheim, California, as the site for the 2037 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, contingent upon satisfactory contract negotiations with the convention center and area hotels. The convention dates would be June 16-17, 2037.



901 Commerce Street, Suite 600, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

JEFF IORG, Chair
WARREN PEEK, President

Serving His Kingdom One Gift at a Time

“Each of you should use whatever gifts you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”

1 Peter 4:10

From the very beginning, God has revealed His love through giving. The Bible mentions “give” over 900 times (almost as often as faith, hope, and love combined). This is not a coincidence. Giving is woven into the fabric of our faith, and nowhere is this more evident than in the gift of Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Why should we give? Because God gave first. His generosity sets the example for us.

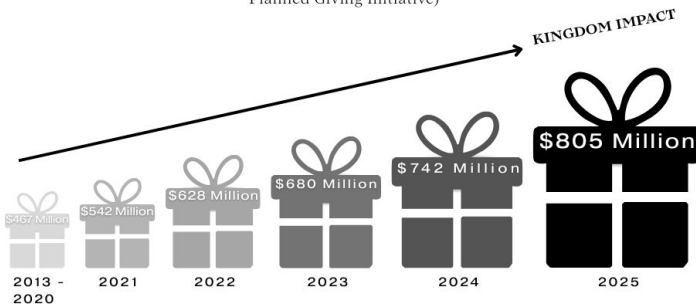
What did He give? His one and only Son; the greatest gift ever given.

Why did He give? So that we might have eternal life. God’s giving was motivated by love.

We know that generosity can be life-changing and life-saving. The Foundation’s estate planning initiative launched in 2013 and continues to be incredibly successful. Through this program, the Foundation has been able to consult with over 4,600 different individuals and families. Over \$805 million in future gifts will be generated for Baptist causes through these estate plans.

FUTURE GIFTS FOR BAPTIST MINISTRIES

(Total Accumulated Gifts Through Southern Baptist Foundation's Planned Giving Initiative)



Shared Christian Values

It is vital for Believers to ensure their investment partner's values align with theirs. Nothing gives us greater joy than helping individuals and families discern the purposes and goals God has laid on their hearts.

Biblically-Screened Investments

We offer institutional-class investments that uphold Biblical principles regarding the sanctity of life, family, stewardship, health, and safety. Now more than ever it matters where Believers invest the resources God has entrusted to them.

Legacy Now and Thru Estate

Giving should be enjoyable and redemptive, not complicated. Acts of generosity by Believers in everyday life, and created through estates, have the potential to impact the world. Gifts of stocks, real estate, IRAs, business interests, or cryptocurrency can carry the Gospel to the nations.

Over \$7 billion has been distributed to Christian organizations since the Foundation's inception. Our clients know that by partnering with the Foundation, we are transforming the world together through biblical stewardship.

Consider the story of Edward Kimball, a humble Sunday school teacher. Few know his name, but his faithfulness led Dwight L. Moody to Christ. Moody's ministry influenced J. Wilbur Chapman, who then impacted Billy Sunday. Sunday's preaching reached Mordecai Ham, who led Billy Graham to Christ—one of the most influential evangelists in history.

One humble act of faithfulness.

One moment of generosity.

A ripple that reached millions.



GENERAL BOARDS

One Hundred and Ninth Annual Report



5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 2200, Dallas, Texas 75244

DAVID RAINWATER, Chair

D. HANCE DILBECK, JR., President and Chief Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for reviewing the reports prepared for our Southern Baptist family. GuideStone is grateful for the continued trust placed in this ministry and remains committed to serving pastors, churches, and ministry partners with excellence. In 2025, the enterprise advanced its mission to enhance the financial security and resilience of those who serve the Lord, supported by the dedicated work of more than 500 employees.

Across the enterprise, 2025 marked a year of significant progress. Total organizational assets reached a record high, exceeding \$27 billion. Advisory relationships expanded to more than 2,000 households, and new institutional engagements strengthened the organization's investment footprint. GuideStone Investment Services surpassed \$4 billion in assets under management and added new ministry partners, including WatersEdge, which selected GuideStone to manage more than \$500 million in assets. These developments reinforced the organization's position as a trusted provider of values-aligned investment and advisory solutions.

Operational readiness also advanced meaningfully. GuideStone finalized preparations for the February 2026 launch of a new multi-carrier property and casualty model designed to deliver broader, more sustainable insurance options to churches in an increasingly complex market. Medical plans recorded improved financial performance, and retention remained strong across retirement, health, and other ministry-partner relationships. Modernization efforts continued across core systems, data governance, and enterprise workflows to enhance reliability, efficiency, and member experience.

Mission:Dignity remained a defining expression of GuideStone's calling. Through the generosity of churches and individuals, more than 2,500 retired ministers, workers, and widows received monthly support to assist with basic needs such as housing, food, and medications. The Hallelujah Goal of the O.S. & Susie Hawkins Emergency Grant Fund was fully funded two years ahead of schedule, and 2025 represented one of the program's strongest fundraising years. These efforts reflected GuideStone's long-standing commitment to honor those who served faithfully and sacrificially.

GuideStone recognizes the importance of stewarding this ministry assignment with transparency, excellence, and accountability. Thank you for your continued trust. Additional resources, updates, and helpful information are available by following GuideStone on social media throughout the year.

Blessings as you continue your work in service to Him

Sincerely,

Dr. D. Hance Dilbeck, Jr.

President, Chief Executive Officer

PROGRAM REPORT

The Program of Management of Retirement Accounts

The Program of Management of Retirement Accounts has as its objective making available retirement plans for all ministers and all other full-time Southern Baptist denominational workers. The objective is accomplished through a combination of plans.

Following is the statistical report of the retirement plans as of December 31, 2025.

Church Retirement Plan – At the end of 2025 there were 15,751 active churches with a total of 50,128 active participants.

403(b)(9) Retirement Plan – A total of 550 agencies and institutions provided retirement plans for their employees. A total of 32,837 employees comprise active participation in these agencies' plans.

Ministers and Chaplains Plan – The Ministers and Chaplains Plans enrolled 12 during the year.

Qualified Plans – GuideStone Financial Resources provides IRC 401(a) qualified plans as an alternative for use by Southern Baptist Convention organizations when IRC 403(b) approaches do not meet their needs. This includes 401(a) defined benefit and 401(k) defined contribution plans. At the end of the year, there were 3 qualified plan employers serving 9 active participants.

Voluntary Retirement Plan – The Voluntary Retirement Plan records 742 participants with an account balance at the close of 2025.

Retirement Income Paid to Members – The heart of GuideStone's ministry is our recipients. Annuity benefits were paid to 19,758 members and beneficiaries in 2025. Systematic withdrawal payments were paid to 23,273 members.

The Program of Ministers' Financial Assistance

Since 1918 GuideStone has been on a mission to help retired ministers, denominational workers, their spouses, and widows live with dignity in their retirement years. The Mission:Dignity ministry is at the heart of that endeavor. Over 60 percent of Mission:Dignity recipients are widows of pastors, and one in four is over the age of 85.

Individuals who meet guidelines for income, assets and 10 or more years of paid Southern Baptist service are eligible for \$275 per month, if single, or \$375 per month, if married. Applicants who meet the additional guidelines of poverty-level income and 25 or more years of ministerial service are eligible for \$550 per month, if single, or \$750 per month, if married.

Mission:Dignity assisted a total of 1,927 households in 2025.

A total of \$9.6 million was paid out in financial assistance in 2025. Of the total granted, Mission:Dignity paid out \$2.2 million in extra assistance-emergency grants, extra checks from state agreements, and Christmas gift checks of \$315, a tradition since 1945.

Donations from churches and individuals provide the funding for the Mission:Dignity program. Fully 100 percent of direct annual gifts received by GuideStone Financial Resources is used to provide financial assistance to retirees in need and is not utilized for any of GuideStone's operating expenses or overhead.

The Program of Insurance Plans and Related Services

GuideStone Financial Resources administers an insurance program that includes life, long-term disability, personal accident, accidental death and dismemberment, and medical coverage for employees of churches and agencies, and products for seminary students.

The following is the 2025 statistical report of the insurance plans (excludes non-Southern Baptist entities).

Life Claims – \$14,070,117

Disability Claims – \$1,801,837

Dental Claims – \$12,686,993

Medical claims (including pharmacy) – \$294,967,083

Group Plans:

Group Plans Employee Term Life Plans – A total of 31,683 members were covered on December 31, 2025, an increase of 371 since the same time last year.

Group Plans Medical Plans – A total of 19,790 members were covered.

Group Plans Dental Plan – A total of 10,663 members were covered in a dental plan.

Group Plans Disability Plan – A total of 2,198 members participated in the Short-Term Disability Plans, and 12,090 members participated in the Long-Term Disability Plans.

Group Plans Supplemental AD&D Plan – Members covered totaled 3,303.

Group Plans Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan – Members covered totaled 9,580.

Premium Waiver – The Group Plans employee life plans had 138 members.

Personal Plans:

Personal Plans Employee Term Life Plans – A total of 11,090 members actively participated on December 31, 2025, a decrease of 529 since the same time last year.

Personal Plans Disability Plans – A total of 864 members participated in the Short-Term Disability Plans, and 3,098 members participated in the Long-Term Disability Plans.

Personal Plans Medical Plans – Members covered totaled 3,297, a decrease of 336 since the same time last year.

Personal Plans Supplemental AD&D Plan – Members covered totaled 1,842.

Personal Plans Accidental Death and Dismemberment – Members covered totaled 3,868.

Personal Plans Dental – Members covered totaled 5,864.

Premium Waiver – The Personal Plans employee life plans had 134 members.

GSAS Property and Casualty Insurance Program

The GuideStone Agency Services Property and Casualty Program provides broad property and casualty coverages for eligible Southern Baptist churches and entities. Those coverages include, but are not limited to, property and liability, worker's compensation, commercial auto, foreign missions, and travel. An important aspect of the program is providing ministry protection education and resources for churches and ministries. At the end of 2025, the related distribution affiliate GuideStone Agency Services served over 1,900 clients with a premium volume over \$66 Million.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to GuideStone Financial Resources during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: GuideStone affirms the biblical vision of diversity reflected in Revelation 7 and is committed to identifying, equipping, and elevating biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This commitment is rooted in our understanding that all people are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and that the body of Christ is made up of believers from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Revelation 7:9).

In recent years, GuideStone has taken intentional steps to foster a culture that reflects this biblical vision. These actions include:

- **Developing Leaders:** Implementing internal leadership development initiatives to identify and prepare biblically qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds for leadership opportunities.
- **Fostering Faithful Hiring:** Utilizing hiring processes designed to attract candidates that reflect the diversity of the broader body of Christ, while maintaining alignment with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.
- **Engaging Affinity Groups:** In response to changing SBC demographics, employing key personnel tasked with building strong relationships with, and serving Southern Baptist affinity groups in a culturally sensitive and biblically faithful manner.

GuideStone remains committed to stewarding its ministry in a way that honors Christ and reflects the unity and diversity of His Church.

One Hundred Eightieth Annual Report**INTERNATIONAL
MISSION BOARD****3806 Monument Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23230****CAROL PFEIFFER, Chair
PAUL CHITWOOD, President****INTRODUCTION**

For 365 days a year — and for more than 180 years — the sun has never set on the work of Southern Baptists through our International Mission Board missionaries. Together, we are strategically engaged in the most important work in the universe: the work of getting the gospel to every nation, all tribes, peoples and languages. The sending of more than 400 fully funded missionaries in 2025 is a significant reminder that Southern Baptists remain fully committed to that work.

Another piece of good news from 2025 is that we hit a new 20-year high in the number of missionary candidates applying to serve through the IMB, topping 1,600. That number represents seven years of challenging and encouraging pastors and churches to call out the called and send them through the IMB. That number also represents a new challenge, the challenge for Southern Baptists to even more generously support their overseas missionaries through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions.

I'm pleased to be able to report to you that the Lottie Moon Offering surpassed \$200 million for only the third time in IMB history. Despite market swings, economic uncertainties, and a presidential election year, Southern Baptists were faithful to support the nearly 3,600 missionaries and 3,000 missionary kids in the IMB family, and we're grateful. Indeed, Southern Baptists' faithfulness and generosity are a blessing to the nations as you continue to send and support missionaries through the IMB.

We also celebrate God's providence in leading Southern Baptists to establish the Cooperative Program 100 years ago, and we were privileged to be part of that anniversary celebration this year. For 100 years, Southern Baptists' desire to work together in our Great Commission endeavor has made the Cooperative Program work. Now is the time to cast a fresh vision for how the CP can continue to impact lostness for the next 100 years. Missionaries need every dollar their churches commit and faithfully give through the Cooperative Program. It is vital to their work, and every church participating impacts lostness and makes a difference in the daily ministry and lives of their missionaries.

To maximize every dollar and leverage mission-advancing innovations, I'm pleased to share that the IMB's Innovation Team is at the forefront of integrating Artificial Intelligence into our mission work to multiply impact, reduce costs, and free missionaries for the work that matters most — engaging lostness. We developed Faithbot.io, a tool that always responds with biblical insights, and engagelostness.faithbot.io, which helps believers practice sharing the gospel across diverse worldviews with coaching and feedback. We are also harnessing AI for large-scale translation. Beyond tools and translation, we have implemented AI-driven automations that relieve missionaries and support personnel from repetitive administrative burdens, allowing more focus on frontline ministry.

The need for more resources for a growing mission force means the IMB must capitalize on opportunity amidst competition. Every year, competing non-Baptist organizations rake in billions of dollars from Southern Baptists through targeted marketing, relationships with pastors, opportunities for easy, hands-on involvement, and by communicating direct impact to individual givers that goes beyond souls saved and churches planted. A long and growing list of relief organizations, compassion ministries, missionary-sending organizations, and new church networks make a case for why they deserve Southern Baptists' missions dollars. While there is no way to accurately measure the IMB's loss of market share, we can readily observe three things: 1) Southern Baptists aren't broke; 2) Southern Baptists have not lost their heart for the nations and their desire to make a difference in the world; and 3) Southern Baptist pastors and churches want to feel like they are valued by their partners.

All of that, along with the fact that the IMB is still here and is the best missionary sending organization in existence, is why I am incredibly optimistic about our future. Last year, IMB missionaries, with their national partners working alongside of them, shared the gospel with 1.6 million people. They saw 144,000 people profess faith and 68,000 follow through with believer's baptism. I can't wait to see the impact they have this year!

At the IMB, we remain steadfast in our mission to serve Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. Our work is focused every day on doing our part to see the fulfillment of the Revelation 7:9-10 vision and the gathering of the Great Multitude before the throne and before the Lamb.

May we be found faithful — together — in this work.

Paul Chitwood, Ph.D.

President, International Mission Board

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of the International Mission Board.)

I. Assist churches by evangelizing persons, planting Baptist churches, and nurturing church planting movements among all people groups outside the United States and Canada; and, provide specialized, defined, and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.

The IMB serves Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations, which is an essential value of the Cooperative Program. CP dollars are a measurable facet of the efforts that impact reaching the lost around the globe. During the past year, missionaries continued to increase efforts to reach out to tens of thousands of churches across the SBC. Missionaries build relationships so that a personal picture of how God is at work can be communicated directly from the mission field to the local Southern Baptist church. Oftentimes, the IMB as an organization has communicated a big picture, which is essential, but now individual missionaries and staff are enhancing efforts to involve churches more specifically by providing direct connections with field teams. Southern Baptists' cooperation is vital. Under the challenge of IMB President Paul Chitwood, missionaries sent to the mission field have redoubled efforts to connect regularly and report on their work with specific local churches. Organic relationships between our missionaries and our churches are the lifeblood of our cooperative missions efforts, so that Southern Baptists experience the value they add by contributing through the Cooperative Program.

Our joint effort begins as members of churches around the SBC begin to pray with us for the advance of the Gospel. The vitality of this effort comes from the clear teaching in Matthew 6 where Jesus teaches believers to pray for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as in heaven. All components of the missionary task move forward from our making this request for His Kingdom to come. As Southern Baptist churches join together with missionaries in prayer, lostness is truly impacted by the gospel. Organic connections between Southern Baptist churches and missionaries make a real difference.

The past year was marked by continued displacement of missionaries around the world. Political challenges and conflicts have had a serious impact on our missionaries. Since the late 1940s and early 1950s, we have not experienced such serious displacement. At the same time, we celebrate the exit-to-partnership component of the core missionary task with several key mission endeavors that have successfully taken leadership of their own mission efforts. Praise the Lord! We are rebuilding missionary placements and increasing the missionary pipeline from our churches to open fields where people who are least likely to hear the good news about Jesus live. It will take time to see the missionary task produce results like those we have seen in previous years.

The “called out” from our local churches who join in the missionary task around the world are at the heart of our cooperative effort. The Romans 10 progression for the gospel begins in our partnership between local Southern Baptist churches and the sending of the ones who herald the good news. In these days, Southern Baptists are rebuilding our mission force. Our missionary applicant pipeline is now at a point that will lead to growth of our mission force around the world — growth which will necessitate increased Cooperative Program resources.

At the IMB, we continue to be challenged by the Apostle Paul’s message that no one can believe without hearing the message about Christ or, as in the case among the Deaf, without seeing the message in their own sign language. The 2025 Annual Statistical Report, which gives data from 2024 work, shows that a total of 795,482 people heard a full gospel presentation with an opportunity to respond; 144,969 people decided to follow; and 68,628 were baptized. We thank the Lord! In addition, 282,692 individuals were discipled, and 84,430 individuals were trained in leadership development processes. We also reported that 247 global missionary partners served alongside IMB teams. Internationally, 41,623 individuals were trained in cross-cultural sending. We praise the Lord for these results of our cooperative efforts. To access the 2025 Annual Statistical Report, go to <https://imb.org/asr> . This publicly available report can be downloaded or read online.

II. Assist churches in sending and supporting Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers by enlisting, equipping, and enabling them to fulfill their calling.

Over the past year, the U.S. Engagement team has intentionally focused on raising awareness, building relationships, and deepening partnerships with individuals, churches, and partner organizations to help Southern Baptists steward the Great Commission globally. Additionally, through strategic partnerships with state conventions, associations, seminaries, and SBC entities, we expanded access points for churches of all sizes to meaningfully engage in the Great Commission. This has resulted in increased missionary partnerships, more qualified candidates entering the pathway toward service, and stronger sending capacity at the local church level. Collectively, over 47,000 Southern Baptist churches have been able to send and sustain missionaries in over 150 countries in 2025. The U.S. Engagement team works to help individuals, churches, and partners see how they can cooperatively work together to be a force for good to accomplish the Great Commission together to reach the every and the all.

The IMB Missions Residency is a pathway for 18- to 29-year-olds who wish to serve cross-culturally with the IMB for 4 months to 1 year. If considering a career in missions or church planting, this pathway sharpens skills and provides practical ministry experience while working on many of the requirements for mid-term (2 years) or long-term (3+ years) jobs with the IMB. Residents participate in strategic, biblical mission efforts alongside IMB teams while being discipled as followers of Christ and ministers of the gospel. In this, the first year of this program, the first 45 residents were sent to the nations in August 2025. Twenty percent of these missions residents are in the application process for long-term service as a missionary.

“Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2). Guided by this biblical mandate, the IMB Prayer Office continues to build on generations of faithfulness while also advancing new strategies to mobilize Southern Baptists to pray for a lost world. Prayer remains foundational to sustaining missionary presence, advancing the gospel among the nations, and engaging people groups who have never heard the name of Jesus.

This past year, IMB prayer efforts combined depth and innovation to expand engagement across the Convention. The launch of IMB’s first prayer campaign originally written in American Sign Language for the Deaflympics drew 1,742 participants, marking the largest response to any digital prayer initiative to date. New SMS messaging capabilities were introduced to support large-scale prayer mobilization, while social media prayer efforts reached record levels of engagement. Nearly 3,500 strategic prayer requests from missionaries in the field were processed and shared, aligning closely with daily Prayer Points content and strengthening consistency across all IMB prayer platforms.

IMB prayer resources also continued to grow in reach and accessibility. The IMB Pray app surpassed 3,000 new downloads, equipping believers to pray daily for missionaries, nations, and people groups. Loving the Lost expanded through French translation, contributing to the distribution of more than 100,000 copies and further enabling churches to pray intentionally for unreached peoples around the world. Looking ahead, the IMB is investing in the next generation of intercessors by designing a 10-hour prayer track for Missions College and developing a future prayer training resource—both emphasizing that every believer has a vital role in fulfilling the Great Commission through informed, faithful intercessory prayer.

The Diaspora Mobilization team continues to provide significant value to Cooperative Program investments by helping Southern Baptist churches engage the nations God has brought to North America. As global migration accelerates, unreached and underserved peoples now live across the street from Southern Baptist congregations, creating unprecedented opportunities for gospel access without the barriers of international travel. Through CP-supported collaboration, IMB personnel are equipping churches to see their local communities as strategic mission fields and to participate meaningfully in fulfilling the Great Commission among the nations.

To this end, the Diaspora Mobilization team has established cohorts and collectives that serve Southern Baptist churches, associations, state conventions, and SBC entities across North America. These collaborative efforts allow CP resources to be leveraged efficiently, reducing duplication and strengthening partnerships with Send Network and Send Relief Centers. Together, these teams provide practical pathways for churches to engage diaspora communities through evangelism, discipleship, church planting, compassion ministry, and leadership development.

Additionally, the team is developing and delivering training resources that equip pastors and lay leaders to understand diaspora realities, practice culturally informed gospel engagement, and mobilize their congregations for sustained ministry. Demographic research and mapping tools are being utilized to identify where diaspora populations are concentrated, where ministry efforts are already underway, and where new opportunities exist. This data-driven approach

ensures that Cooperative Program funds are stewarded wisely, helping churches align their local mission efforts with global Great Commission priorities.

Ultimately, diaspora mobilization expands the missionary reach of Southern Baptist churches by connecting local obedience to global impact. As churches engage the nations locally, relationships are formed that often extend to sending partnerships overseas, multiplying gospel influence far beyond U.S. borders. Through Cooperative Program support, churches are not only reaching their neighbors — they are participating in a strategic, presence-sustaining mission effort that advances the gospel among the nations both at home and around the world.

Church Connections is an intentional initiative of the IMB designed to embed missionary relationships into the life of every Southern Baptist church, ensuring that churches and missionaries are not disconnected from one another but are active partners in fulfilling the Great Commission. Historically, many IMB missionaries maintained limited church relationships, often connecting only when stateside. As a result, thousands of SBC churches had no direct relationship with an IMB missionary. Church Connections was launched to change that reality by intentionally assigning missionaries a group of churches to engage, encourage, and partner with on a regular basis.

In 2025, we saw 28,977 churches contacted by our personnel through Church Connections. At its core, Church Connections prioritizes personal, sustained relationships between missionaries and churches. Through consistent communication — such as prayer updates, stories from the field, and personal interaction — churches gain a clearer picture of how God is at work among the nations. At the same time, missionaries are strengthened by knowing they are seen, supported, and prayed for by specific congregations. This two-way relationship reinforces the truth that churches are not merely supporters of missions but essential partners in gospel advance.

The IMB's long-term vision is clear and compelling: a missionary connection in every Southern Baptist church. When every congregation has a missionary they know by name, global missions become personal and tangible. Whether a church is large or small, urban or rural, Church Connections ensures that every Southern Baptist church can meaningfully participate in God's global mission through informed prayer and encouragement. Many missionaries now maintain multiple church connections, helping broaden awareness of global lostness while deepening engagement at the local church level.

The impact of this approach is profound. When missionaries are prayed for regularly by churches across the convention, prayer becomes specific, faithful, and missionally focused. Churches grow in unity and purpose as they intercede for gospel work among the nations, and missionaries experience the sustaining power of knowing they are covered in prayer by their sending family. Church Connections strengthens the bond between the field and the pew, ensuring that no missionary serves alone and every church is actively connected to the mission of making disciples of all nations.

The IMB is here to serve Southern Baptists. A key way IMB serves and mobilizes Southern Baptists is by providing clear, relational pathways for churches and individuals to engage in the missionary task. Through ongoing conversations by phone, email, and online channels, the Church Success Center regularly assists Southern Baptists with questions about involvement in missions, partnership opportunities, sending pathways, and available resources. Whether churches are exploring how to pray, give, go, or send — or individuals are discerning their next step in service — this team exists to listen, guide, and connect them with the appropriate support across IMB. Southern Baptists are encouraged to reach out at info@imb.org or 1-800-999-3113, knowing they will be met by a team committed to helping them engage faithfully and effectively in God's global mission.

In 2025, there Southern Baptists participated in 2,187 volunteer mission trips, with 13,672 Southern Baptist volunteers working with 3,500 field missionaries. Additionally, U.S. Engagement enhanced stewardship of Cooperative Program resources by improving coordination across national events, networks, and mobilization efforts — reducing duplication while increasing reach and effectiveness. We strengthened volunteer and short-term pathways that serve as on-ramps to long-term service, helping churches align missions efforts with IMB’s strategic priorities in unreached and underreached contexts. By equipping pastors, missions leaders, and next-generation leaders with clearer tools, training, and support, Cooperative Program dollars were multiplied through local ownership, sustained prayer, giving, and sending — ensuring Southern Baptist missionaries are both well-supported and strategically deployed for lasting gospel impact.

III. Mobilize and equip Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission through praying, giving, going, and sending.

Over the past year, Cooperative Program dollars entrusted to the IMB have continued to add significant value by sustaining and strengthening one of Southern Baptists’ greatest global assets: missionary presence. For 180 years, Southern Baptists have faithfully mobilized and equipped believers to carry out the Great Commission, and that enduring commitment has been made possible through sacrificial giving and careful stewardship. As IMB President Paul Chitwood has noted, these resources currently enable the deployment of more than 3,600 missionaries and 3,000 missionary children across over 150 countries.

Since 1845, more than 25,000 missionaries have been sent to 185 countries, representing 229,000 years of gospel service. Cooperative Program support ensures this historic presence is not only maintained, but also remains strategically aligned to make disciples and establish long-term gospel witness among the nations.

At the same time, Cooperative Program dollars are being stewarded with a clear focus on the unfinished task. With 8.2 billion people in the world and more than 7,200 unreached people groups — representing nearly 5 billion people — IMB has prioritized sustaining and deploying missionary presence where the gospel has little to no access. By mobilizing Southern Baptists to pray intentionally, give sacrificially, go strategically, and send faithfully, Cooperative Program resources help ensure that unengaged and unreached peoples are not overlooked. This stewardship reflects a deep conviction that the “every” and the “all” of the Great Commission truly matter, and that sustained presence among the nations remains essential for reaching those who have yet to hear and respond to the gospel.

IV. Assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs-based ministries, and providing leadership, administrative support, and financial accountability for implementation of these strategies.

Send Relief partners with IMB personnel by providing training, consultation, and resources to implement compassion ministries that integrate into the missionary task. Send Relief work includes responses to acute needs caused by disasters, as well as long-term chronic needs from issues such as poverty, hunger, and injustice.

For fiscal year 2025, the IMB, in partnership with Send Relief, impacted over 2.3 million people in 78 countries: 690,240 people received food assistance; 190,798 received healthcare support; and 141,564 people benefited from clean water or improved sanitation. Through these efforts, 1,277 previously closed areas have been opened, offering the hope of the gospel to those who have not heard. Through these compassion ministries, 50,683* came to faith in Christ, and 2,857* national churches were involved in reaching their communities through these projects.

Many parts of the globe which have great human needs are also in desperate need for the gospel, but people in these areas lack easy access to the gospel. Send Relief plays a strategic role for the IMB, not only in meeting critical physical needs, but also in opening doors in these difficult places for the spread of the gospel and church planting.

**These numbers represent work with both IMB field personnel and non-IMB partners. IMB numbers may also be included in IMB's Annual Statistical Report (IMB.org/ASR), so these results are overlapping, not in addition to that official count.*

V. Assist churches by evangelizing persons, planting Baptist churches, and nurturing church planting movements among all people groups outside the United States and Canada; and, provide specialized, defined, and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.

Despite political challenges and conflicts that have had a serious impact on missionary placement and displacement, our mission force around the world is growing. Increased resources will be needed to invest in those joining the force and their efforts to make sure every and all peoples have a chance to hear the good news.

In an effort to cover all unreached peoples and places, some IMB affinities are grouping unreached people groups and places into Harvest Fields. Some teams now have a Harvest Fields focus incorporating multiple peoples and places as opposed to a single people group focus. The goal is for every and all people groups to have opportunities to hear the good news and for the church to be planted among unreached peoples and places.

An emerging way to address the world's changing situations is to continue to work with global Baptist partners in developing their mission-sending capacities. In the spring of 2024, IMB President Paul Chitwood convened a global partnership meeting with representatives from 76 nations and Southern Baptists who serve alongside them in their countries. Great joy resulted from our like-minded approaches, both biblically and missiologically, to accomplish the Great Commission task. As we met together, we truly felt the pleasure of the Lord in our joint desire to serve in partnership to make disciples of all nations. Our global partners challenged each other and made faith commitments to send out more than 1,000 missionaries in the years ahead. We continue to work together to develop a missionary force that will literally send missionaries from everywhere to everywhere. This will create a new horizon for Southern Baptists in a world of increasing conflict/chaos and barriers as we all seek to be an essential part of the fulfillment of the Rev. 7:9 vision.

VI. Assist churches in sending and supporting Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers by enlisting, equipping, and enabling them to fulfill their calling.

Looking toward 2026 and beyond, one of the primary opportunities before us is to steward Cooperative Program funds in ways that increasingly strengthen trust, clarity, and shared ownership of the Great Commission among Southern Baptist churches. As global lostness grows and missionary access becomes more complex, churches are asking not only where their giving is going, but how it is making a difference. This creates an opportunity to more intentionally connect churches to the outcomes of their generosity — showing how Cooperative Program funds sustain long-term missionary presence, support strategic volunteer pathways, and enable gospel advance in hard-to-reach places. By driving greater awareness and transparency, we can deepen relationships with churches and partners and invite them into a more active, informed participation in fulfilling the Great Commission globally.

At the same time, emerging challenges will require new directions in how we enlist, equip, and enable churches. The next generation of Southern Baptists often engages missions first

through experiences, relationships, and clear on-ramps to involvement rather than traditional pipelines alone. This necessitates expanded partnerships, innovative engagement strategies, and adaptable equipping models that align with the realities of globalization, mobility, and digital connectivity. Faithful stewardship of Cooperative Program funds will mean investing not only in sustaining current structures, but also in cultivating future-ready pathways that help churches send and support missionaries and volunteers effectively. By strengthening partnerships and aligning resources with both global needs and local church vision, we can continue assisting churches in fulfilling their calling with greater unity, impact, and long-term faithfulness to the Great Commission.

VII. Mobilize and equip Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission through praying, giving, going, and sending.

Looking toward 2026 and beyond, several emerging opportunities and challenges will require adaptive approaches in how we mobilize and equip Southern Baptists to carry out the Great Commission through praying, giving, going, and sending. Ongoing global inflation continues to increase the cost of sustaining long-term missionary presence, responding to humanitarian needs, and supporting global infrastructure for mission work. This reality heightens the importance of strong stewardship, clear communication of impact, and deeper trust with churches as we help them understand how their sacrificial giving fuels gospel advance in a more costly global environment. Inflation also presents an opportunity to equip churches with a broader vision of collaborative sending — encouraging strategic partnerships and shared responsibility in prayer, giving, and sending to ensure a faithful and resilient missionary force.

At the same time, disagreements within the Southern Baptist Convention and the expanding landscape of other sending and compassion-focused organizations create both tension and opportunity. Internal disagreements can distract from mission focus and challenge unified engagement, necessitating renewed emphasis on gospel-centered cooperation, transparency, and relational trust. Externally, the growth of alternative sending pathways and compassion organizations requires a clearer articulation of the unique role Southern Baptists play in global missions — particularly our commitment to long-term presence, theological faithfulness, and strategic cooperation. These dynamics call for new directions in equipping churches to discern their role within a crowded missions ecosystem, strengthening partnerships that align with our convictions, and mobilizing Southern Baptists with a compelling, unified vision to pray, give, go, and send for the sake of the nations.

VIII. Assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs-based ministries, and providing leadership, administrative support, and financial accountability for implementation of these strategies.

Send Relief will continue to grow in reach and impact by coming alongside more IMB missionaries and partners to support the work of the missionary task. Everywhere IMB missionaries go, they encounter human needs. Natural and man-made disasters are on the rise. The global hunger crisis has risen to its highest level in 40 years. The number of forcibly displaced people has doubled over the past decade, now reaching over 120 million people worldwide. Growing urbanization presents new challenges for addressing the pervasive human needs of the city. Send Relief will continue to improve in expertise and capacity to help the IMB address these challenges — these opportunities — in gospel-centered ways that advance the missionary task. And as the IMB continues to press the edges of lostness, the meeting of human needs will create unique opportunities for access and engagement of some of the least-reached peoples of the world.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to International Mission Board during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: The International Mission Board proactively seeks to engage all ethnicities in our work and to consider every biblically qualified candidate for every leadership role.

For example, we employ ethnically diverse mobilizers, and staff and field recruiters, who are dedicated to working with ethnic minority churches to engage them in the task of the Great Commission. We have for the first time hired multilingual candidate consultants, including one fluent in ASL to work with our deaf candidates. We have initiated vision trips to the mission field for African American pastors. We also continue to grow strong networks with Asian, Latino, and Hispanic churches. And we listen carefully to learn ways in which we can make believers of all ethnicities feel welcome, in accordance with God’s Word, to participate in work of all levels at the International Mission Board. We look forward with expectancy to the day we gather together with a great multitude that no one can number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

ANNUAL IMB STATISTICAL REPORT BASED ON 2024 DATA

Global summary reflecting work in calendar year 2024, reported in 2025

Entry

- How many human needs projects were implemented? 3,013
- How many people were impacted by human needs projects? 271,603
- How many views of digital gospel content were watched to at least 95%? 932,259
- How many hours were spent prayer walking? 19,217

Evangelism

- How many people heard at least some portion of the gospel message? 1,609,869
- How many people had an opportunity to respond to Christ? 795,482
- How many who heard a gospel witness became new believers? 144,969
- How many believers were baptized? 68,628

Discipleship

- How many people were discipled? 282,692
- How many were given basic discipleship? 46,277
- How many were given evangelism training? 126,333
- How many were trained to make disciples? 77,648

Church Formation

- How many new groups intending to become churches were formed? 7,025
- How many new churches were formed? 2,409

Leadership Training

- How many leaders were trained? 84,430
- How many leaders were trained in preaching or teaching? 20,655
- How many leaders were trained as a pastor or elder? 14,195
- How many leaders were trained in church planting? 25,702
- How many leaders were trained in church health? 27,421
- How many leaders were trained in theology or doctrine? 18,602

Exit to Partnership

- How many people were trained in cross-cultural sending? 41,623

The International Mission Board's Annual Statistical Report (ASR) contains the most accurate information for the stated reporting period available at the time of publication. Figures reported are for work related to IMB personnel and close baptistic partners only, and since 2009 no longer include reports from global Baptist conventions and unions.

After publication, the board's Global Research Department continues to process both new and revised reports as field personnel continually strive to provide the most accurate picture of the board's work and influence during the given reporting period. Field offices may submit new or revised reports for a variety of reasons, including typographical errors in the original report, newly received or corrected information, clarification of reporting categories, etc.

After publication of the ASR, all analyses utilize the most current data for the reporting period available at that time, including all new and revised reports submitted since the ASR's publication. Thus, subsequent reports may reflect updated or additional data and may differ from previously published reports. For current data regarding a given reporting period, including the latest revisions, contact the Global Research Information Center (GRIC@imb.org).

Lifeway

200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027

JAMES CARROLL, Chair

RYAN BLACKWELL, President and CEO

JOE WALKER, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

We're honored to share with you what God is doing through Lifeway as we come alongside churches, designing trustworthy experiences that fuel ministry. As you read this year's report, we hope you'll sense our deep gratitude for the Lord's guidance and blessing, and our commitment to continue serving His church.

In the report, you'll find details of how Lifeway is fulfilling its commitment to equipping churches with practical, biblically grounded tools and training that strengthen leaders and foster healthy, disciple-making churches. Everything we do is focused on helping churches make disciples of Jesus, because our team truly believes **the church flourishes when disciples are being formed.**

This past year has been one of transition and growth. In August 2025, our former president, Ben Mandrell, accepted a call to serve as senior pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis. The Board of Trustees quickly began the search for Lifeway's next president, naming Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Joe Walker interim president. During the transition, our executive leadership team continued to work closely with the board to maintain the strong culture and financial health we've enjoyed in recent years. On April 22, 2026, the trustees elected Dr. Ryan Blackwell as Lifeway's 11th president and CEO. He officially stepped into that role on June 1.

Ministry Highlights

Lifeway's ministry touches nearly every aspect of church life, and discipleship remains at the heart of all we do. Sunday School continues to be a critical component of many churches' discipleship strategy. Sunday School and Bible study in their various expressions are reaching millions on a weekly basis, and Lifeway's curriculum resources (The Gospel Project, Explore the Bible, Bible Studies for Life, and Hyfi) continue to play a significant role in this vital ministry.

Lifeway remains committed to Christian education, biblical and theological literacy, and spiritual formation—providing essential resources that strengthen Southern Baptist churches and equip them for effective ministry. In June 2026, we'll introduce DisciplesPath, a new resource offering a robust framework and free tools for churches to develop effective discipleship strategies.

This past year, leadership development and church equipping have grown through in-person events, digital resources, and strategic partnerships. More than 60 events trained pastors and leaders in group leadership, growth, and strategy. Our Lifeway podcasts now reach over 100,000 listeners, providing ongoing encouragement and practical insights.

Lifeway Women continues to encourage and equip women across the United States and around the world. The team hosted simulcasts and live events reaching over 120,000 women and trained more than 3,200 leaders in 2025. Lifeway Men relaunched its brand and released new studies and resources to help churches serve men more effectively. Looking ahead, we'll continue to invest in discipleship, training, and community for both men and women.

Our camps welcomed over 120,000 participants from more than 4,300 churches in 2025. More than 5,000 campers made decisions to place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, and more

than 900 individuals committed to pursue a calling to vocational ministry. This summer we expect to host 124,000 kids, students, and their leaders as we expand to four new locations.

Global ministry continues to expand, especially in Spanish-language resources. Lifeway Global was recognized as Publisher of the Year by the Spanish Evangelical Publishers Association, and our training events served thousands of pastors and leaders across multiple countries.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, we'll launch new resources, refresh curriculum, and expand our equipping efforts through conferences, cohorts, and digital platforms. We're committed to listening to churches and crafting resources that meet your unique needs. Whether it's through Sunday School, Bible studies, camps, VBS, leadership training, or global outreach, our goal is to help your church create environments for intentional, relational discipleship.

Thank you for partnering with us. Know that we at Lifeway are praying for you and your churches as you carry out Christ's mission. We're honored to serve alongside you in this kingdom work.

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I. Assist churches in the development of church ministries.

Sunday School

Sunday School continues to be a critical component of many churches' discipleship strategy. Lifeway remains committed to this element of ministry, Christian education, and biblical literacy as one of its most critical resources for Southern Baptist churches. The Gospel Project, Explore the Bible, and Bible Studies for Life are fixtures in Southern Baptist life and embody three distinctive approaches to Christian education and discipleship. The launch of the new HyFi curriculum for Kids and Students has been a success, and Lifeway has seen increasing adoption of this new venture as churches are introduced to it. Sunday School and Bible study in their various expressions are reaching millions on a weekly basis and Lifeway's curriculum resources continue to play a significant role in this vital ministry.

In late 2023, the Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students publishing teams merged under one "Lifeway NextGen" umbrella and under one director. Since that time, Lifeway team members have worked to bring increased collaboration and correlation to the study plans, publishing processes, and timelines of the four ongoing brands created in the NextGen area (Bible Studies for Life, Explore the Bible, The Gospel Project, and Hyfi). Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students publishing team leaders are now collaborating daily. This change in organizational and operational structure is generating a more unified experience for churches from birth through high school.

The Hyfi study, an all-digital resource that utilizes high-quality media, games, and side-by-side learning to foster a fun atmosphere of learning and belonging, entered its third year of use and its third year teaching through 12 biblical truths that teach preschoolers, kids, and students who they are because of who God is, leading them to discover their identity in Christ. In response to feedback from student users, the Hyfi team worked on updates to the Hyfi Student offering to align its biblical content with Kids and Preschool ministries, and to continue to hone the student experience with more, but shorter, videos. Hyfi is a growing resource serving many churches across the country. Lifeway continues to maintain a close feedback loop with churches to listen and craft the resource to meet the unique needs of churches.

In 2024, Lifeway Adults released a completely reimagined version of The Gospel Project (TGP) for Adults. This re-engineered iteration of The Gospel Project resonated with churches and established a growth trend in terms of church adoption and use. Reports from the field have

also been very positive. On the heels of this success, Lifeway Adults released a refresh edition of Explore the Bible for Adults for Fall 2025. After listening to advisory board churches from around the country, several changes were made to further improve Explore the Bible for Adults, which is the most successful curriculum line in Lifeway Adults. Changes include group plans in the leader guide that provide more options for discussion while remaining more concise than past iterations, fresh design to give covers and layout a more inviting feel, and a weekly prayer feature to help groups pray through biblical concepts studied in each session.

Future Plans — In Fall of 2026 Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students will restart the scope and sequence of Bible Studies for Life with refreshed content, including new kids videos and a new student-friendly look for our student teaching materials. Bible Studies for Life Kids and Students center studies around 10 biblical concept areas at eight age levels, from birth through high school, as outlined in Lifeway's Levels of Biblical Learning. With the refresh, Lifeway Adults will also use the Levels of Biblical Learning to organize studies for adults.

Discipleship

Discipleship is at the heart of all we do at Lifeway. We produce trustworthy and effective resources for church leaders to use in all of their ministry environments in the hopes that the Lord is using each conversation and the leaders He has entrusted in His church to raise up new disciples. As practitioners, however, we also understand the complexity of disciple making and are compelled to do all we can to bring not only resources but also research and thought leadership that can help provide clarity, direction, and strategy for ministry leaders.

In 2026, Lifeway will introduce a new resource called DisciplesPath. (Not to be confused with the now out of print, Disciples Path short-term studies.) Lifeway's conviction is that **churches flourish when disciples are being formed**. The mission of disciple-making is at the heart of all that Christ commands us to do, and as the leader in the discipleship resource space, Lifeway is seeking to provide a robust framework and library of free tools and resources for churches to use as they develop their own plan to effectively make disciples in their own context. This tool will not only provide thought leadership, but practical tools to help church leaders evaluate the effectiveness of their current efforts and the spiritual health of those they are shepherding.

Lifeway continues to serve tens of thousands of churches through our ongoing curriculum lines—Explore the Bible, Bible Studies for Life, The Gospel Project, and Hyfi—as well as short-term studies such as classics like *Experiencing God* by Richard Blackaby, and new studies such as *Deep Discipleship*, by JT English, Jen Wilkin, and Kyle Worley. *Deep Discipleship* was released to meet the need of churches who are looking for curriculum to serve those who are most eager to take focused intentional steps forward in their faith.

Lifeway Students has launched a dynamic collection of games designed to do more than entertain—they foster authentic connections, spark meaningful conversations, and strengthen community within youth ministries, families, and small groups. Each game is crafted to be age-appropriate, ministry-friendly, and irresistibly fun. In an age dominated by screens, these games create space for real conversations and relational ministry. Whether for kids, students, adults, men, or women, Lifeway continues to strive to serve each audience in the church with Bible studies and resources tailored specifically to them.

The Lifeway NextGen team produced the ETCH Family Ministry Conference in October 2025, at Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, TN. ETCH is an acronym for “Equipping The Church and Home” and has become a premier event for Preschool, Kids, Middle School, High School, and NextGen/Family Ministry leaders. More than 900 leaders from 33 states across the country attended this highly anticipated event. Our 2025 theme was “Velocity: Ministry at the Speed of Culture” where attendees learned that, while culture changes quickly, the church must

move with equal speed in the direction of the cross. Plans for ETCH 2026 are well underway. From unlocking research to discovering new strategies to helping church leaders reconnect with their calling, ETCH equips church leaders to reach, disciple, and pass on the faith to the next generation.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) Preview events continued in person in January 2025 in four locations: Brentwood, TN; Houston, TX; Ridgecrest, NC; and at a new venue in Dallas/Ft Worth, TX, where more than 2,000 VBS leaders and volunteers experienced various aspects of the VBS 2025 theme, *Magnified*, including training and inspiration for running a great VBS. Lifeway also trains state convention VBS teams through an in-person VBS Institute alongside its Houston Preview event. These events and locations continued in January 2026 for this year's theme, *Illumination Station*.

Future Plans – In 2026, Lifeway Adults will publish a new pipeline of short-term studies including, *Experiencing God in Everyday Life*, by Richard Blackaby. For all of those having worked their way through the classic Blackaby study, *Experiencing God*, this study will be the follow-up study to help learners understand what it looks like to carry the seven realities for experiencing God into everyday life. Other projects will include a refresh of Masterlife.

Leadership Development and Church Equipping

In 2025, Lifeway continued to equip church leaders through in-person events, digital resources, and strategic partnerships, serving thousands of leaders nationwide. Adult equipping efforts included the release of *Welcome Aboard*, a Sunday School support booklet with a free training plan to strengthen biblical hospitality in groups. More than 60 events—including Group Essentials Conferences, EQUIP Conferences, Black Church Leadership and Family Conference, and one-day seminars like Groups Matter—trained pastors and leaders in group leadership, growth, and strategy development. Through partnerships with organizations such as SBCAL, training reached AMS leaders and their churches across the country. Digital engagement also grew through the *Disciple-making in Community* and *Group Answers* podcasts, LifewayResearch.com and Lifeway Research e-newsletter, and the Sunday School Director's blog, which published 96 posts and connected with over 144,000 readers.

Lifeway Students and Lifeway Girls equipped more than 600 leaders across 10 states and 13 cities through Essentials and New2Ministry conferences. For the first time, NextGen Essentials launched in Texas and Colorado in partnership with Lifeway Kids, expanding collaborative training for leaders serving the next generation. Strategic partnerships with state leaders in Louisiana, Colorado, and South Carolina fueled growth, with Essentials Charleston becoming the largest youth ministry gathering in South Carolina's low country in over a decade. Digital outreach also expanded, with Youth Ministry Booster and *His Glory, Her Good* podcasts reaching more than 44,000 streams. New resources included original research, the leadership book *Define the Relationship*, and tools to strengthen ministry alignment between church and home.

Women's Ministry Equipping continued to grow through 22 events, serving more than 1,250 churches nationwide. Lifeway Women focused on equipping and encouraging women's ministry leaders in biblical literacy, spiritual growth, leadership, and practical ministry. YouLead and Women's Leadership Forum continue to be effective experiences for equipping leaders and creating a vibrant leadership community. Looking ahead, YouLead will be rebranded as Deeply Rooted—a refreshed experience designed to help women serve faithfully and flourish in their calling. Additional resources and events will continue to provide leadership development and community for women in ministry.

Black Church Equipping efforts included five Essentials Conferences, 11 Big Results Essentials Conferences, and participation in more than 40 live and online events, serving over 300 churches. These gatherings provided practical tools for pastors and church leaders to strengthen

their ministries. In 2026, Lifeway will introduce the Pastors Leadership Cohort, adding a third layer of support alongside Essentials and Big Results Conferences. This 12-month initiative will provide ongoing coaching and training to help pastors achieve their ministry goals and lead with confidence.

Kids Ministry Equipping partnered with state conventions to provide breakout and keynote sessions tailored to their events. National training included ETCH, VBS Previews, and VBS Institute—a multiplier event where state teams are trained and equipped to lead their own training events. Lifeway supported new kids ministers through New to Ministry and Essentials Conferences and expanded its reach by training in three new states.

- **Approximate number trained:** 6,166
- **Approximate number of churches served:** 3,150
- **Number of Kids Training Events:** 35

Podcasts, consistent with the national trend, have become a vital part of Lifeway’s equipping strategy, reaching ministers in Kids, Students, Women, and Adult ministry areas. In 2025, Lifeway podcasts grew by more than 20%, with a combined reach of over 100,000 listeners. These platforms provide ongoing encouragement, practical insights, and leadership development beyond in-person events, expanding Lifeway’s impact nationwide.

Future Plans — Looking ahead to 2026, Lifeway will expand its equipping efforts through several key initiatives:

- **Launch of DisciplesPath** at the 2026 SBC Annual Meeting—DisciplesPath is a free resource designed to help senior pastors lead their staff and key leaders in developing a clear, biblically grounded discipleship strategy for their churches. This process will enable churches to assess discipleship and spiritual growth year over year and align ministry efforts with a vision for spiritual maturity.
- **Cohorts for Ministry Leaders**—All Lifeway ministry areas will introduce cohorts, creating intentional communities where leaders can connect with other ministers, grow in confidence in their ministry roles, and receive ongoing encouragement and practical training.
- **Essentials Conferences**—Continued expansion of Essentials Conferences into new regions, strengthening partnerships with state conventions, investing in new ministers, and leveraging podcasts, digital platforms, and live events to connect relationally with church leaders nationwide.

These initiatives reflect Lifeway’s commitment to equipping churches with practical, biblically grounded tools and training that strengthen leaders and foster healthy, disciple-making churches.

Worship and Music Ministry

In our Worship Music area, the lifewayworship.com platform continues to serve churches with new congregational music arrangements along with our extensive catalog of choral music resources for adults and children available at lifeway.com. Lifeway is excited about the intensive work that was initiated in 2025 in a few areas associated with Lifeway Worship. First, initial steps were taken in the summer and planning continued through the fall and spring to improve the lifewayworship.com customer experience with advanced features. Related, a small team worked closely with the SBC worship community to lay the foundation for a more robust strategy for serving worship pastors more effectively. Consistent with this new energy, Lifeway welcomed its new director of Lifeway Worship, Kirk Kirland.

Growth has continued in our Broadman Church Supplies area. We added a new line of prefilled communion cups that have helped better meet the increasing demand for these church supplies, and engineers continue to refine the machinery in order to address feedback that has been received.

We are confident this work will lead to a better communion cup experience. Lifeway's OneSource church administration program continues to provide Southern Baptist churches with an opportunity to receive exclusive discounts on a wide variety of products and services.

Future Plans – Worship is critical to the effectiveness of the local church. When something is important to the local church, it's important to Lifeway. In this spirit, Lifeway expects to announce several initiatives and aspects of a more comprehensive ministry support to worship pastors over the course of 2026. Included in this is a revised and improved lifewayworship.com experience to be rolled out in the coming months. Additionally, Lifeway expects to work more closely with state leaders and worship community stakeholders in developing new and fresh ways to meet the needs of this area of local church ministry. Lifeway Worship continues to gather feedback on how Lifeway Worship can best serve church music ministries in the future, and plans continue to be built alongside church leaders, denominational leaders, and current Lifeway trustees. Lifeway expects to continue crucial partnerships with seminaries, like-minded ministries like Metro and SBCMC, and other key leaders in the worship community.

Evangelism

Lifeway continues to position evangelism as a crucial component of its publishing strategy. By keeping existing evangelism resources in front of churches through consistent messaging and developing new concepts and titles, Lifeway is ensuring evangelism and evangelism strategies maintain their rightful place as a core spiritual discipline.

Each issue of Bible Studies for Life and Explore the Bible includes an evangelism session that is intentional in calling the reader to place his or her faith in Christ. Moreover, "sharing Christ" is one of eight signposts of an effective disciple on which our Bible Studies for Life curriculum is built. Because of this, churches that use Bible Studies for Life will spend no less than six consecutive weeks discussing the pivotal discipline of evangelism every year. Our ongoing curriculum leader guides also instruct leaders to invite group members to place their faith in Christ. While The Gospel Project hasn't followed this same pattern, each session includes Christ crucified and resurrected as the focus and intent of the Scriptures, calling on all people to believe in Him and encouraging believers to share this good news with others.

In 2025, Lifeway Adults maintained a focus in each ongoing curriculum line to better encourage Bible study groups to foster a reaching and evangelistic posture as is commanded by Scripture. Hyfi follows a monthly themed scope and sequence in Kids and Students designed to help the next generation see and understand who God is. In this highly relational approach to Bible study, Hyfi helps small group leaders and fellow learners develop relationships that lead to gospel conversations.

In 2025, Lifeway Adults also published two new evangelism studies. *Everyday Evangelism*, by Preston Perry, gives those interested in learning how to share their faith an opportunity to learn how to win the hearts of others from a renowned apologist. *Made to Multiply*, a study by the creators at I Am Second, gives another approach to evangelism from a ministry whose legacy has been built on the discipline of Christians sharing their testimony to create opportunities for others to see and experience the love of Christ. Both of these studies offer a fresh perspective for churches seeking to train and motivate their people in sharing their faith.

Sharing the gospel with kids is a top priority at Lifeway, and we help churches have effective gospel conversation in multiple ways.

Vacation Bible School is the largest outreach to unchurched kids in any given year for 78% of churches hosting VBS, according to Lifeway Research. Research shows that 25% of baptisms in Southern Baptist churches can be traced back to decisions made during VBS. Each year, over

2.5 million kids and adults participate, and for many, it's their first meaningful connection with a church, and with the gospel. These numbers highlight why the time, energy, and resources invested in VBS truly are worth it—it's not just an event, but a catalyst for lifelong faith journeys. Statistics have shown parents will allow their child(ren) to participate in a VBS event at a church they don't attend if their child is invited by a friend. With opportunities for evangelism, discipleship, and relationship-building throughout a week of VBS, churches are able to connect with their communities in fun and engaging ways. Lifeway provides churches with evangelistic VBS and Backyard Kids Club curriculum materials.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me Bible study presents the gospel in kid-friendly language with applicable Scripture verses. It includes information about how to respond to the gospel, pages to guide parents in at-home conversations, and downloadable leader content.

What Is a Christian? Answers for Kids is an eight-week activity book for kids that helps them answer questions about becoming a Christian. This study includes questions about God, Jesus, sin, the gospel, becoming a Christian, heaven, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. An included parent section equips parents to have conversations with children who are asking questions about the gospel. *What Is a Christian?* can be used in a class setting at church or in a home environment to help kids work through their questions related to what it means to be a Christian and how to receive God's gift of salvation.

To model presenting the gospel to kids, Lifeway.com/kids provides several video examples, and provides downloadable gospel presentation videos and scripts for *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* and the *Three Circles*, including a Spanish option, to help leaders talk with kids about becoming a Christian.

Another way Lifeway Kids is helping parents evangelize and disciple their children is through ongoing curriculum's At Home digital resources available for churches to distribute to families through Ministry Grid. Simple to access and easy to use, At Home provides families with weekly worship experiences, videos, prayer prompts, and family activity ideas that coincide with weekly on-cycle curriculum sessions for The Gospel Project, Bible Studies for Life, Explore the Bible, and Hyfi.

Lifeway's summer camps remain a key avenue for evangelism, combining gospel-centered teaching with hands-on mission and evangelism training for students. In 2025, over 5,100 teenagers responded to the gospel and placed their faith in Jesus through these camps.

Future Plans — Lifeway's VBS 2026 theme, *Illumination Station*, shines a light on who Jesus really is. While many people in the world have uninformed thoughts about Jesus, many are in the dark about who the Bible says He really is. During VBS, kids will learn that Jesus is more than a good teacher or a moral leader; He is the perfect, proven, powerful Son of God, sent to be our Savior.

Short-term studies will continue to be developed that address the crucial component of evangelism in the daily life of a disciple, be it an entire study or aspects of topical studies. Our teams look for ways not only to include gospel messages in every resource we develop but also reminders of Jesus's charge to make disciples of all the nations. Lifeway's ongoing curriculum lines will continue to emphasize evangelism as a regular aspect of outline development.

Marriage and Family Ministry

Lifeway continues to resource churches in family ministry through the publication of quality family and devotional magazines. Included are:

- *HomeLife* — Focused on faith, family, and life, *HomeLife* is a monthly magazine with articles and fresh ideas for families, marriages, and personal development. Homelife celebrated its 80th year in publication.

- *Mature Living* — A monthly magazine focusing on the spiritual and personal needs of adults, from boomers to seniors.
- *ParentLife* — A monthly magazine offering biblical and relevant content. Each issue offers practical help with insights written especially for parents.
- *Open Windows* — A quarterly devotional guide featuring individual daily readings and selected Scripture passages (also available in large print). It also includes a prayer guide that focuses on praying for missionaries serving through the International Mission Board.

In addition to these magazine and devotional resources, Lifeway Adults is planning a new set of resources and potentially events focused on cultivating healthy marriages. In 2026, Lifeway will begin the development phase of this work for release in 2027.

Global

In 2025, Lifeway Global continued expanding our Spanish-language catalog and was recognized once again as Publisher of the Year by the Spanish Evangelical Publishers Association. We successfully added new study Bibles, trade books, academic books, and short-term studies, growing our business 7% in a year when the industry experienced an overall 3% decline.

Additionally, our Global Go-to-Market team completed its first year and continues driving our strategy around key initiatives, seeking to expand our presence across multiple global markets.

We continued our emphasis in our comprehensive contextualization as a core value of our publishing philosophy. Our Spanish publishing pipeline included more than 60 authors from over 20 nationalities, showcasing our commitment to serving and representing the global church.

Our Spanish training events allowed us to serve thousands of pastors, leaders, educators, and disciples across multiple states and countries including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Peru, Spain, Colombia, Ecuador, and Argentina. We also participated in events that serve Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean churches affiliated with the SBC.

One of the most significant projects we worked on this year was the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) in Spanish. From editorial to marketing plans, we prepared the way for its launch in 2029.

Looking ahead, Lifeway Global is excited about the continued acquisition of international authors for the English-speaking global church and the launch of the CSB in Spanish.

II. Assist churches in ministries to college and university students.

Lifeway Students continues to produce short-term Bible studies designed to disciple and equip college students. These short-term studies are ideal for semester small groups and retreat settings. A variety of authors and subjects are considered extremely relevant to the life of college students and young adults. Notable among these is 2024's *Revival Generation*, a new eight-session Bible study by Shane Pruitt (Next Gen Director at NAMB). *Revival Generation* calls for high schoolers, college students, and young adults to prepare for spiritual awakening and provides a biblical understanding of what revival is. In August 2025, Lifeway Students released another new title from Shane Pruitt, *Not My Jesus*. *Not My Jesus* speaks directly to cultural misunderstandings about who people incorrectly believe Jesus is and provides biblical truth to help college students understand and explain who Jesus is according to God's Word.

Future Plans — Short-term studies will continue to be offered that are relevant to issues young adults and college students are facing within their culture, and Lifeway continues to explore opportunities for serving collegiate ministries and leaders through curriculum development and training. In 2026, Lifeway Students has plans to release a new *Daughters* Bible study for college women by authors Mac Bridges and Kenz Durham, which will explore how studying women of the Bible reveals God heart for young women today.

III. Assist churches with Christian schools and homeschool ministries.

A biblical philosophy of education to guide the training of children and youth is presented in *Kingdom Education: God's Plan for Educating Future Generations*, 2nd edition. This resource provides the driving principles that shape essential biblical education services and resources to Christian schools, churches, and families.

The Gospel Project for Kids: Home Edition is designed to help families—whether they homeschool or engage in traditional education—supplement biblical education and child discipleship. Lifeway's Student Ministry continues to provide CharacterQuest Bible curriculum for Christian schools and homeschools.

Future Plans — In response to a motion brought to the floor of the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, Lifeway formed a work group of trustees and employees to conduct a study on this motion to see what Lifeway could further offer homeschool educators. As a result, it was determined that Lifeway will create a new webpage that will consolidate Lifeway resources pertinent to homeschooling, including curriculum from Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students, B&H Academic titles, Bibles and reference books, so they can be easily found. Resources can be found at Lifeway.com/homeschool.

IV. Assist churches with ministries to men and women.

Men's Ministry

Throughout 2025, churches noticed an exciting trend in men returning to the church. While this trend is most noticeable in the Gen Z audience, millennial men are also returning to the church in record numbers. In the midst of this trend, leaders are asking how they can better serve their men in hopes of keeping them and leveraging this moment to bring a new measure of health to all aspects of a man's life. To this end, Lifeway Adults relaunched the Lifeway Men brand and released a Men's Ministry Toolkit to help churches launch or improve a ministry to men in their church. Lifeway has published studies such as *Daniel* by J.D. Greear and *Titus Ten* by Josh Smith to serve men's groups and has plans to increase the number of men's studies in the coming months.

Lifeway also publishes *Stand Firm*, a devotional guide for men with daily encouragement and small group questions that fit into a man's busy schedule. This devotional has been redesigned and is now available in a quarterly format.

Future Plans — In 2026, Lifeway Men plans to release a 2.0 version of the Men's Ministry tool kit that will be built upon the strength of a first-ever Lifeway Research study to discover the State of Ministry to Men in U.S. churches. Alongside this research project and new toolkit, Lifeway Men will also release three new men's studies to include an Advent study, a study on the life of Paul, and a course on how to study the Bible just for men.

Women's Ministry

Lifeway Women continues to encourage and equip women across the United States and around the world.

The women's event team hosted three simulcasts —Feast Virtual, Going Beyond Simulcast with Priscilla Shirer, and the Prepare Him Room digital event with Kelly Minter reaching over 100,000 women. Eleven live events took place across the United States, reaching over 21,000 women. A unique event took place in 2025 with a live audience in conjunction with the Bible study taping of *The Names of God*. Through our live events, women opened God's Word, heard from the Lord, and embraced biblical truth.

Lifeway Women trained more than 3,200 leaders in fiscal year 2025 through our You Lead Events, Women's Leadership Forum, Essentials, Lifeway Academy, and Lifeway Women's Symposium. The 2025 Lifeway Women's Leadership Forum was held in November 2025. More than 850 women participated in this training. A passion of Lifeway Women is equipping and developing leaders for kingdom impact with an emphasis on local church ministry.

We had a year full of releases from the short-term Bible study team. These included: *Heaven* by Jennifer Rothschild, *Galatians* by Elizabeth Woodson, *Titus* by Courtney Doctor and Hunter Beless, *Daring Joy* by Nicole Zasowski, *More Than Enough* by Christine Hoover, *Body & Soul* by Lisa Whittle, *Behold the Savior* by Lifeway Women, *Anchored* by Marian Jordan Ellis, *Angels* by Melissa Spoelstra, and *The Way of Wisdom*—an ensemble study featuring Jen Wilkin, Courtney Doctor, Kelly Minter, Adrienne Camp, Ruth Chou Simons, and Elizabeth Woodson. The January release of *Heaven* by Jennifer Rothschild has reached over 100,000 women. The August release of *The Way of Wisdom* has reached over 46,000 women and is available in both lay-flat and spiral-bound formats.

Lifeway continues to publish, *Journey*, a devotional magazine for women with content that is substantive but not overwhelming for busy schedules. This devotional has been redesigned and is now available in a quarterly format with digital access available to all print users through the Lifeway Women app.

The Lifeway Women app continues to offer resources that impact women in their daily lives. The app provides free plans that correspond with our Bible Studies and *Journey* devotional magazine. It also includes paid plans that contain all the content from a Bible study. This app also makes it easy to listen to the *Marked* podcast, which hit 2,771,887 lifetime downloads in 2025. Women can read the latest news from Lifeway Women and stay up to date on resources, events, and trainings via the app.

Future Plans — Lifeway Women will continue to offer multiple avenues for encouragement and equipping to invest in women and strengthen their faith. Lifeway Women live events will feature *Going Beyond Live* with Priscilla Shirer, *In the Word* with Jen Wilkin, and the Lifeway Women's Leadership Forum. You Lead has been rebranded as Deeply Rooted, with a focus on leadership and ministry training that is rooted in Christ.

These trainings will be strategically paired with live events to create a weekend filled with equipping for leaders and encouragement for all women. Multiple cruises are in the works for 2026 and will focus on strategic destinations along with Bible teaching for spiritual impact.

The publishing pipeline for 2026 includes plans to publish the following women's Bible studies: *Joshua* by Jen Wilkin, *See For Yourself* by Kelly Needham, *Very Good* by Jen Oshman, *Forever For Our Good* by Katie McCoy, *Friends & Sisters* by Lifeway Women, *Melody of Grace* by Whitney Capps, *The Names of God* by Kristi McLelland, Kelly Minter, Elizabeth Woodson, Blair Linne, Caroline Saunders, and Jennifer Rothschild, *All Who Draw Near*, by Lifeway Women, *The Bible Every Day* by Mary Wiley, and *Acts* by Kelly Minter. The publication of magazines and devotionals will continue and will be boosted by creative marketing avenues to reach more women.

Lifeway Women will continue to offer trustworthy resources and experiences for women. The team is excited to work strategically as we strive to serve women with excellence. Our goal is to continually offer a place for women to gather and grow so they can be sent out to live on mission for kingdom impact.

V. Assist churches through operation of Conference Centers and Camps.

In 2025, Lifeway's family of camps—including CentriKid®, Student Life, Student Life for Kids, and FUGE Camps®—welcomed a combined total of 120,830 participants from 4,360 churches across the nation during 230 cycles of camp.

Campers demonstrated remarkable generosity, giving \$697,891 in offerings to support the ongoing missions work of the International Mission Board (IMB) and the North American Mission Board (NAMB).

The impact of the summer was profound: 5,120 campers made decisions to place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation, while more than 900 individuals committed to pursue a calling to vocational ministry. Additionally, camp participants engaged in 532 mission sites across local communities, serving others and sharing the gospel through practical acts of ministry.

After adding eight camp locations in 2025, Lifeway camps are expanding once again in 2026, adding four new locations, in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas and South Carolina, as well as bringing new camps to previous locations. This summer FUGE Camps expects to serve its 2 millionth camper since 1979.

Future Plans—Lifeway continues its commitment to provide transformative camp experiences across the country.

VI. Assist churches through the publication of books and Bibles.

B&H Publishing Group publishes timely, trustworthy resources that communicate biblical truth, deepening readers' understanding and equipping them for spiritual growth. In 2025, B&H released new Bibles and books in various genres all intended to aid in the discipleship of God's people. B&H exists in order to assist churches by publishing reading experiences that fuel ministry.

B&H Books—In 2025, B&H Books published 53 new titles, demonstrating its core commitment to providing biblically faithful and practical resources for every Christian. Several books in 2026 are aimed at discipleship and spiritual formation, such as *Movement-Ready Church: A Blueprint for Making Disciples* by Robby Gallaty and Vick Green, *Habits of Resistance: 7 Ways You're Being Formed By Culture and Gospel Practices to Help You Push Back* by Elizabeth Woodson, *Shepherding Renewal* by Matt Capps and Steven Wade, and *Reaching Generation Alpha* by Shane Pruitt and Shelly Melia.

B&H Kids—For 2026 releases, B&H Kids partnered with several thoughtful voices to create books for kids so that their faith might grow and flourish. These books will include *Where Is Church?* by B&H Editorial (Toddler Theology series), *Hooray Day* (Hyfi book), and *Illumination Devotion* (VBS devotional).

B&H Academic—Focused on providing theologically faithful textbooks and classroom resources for scholars, professors, and students, B&H Academic released 36 new titles in 2025. In 2026, B&H Academic will continue its aim to equip the church through resources like *Scripture's Use of Scripture in the Old Testament* by Matthew Swale, *Youth Ministry Deconstructed* by David Odom, *Take and Eat: Recovering the Regular Celebration of the Lord's Supper* by Harrison Perkins, *Counseling Teens: Biblical Wisdom for Today's Young People* by Kristen Kellen, *Complementarianism: A Continuum of Perspectives on Men and Women in the Church* edited by David S. Dockery, *Creator to Crown: A Christ-Centered Catechism* created by Adam McLendon and Adam Hulshof, *Connected: How Scripture Guides the Study of Scripture* by Gary Edward Schnittjer.

B&H Bible & Reference—Holman Bible & Reference is recognized as one of the largest Bible publishing houses by the ECPA, publishing Bibles, commentaries, and reference resources to help people of all ages grow in their understanding of Scripture. In 2025, the Holman imprint continued to expand its diverse portfolio of resources to serve churches and fuel ministry, with the CSB—its proprietary translation recognized as trustworthy and readable for all ages—maintaining a leading position among major English Bible translations.

Notable 2025 Holman Bible new releases include the *CSB Jesus Daily Bible* in partnership with Dwayne Milioni and Pillar Church Network, the *CSB Notetaking Bible, Revive Our Hearts Edition* in partnership with Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth and Revive Our Hearts, and the *CSB Connecting Scriptures New Testament* developed by leading biblical theology scholars Benjamin L. Gladd and G.K. Beale. In addition, 2025 saw continued expansion of CSB text Bibles—equipped with “Digital Study” tools—as well as additional Reference and Commentary resources, most notably the *Church History Handbook* and additional volumes in the trusted *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary* series and new *Christian Standard Commentary* series.

Future Plans — In 2026, the B&H Publishing Group plans to publish over 100 titles. Key releases for B&H Books include *Every Day Counts* by David Pollack, *Still Here* by Steven Curtis and Mary Beth Chapman, and *Heaven for Today: 60 Devotions on How the Life to Come Changes Your Life Right Now* by Jennifer Rothschild. Key releases for Holman Bibles and Reference include the *CSB Women’s Study Bible*, *SRT Spiral-Bound Notetaking Bible* (Five-Volume Set), the *CSB Teen Study Bible*, and the *Christian Theology Handbook*.

VII. Assist churches through the operation of Lifeway Christian Stores.

In 2025, tens of thousands of churches were served through Lifeway.com. We continue to focus on improvements to create a frictionless and delightful experience for customers visiting our website. Over the last three years, visitors to Lifeway.com have seen new features like biometric login, improved product pages, updates to the My Lifeway account tool, a new shopping cart, the addition of ratings and reviews, and a Bible comparison tool allowing customers to explore and compare up to three Bibles at a time.

In addition to Lifeway.com, Lifeway interacts with customers in a variety of channels and multiple touch points including our Customer Service Center, Customer Success Team, Church Sales team, and at our regional and national events. Lifeway hosted 27 onsite event stores in 2025. One of the values for churches obtaining resources and services directly through Lifeway is the team of experts who can help churches and church leaders find just the right resource for their ministry needs.

Southern Baptists also have access to Lifeway material through channels such as the Amazon Marketplace, retail chains such as Walmart, Hobby Lobby, Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million, and Mardel Stores, and a network of more than 500 independent Christian retailers in 45 states that serve as authorized Lifeway dealers. Through these channels, Lifeway continues to extend its reach to new markets and more customers.

Whether you’re a pastor, worship leader, children’s leader, student leader, discipleship leader, women’s ministry leader, or men’s ministry leader, we want to ensure every touch point is designed to solve specific needs in the work you do for the local church.

Future Plans — Lifeway will continue to serve and provide our resources at competitive prices through our online store at Lifeway.com and our Customer Success team, as well as provide Lifeway Stores at regional and national events. Customers will continue to see improvements at Lifeway.com as we seek to create a more customized experience for ministry leaders looking for resources specific to their ministry needs.

VIII. Assist churches through church architecture consultation and services.

Since 2013, Lifeway has worked alongside Visioneering Studios as its preferred firm to assist churches through architectural design and renovation services. This long-term relationship strengthens and expands the support available to churches as they navigate complex facility decisions. Today, Visioneering Studios is recognized as a premier nationwide faith-based, Design+Build partner with multidisciplinary studios and architectural licensure in more than 40 states.

In 2023, Visioneering expanded its integrated services with the launch of Enviropop, a wayfinding and environmental graphics studio created to help churches make their space pop through intentional, high impact visual updates. This addition strengthened Visioneering's ability to support ministries with environments that communicate clearly and elevate the guest experience.

With studios in Dallas, Nashville, and Southern California, Visioneering provides integrated services in architecture, master planning, construction, and interior environments. For more than two decades, Visioneering has partnered with ministries of every size, from new church plants to revitalizations to some of the nation's largest and fastest-growing churches, delivering creative, mission-focused spaces that support long-term ministry impact. For more information, visit www.visioneeringstudios.com.

IX. Assist churches in capital fundraising.

Auxano Clarity Consulting serves as Lifeway's preferred partner for helping churches navigate capital fundraising and vision clarity consulting. The firm equips pastors and ministry leaders with clarity around vision, mission, and strategy, while providing hands-on leadership in capital campaigns, generosity development, staff alignment, and long-term ministry planning. In October 2025, Visioneering Studios acquired Auxano from Lifeway, continuing the shared commitment to serving churches with excellence. Churches seeking strategic vision clarity planning or capital fundraising support can visit www.auxano.com for more information.

X. Ministry Assignment: Assist churches by conducting research and compiling statistics

Lifeway Research released a variety of significant research studies in 2025. These included research on the state of discipleship, student ministry and parenting, consumerism, multiplication, welcoming guests, Bible reading, church discipline, physician assisted suicide, pastor attrition, pastor wellbeing, Hispanic church planting, the state of American theology, and rural churches.

These findings and insights articles were provided on LifewayResearch.com to help pastors and church leaders understand and navigate changes in today's ministry context.

Lifeway Research continues to partner with state conventions to compile the SBC Annual Church Profile (ACP) including enhancements to track more detail on a congregation's ethnicities. Lifeway Research released additional analysis in 2025 of ACP data on baptism trends, membership trends, attendance, and church closures.

Future Plans— Lifeway Research will release research studies in 2026 on the state of discipleship, the state of theology in Canada, secularization, occasional attendees, understanding the Bible, and Artificial Intelligence.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to Lifeway Christian Resources during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: That Lifeway Christian Resources report to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 9-10, 2026, that it affirms a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7 and is committed to making progress in minority-ethnic and multi-ethnic leadership and participation at all levels of our work and ministry in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message (2000). Lifeway strives to reflect the ethnic diversity of the churches we serve and recognizes the strength of a diverse workplace. Lifeway is also committed to serving the global church by creating products that help spiritually transform people from all cultures and backgrounds and encourages churches to utilize those products to help their members know Jesus Christ and seek His kingdom. Lifeway serves an ever-increasing number of non-English-speaking individuals and non-English-speaking churches through the resources we provide. Additionally, Lifeway has, since 2016, reported on its efforts to increase ethnic participation and ethnic leadership in its Annual Ministry Report found at SBC.net



North American Mission Board

4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022

JONATHAN JARBOE, Chair

KEVIN EZELL, President

In 1845, Southern Baptists established the entity that would one day become the North American Mission Board (NAMB). Since that time, the political and cultural landscape of North America has changed many times over. Yet through every season, Southern Baptists have remained steadfast in their commitment to reach our continent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In this year's report, we celebrate the work of more than 6,000 missionaries and chaplains who serve throughout North America and around the world. Their faithful ministry is only possible because of the churches who send them and the people who give sacrificially to support their work. For that reason, this report is not simply a celebration of what God is doing through NAMB—it is a celebration of what each Southern Baptist church and every member of those congregations are doing to move the mission forward today.

As we look back on 2025, we do so with a sense of awe and heartfelt gratitude to God. Southern Baptist churches gave more than ever before to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®, making so much of our work possible. Together, we also celebrated 100 years of the Cooperative Program—an offering that has provided stability and partnership so missionaries can focus on reaching the lost rather than raising financial support. There is truly so much to be thankful for.

At NAMB, everything we do is centered on the gospel. Our evangelism team is privileged to provide tools and resources that help Southern Baptist churches equip their congregations to share Christ. Last year, Southern Baptists celebrated an increase in baptisms for the fourth consecutive year and the highest number of baptisms since 2017. Our team has distributed more than 36,000 Evangelism Kits and this year we trained more than 2,400 churches in person on how to use them. We also hosted another women's evangelism conference in 2025. In addition, more than 17,000 people heard the gospel through Crossover Dallas in June, resulting in 711 recorded salvations.

Through Send Network, we continue to partner with Southern Baptist churches to plant new churches across North America. In 2025, Southern Baptists started 792 churches. This included 699 new plants—the most since 2016—and 93 replants. With 32 new campuses and 127 new affiliations, all told, Southern Baptists added a total of 951 new congregations. Our Sending Labs trained 1,802 leaders from 1,111 churches, while 456 people attended Send Network orientation events. Our Newchurches.com remains an invaluable resource for pastors, church planters and sending churches, and in 2025 we added a theology masterclass featuring 70 new videos.

Send Relief continues to see remarkable engagement from Southern Baptist churches. In 2025, Send Relief worked directly with 1,931 churches across North America and Puerto Rico. This mobilization resulted in 44,566 individuals serving 201,202 people across diverse communities and catalyzed 84,292 gospel conversations.

Chaplaincy remains a vital part of NAMB's mission. We currently endorse and train more than 3,000 chaplains serving around the world. Through three quarters of 2025 (the data that's available at the time of this report), Southern Baptist chaplains reported presenting the gospel more than 109,000 times and counted 19,062 professions of faith and 2,702 baptisms.

The Apostle Paul asked in Romans 10:14-15, “How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher?” (CSB). Thank you, pastors and Southern Baptists, for all you do to help send those who will preach and proclaim the good news of Christ, so that many will hear and may believe.

Serving Together,

Kevin Ezell

President

North American Mission Board

Jonathan Jarboe

Trustee Chairman

North American Mission Board

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of The North American Mission Board.)

I. Assist churches in planting healthy, multiplying, evangelistic Southern Baptist Churches in the United States and Canada.

To reach people for Christ—and disciple them to reach others for Christ—North America must have strong, evangelistic, healthy churches. In addition to encouraging existing churches to be as healthy as possible, new churches are needed. These new churches require qualified church planters, and the primary developer of these missionaries is the local church.

To help churches develop leaders who may one day become church planters, NAMB has developed the Multiplication Pipeline and a Residency program for churches to implement. The Pipeline allows a church to intentionally discover and develop leaders who may one day plant a church or serve in another leadership capacity within the church. Our Multiplication Pipeline is available online for any church, free of charge, through the Send Network’s Church Development Library.

In 2025, more than 1,802 leaders from 1,111 churches attended a Sending Lab and Residency Builder. Sending Labs and Residency Builders show churches how to develop a three-part Multiplication Strategy which includes (1) a discipleship pathway, (2) ministry training, and (3) a church planting residency.

We are encouraging SBC churches to offer residencies, through which they can intentionally discover, develop, and deploy missional leaders and church planting teams.

In 2025, NewChurches.com, a site offering church-planting resources to equip church planters and sending churches, released the Theology Masterclass. This 70-video course ended the year with more than 2,000 registrations.

The NewChurches.com site also published two new eBooks this year—*What Great Pastors Do* by Kevin Spratt, and *Theology for Church Planters* by J. A. Medders. The New Churches social media accounts continue to grow—seeing 5,000 new followers and over 5,000,000 views. In addition to courses and eBooks, NewChurches.com offers free podcasts, articles, ready-to-use resources, and more to help planters and churches with the tools they need to start faithful and effective churches everywhere for everyone.

Send Network continues to provide a clear pathway for Southern Baptist churches to deploy God-called believers across North America. Send Network’s Planter Pathway provides a robust application and assessment process that allows churches to confirm the gifts, calling, and abilities of those they seek to send.

During assessment retreats, the missionary candidate and his wife spend time with church and ministry leaders from the city or region where the church will be planted. Upon endorsement, Send Network's Planter Development team then takes the baton, leading to the orientation, training, coaching, and care for all SBC planters.

In 2025, NAMB hosted 49 assessment retreats. Send Network Orientation welcomed a total of 456 attendees. During orientation, newly endorsed planters hear the vision and mission of Send Network. They're equipped to embody the network's shared values: seek first the kingdom, deepen devotion, stick together, think multiplication, and engage your city. The orientation is also a time for planters to receive critical information about being part of the Southern Baptist Convention and the importance of giving through the Cooperative Program and to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®.

The training Send Network provides enables planters to develop a contextual and missional strategy to engage their cities with the gospel, make disciples, and plant healthy churches. Send Network coaches then walk alongside planters and help them process the next steps to personal, family, and church health.

In addition to our ongoing commitment to developing planters, we are also committed to developing church planting wives. When the spouse is flourishing, her impact on her husband, their family, and the church plant is transformational. Send Network provides care and has implemented a strategy to train and coach planters' wives. We also have a team of field staff and local churches that provide care to our church planting families so that every planter is appreciated, connected, and encouraged.

NAMB also provides all Send Network Planter Pathway tools and resources to be used by Send Network state convention partners for their own process from assessment to care. Some of the benefits partners experience by using these tools and resources are:

- Planters get an excellent, seamless experience from application through their first years of planting using free, Send Network-provided resources and technology platforms at each stage of the journey.
- The convention partner saves money on systems and materials using Send Network's robust tools, processes, and personnel rather than producing and maintaining their own.
- Use of up-to-date resources and platforms that are regularly upgraded to reflect the best training methods and technology.
- Promotion of local church planting efforts utilizing Send Network's national brand recognition.

GenSend gives college students hands on experience with church planting and compassion ministry. In 2025, GenSend mobilized 206 students in 13 cities, serving 40 Send Network church plants. Together they invested 45,480 missional hours resulting in 1,731 gospel conversations.

These students served in cities across the nation through church planting and compassion ministry opportunities to reach people with the hope of the gospel. NAMB regularly hears from these students who return to the cities where they served during GenSend after they've graduated. Even those who don't return to the cities report having greater awareness of what it takes to live "on mission" wherever they go. GenSend has proven to be a valuable resource for introducing young adults to church planting and missions.

II. Assist churches in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples.

The North American Mission Board exists to serve pastors. From evangelism to Send Network to Send Relief, the goal is to come alongside pastors and churches to serve them in ways that enable them to reach their community with the hope of the gospel.

In 2025, the Evangelism team had the privilege of serving thousands of pastors and ministry leaders by providing resources and training to engage and equip their churches in evangelism, while also offering opportunities for pastors and their wives to be encouraged and refueled to lead the ministries where God has called them.

To facilitate evangelism assistance to pastors and churches, the Evangelism team is organized based on five areas of focus with each being led by a National Director:

- Personal Evangelism—JJ Washington
- Women’s Evangelism—Catherine Renfro
- Multiethnic Evangelism—Mark Hobafcovich
- GenSend Student Evangelism—Shane Pruitt
- GenSend Collegiate Evangelism—Paul Worcester

Evangelism Trainings

In 2025, the Evangelism team not only continued to provide the NAMB Evangelism Kit to churches across the SBC but also held in-person and online trainings to help provide valuable insights into how to customize the kit to each church’s context. The kit is designed to help churches develop a roadmap for creating a culture of evangelism in the life of their local congregation. NAMB has distributed 29,446 of these kits in English and 6,361 in Spanish to churches, associations, and state/regional conventions. Over 2,400 churches were represented at in-person training events in 2025. Those events focused on creating a culture of evangelism. Additionally, the Evangelism team has developed versions of the evangelism kit designed for women, youth leaders, and collegiate leaders. These versions are now available as online courses at nambevangelism.com.

Free Resources

In addition to the NAMB Evangelism kits for churches, NAMB provides resources to equip individuals to share the gospel. Tools range from prayer guides that help people be spiritually prepared to share to wristbands that serve as conversation-starters. Tract offerings provide different presentations of the gospel message, with several translated into multiple languages. More than 2 million English and 400,000 Spanish 3 Circle Conversation Guides have been distributed to churches since the resource was created, and more than 140,000 Everyday Evangelism cards have been distributed in the last year. Also, several guides designed for use with children present the gospel in an age-appropriate manner.

Refresh Retreats

NAMB hosted five Refresh Retreats for pastors and wives in 2025. These were scattered across the U.S.—Atlanta (2); The Cove, Asheville, N.C., (2); and San Deigo, California. During each retreat, there are general sessions of worship through song and biblical teaching as well as breakout sessions for pastors’ wives and free time for rest and refreshment. More than 1,000 pastors and wives attended these retreats, and they shared numerous testimonies of how the Lord provided much-needed rest, encouragement, and refreshment.

Crossover Dallas

Crossover is an annual evangelistic emphasis that takes place in the city where the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting is held. NAMB, in cooperation with state conventions and local associations, functions as a catalyst and a support system for SBC churches in the host city to take the gospel to their communities. Since NAMB has received the responsibility for the execution of Crossover, we provide the training and resources to help make Crossover a success. Eighty-nine churches, 2,935 volunteers, and 80 students from four SBC seminaries (SEBTS, SBTS, NOBTS, and SWBTS) participated in Crossover Dallas 2025 resulting in

17,033 hearing the gospel (via one-on-one and group presentations), and 711 salvations! Host churches benefit significantly from participating in Crossover, not only by sowing the seed of the gospel, but by learning evangelism best practices. Additionally, Crossover often functions as a catalyst to help host churches create or sustain a culture of evangelism in their church.

Women's Evangelism

The evangelism team hosted the second Women's Evangelism Conference, encouraging and equipping leaders to create a culture of evangelism in their ministry contexts. The team partnered with churches, associations, and state conventions that held trainings and conferences to do the same. *Women in the Mission of God* resources have been created to help ladies leverage their lives for the gospel. To date there have been over 10,000 downloads of the *Women in the Mission of God* eBook.

Next Gen

There is massive mission field of teenagers and college students who need the gospel. The North American Mission Board and the GenSend Team continue providing relevant next gen resources for youth and collegiate leaders as they reach their students and young adults with the gospel well as to mobilize them to live on mission from middle school all the way through college post-graduation. The resources can be found online at www.gensend.org.

In 2025, NAMB's Evangelism team hosted two cohorts for the Youth Leader Coaching Network (YLCN) led by Shane Pruitt. The Spring semester had more than 370 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions, and more than 180 leaders came to the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB's building in Alpharetta. The Fall semester had more than 400 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions with more than 190 leaders attending the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB. Since YLCN's launch in 2021, more than 1,400 youth leaders have attended the in-person gatherings, and more than 3,000 youth leaders have participated in the online sessions.

The Collegiate Coaching Network (CCN), led by Paul Worcester, had more than 220 college leaders attend the Fall semester in-person gathering at the NAMB building in Alpharetta. There were also more than 300 leaders who participated in the online sessions. CCN launched in the spring of 2022, and since then has had more than 600 collegiate leaders participate in the in-person gatherings and more than 900 engaged through the online sessions. Both networks equip leaders to engage their students in evangelism and discipleship.

The Evangelism team and GenSend team created two online courses for Next Gen Leaders, called "Creating a Culture of Evangelism," with one targeted specifically to Youth Leaders and the other to Collegiate Leaders. There two evangelism training courses can be found at <https://learn.namb.net>. The GenSend Podcast and YouTube channel has continued to grow and be a blessing to many next gen leaders. The podcast can be found on your favorite podcast platform.

NAMB emphasized the fourth annual SBC National Student Baptism Day on October 26, 2025. Churches across the nation gave students an opportunity to take their next steps of faith through believer's baptism. This year we received a significant number of testimonies about young people being baptized in SBC churches across the nation. It's encouraging to see so many students boldly following Jesus.

Our team also hosted two live webinars (Spring and Fall) to train next gen leaders. The Spring webinar had more than 300 leaders register, and the Fall webinar had more than 350 leaders register.

Chaplaincy

Through three quarters of 2025 (the data that's available at the time of this report), Southern Baptist chaplains reported presenting the gospel more than 109,000 times and counted 19,062 professions of faith and 2,702 baptisms. Chaplains serve in throughout various disciplines, including to the U.S. Armed Services, in hospitals, in public safety departments, in prisons as well as in the corporate setting.

Raised up and sent out by Southern Baptist churches, NAMB serves as the endorsing entity for SBC chaplains, and the chaplaincy team at NAMB facilitates training and encouragement throughout the year to encourage these chaplains to focus on evangelism.

Send Relief

NAMB supports Southern Baptist compassion ministry efforts through Send Relief. Through its Ministry Centers, events like the Send Relief Serve Tour, and other projects, Send Relief aims to see compassion ministry provide a bridge to gospel proclamation. More than 84,292 people heard the gospel through Send Relief's ministry in 2025.

When disaster strikes, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) volunteers arrive to bring help, healing, and hope to those impacted. Send Relief provides many of the resources that enable those volunteers to conduct their work, and those SBDR volunteers reported 18,439 gospel presentations and 1,535 professions of faith in 2025.

Church Planting

Since 2010, NAMB has centered much of its mission work on church planting in areas outside the South in places where there are not enough gospel-preaching churches and where Southern Baptists have not had as strong of a presence as in South states.

In 2024 (the most recent data available through the Annual Church Profile), churches planted since 2010 accounted for 63 percent of baptisms reported among SBC churches in Michigan, 57 percent of baptisms in the Dakotas, 52 percent in Utah/Idaho and 51 percent in Iowa. Overall, for all the non-South states, churches planted since 2010 accounted for 29 percent of all reported baptisms among Southern Baptist churches.

III. Assist churches by appointing, supporting and assuring accountability for missionaries serving in the United States and Canada.

NAMB currently has more than 3,000 missionaries and 3,000 endorsed chaplains. To grow the number of missionary personnel, NAMB's Send Network team has a comprehensive training resource for the local church to discover and develop future church planting missionaries. Send Network's residency program allows a church to intentionally raise up leaders who may one day plant a church or serve in another ministry within the church. Our tools for churches are available in Send Network's Church Development Library and is available free of charge.

To help churches develop leaders who may one day become church planters, NAMB has developed the Multiplication Pipeline. The Pipeline allows a church to intentionally discover and develop leaders who may one day plant a church or serve in another leadership capacity within the church. Our Multiplication Pipeline is available online for any church, free of charge, through the Send Network's Church Development Library.

For church planters, the planter pathway ensures strong accountability from assessment to planter care. NAMB's Send Network team provides one of the most robust assessments for future church planters. The online pre-assessment, followed by a two-day assessment retreat, provides critical feedback to Sending Churches which, in turn, allows them to have confidence in either the sending or the further development of their church planters.

During Send Network Orientation, we inform new planters of the vision and mission of the network and equip them to embody our network's shared values. Our Send Network training helps new planters develop a contextual strategy for making disciples in their communities. Most recently we have also developed and deployed a strategy to train and coach our planting wives via training retreats. Throughout the planting process, NAMB utilizes a quarterly reporting tool which provides Sending Churches, and other entities involved in a church plant, a clear picture of the vitality of the new church.

As housing costs in large cities continue to be a significant challenge that keeps many missionaries off the mission field, NAMB has made missionary housing available to a limited number of missionaries on a short-term basis throughout the Send Cities and some other key areas. A missionary may live in the home for up to 18 months as they are deployed or trained for deployment to their context. Increasingly, we are seeking to locate these homes near multiplying churches that are committed to regularly developing new church planters and planting churches throughout their city and region. As a planter launches his church and becomes more established, his family transitions out of NAMB's missionary housing so another missionary family can move in.

NAMB's planter and family care ministry walks alongside a church planting missionary and his family during the entire church planting process. One of the greatest dangers a missionary family faces is isolation, so we make it a priority to connect church planting missionaries with other missionaries in their area as well as other nearby churches. Events, resources, prayer, gifts, and encouragement are some of the many tangible ways our planter and family care ministry walk alongside church planting missionaries and their families, so they know they are never alone.

NAMB provides similar supervision, oversight, and resourcing for missionaries serving in other capacities. A growing number of missionaries serve in Send Relief-related assignments. NAMB continually assesses its missionary categories and roles, and our goal is to have highly qualified missionaries who are keenly focused on our primary ministry areas of church planting and compassion ministry.

Since most of our missionaries are involved with church planting, their tenure with NAMB ends once their church matures past the five-year mark. This results in fluctuation in NAMB's missionary count from year to year.

In 2025, GenSend mobilized 206 students in 13 cities where they served 40 Send Network church plants. Together they invested 45,480 missional hours resulting in 1,731 gospel conversations. GenSend remains one of NAMB's strongest pipelines, with 71% of participants interested in returning for a Second Summer and 62% considering Go2 (a two-year commitment to live on mission with a church plant after college).

NAMB also serves as the endorsing entity for Southern Baptist chaplains. As the endorser, NAMB provides oversight and assistance to chaplains, and a special committee of NAMB's trustees forms the Chaplains Commission, alongside NAMB staff, to evaluate and approve candidates who have applied to become Southern Baptist chaplains.

IV. Assist churches by providing missions education and coordinating volunteer mission opportunities for church members.

The North American Mission Board provides mission education that brings awareness of needs and how to minister to and share Christ with those who have yet to find hope in Christ. Both Send Relief and NAMB aim to create mission education that will spark a lifelong passion and advocacy for missions.

As part of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® for North American Missions, NAMB provides study lessons and videos for children, youth, and adults. On Mission magazine, NAMB's flagship publication, includes missions awareness, advocacy, and engagement features. Our annual prayer calendar not only equips Southern Baptists to pray for North American missionaries, it informs them about where the missionaries serve, the types of ministries they lead as well as their prayer needs.

Additionally, NAMB continues to circulate the North American Missions Activity Book for Children and resource Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) with missionary contacts for age-level curriculum materials produced by the auxiliary, as well as providing content review for WMU materials related to NAMB's work. NAMB produces missions videos for use in Lifeway student camps and Vacation Bible School. NAMB also assists with entity requests for materials that increase missions awareness and education, like CP Stories.

In addition to print, online, and video resources, NAMB provides experience-based mission education. Send Relief provides numerous opportunities to experience missions firsthand through our many Ministry Centers and a wide array of ministry events. Through its national efforts in 2025, Send Relief worked directly with 1,931 churches across North America and Puerto Rico. Send Relief mobilized churches to serve throughout North America, which resulted in 44,566 individuals engaging to serve 201,202 people across diverse communities. Their work catalyzed 84,292 gospel conversations.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers devoted more than 414,000 hours of service and care. Alongside and with support through Send Relief, there were more than 233,013 meals prepared and the gospel shared 18,445 times. Send Relief also catalyzed churches to participate in a Backpack Day in their local communities. There were more than 967 churches that registered for the event, and more than 60,000 backpacks distributed to local SBC churches for them to use in their Backpack Day mission project.

Send Relief leads and supports Ministry Centers as they operate throughout the United States in the day-to-day mission of showing and sharing the compassion of Jesus to "the least of these." Ministry Centers are built to engage their local communities through gospel-centered compassion and serving the vulnerable. Through its active ministries, the missionaries provide informed and in-person ministry coaching to individuals and churches. These centers host trainings and mission trips, enabling them to be hubs for churches from all over America where they can learn to replicate the ministry in their own communities. Churches, in turn, bring an intentionality to their local communities and implement the compassion ministry principles they learned through the Ministry Center. Send Relief Ministry Centers can be found in compact, urban areas, the sprawling plains of South Dakota, the rural farms of South Georgia, and the mountains of Appalachia.

Send Relief's replication coaching team is a new initiative built from the network of coaches who have experience serving in one of Send Relief's focus areas for compassion ministry. Many have worked with the vulnerable most of their adult lives and can offer expert advice to churches in a customizable, culturally appropriate way. Individuals and church leaders receive hands-on help to evaluate, investigate, and discover best practices to implement in their communities. This resource is available to any church that may be ready to take that next step. From the shallow to the deep end of the pool, replication team members are ready to listen, be a sounding board, and offer practical training.

Events are a key aspect of Send Relief's strategy in working with engaged churches. There are four main categories that meet churches where they are on their journey toward engaging in compassion ministry:

1. Catalytic Events – one day inspirational opportunities;
2. Vision Tours – allow for churches to come and see ministry centers and the ways they engage spiritual and material needs;
3. Trainings – gives theological and practical wisdom to implement compassion ministry in local communities; and
4. Mission Trips – involves training, hands-on service, and cultural engagement.

All these mission efforts are intended to enable each individual and church to replicate gospel-focused compassion ministry within their own community, contextualizing what they learned in ways that best fit their own communities.

Send Relief has launched a library of video courses with expert practitioners in each of their respective fields as part of its Church Guide to Ministry. Whether a person has been in ministry for six months or 60 years, these courses are intended to encourage and inspire with their thoughtful and time-tested methods for engaging in practical, gospel-centered compassion ministry. Five of the courses align specifically with one of the five focus areas of Send Relief: Strengthen Communities, Fight Human Trafficking, Protect Children and Families, Care for Refugees, and Respond to Crisis. Then, the newest trainings offer a deep dive into the how and why a church can Become a Trauma-Informed Church. We are called to care for the needy and “least of these” both near and far, allowing the compassion of Jesus to lead us in how to serve.

Send Relief has seen the continued impact of gospel engagement through the Send Relief Serve Tour. Events in cities across the United States have been developed in coordination with multiple state conventions. In the lead up to each event, Send Relief identifies communities’ most pressing needs by partnering with churches, associations, state conventions, local school staff, and government officials. These initiatives are driven primarily by local churches and seek to generate long-term impact for them within their communities. Send Relief coordinates with the International Mission Board to conduct international Send Relief Serve Tour events as well.

As with all Send Relief efforts, any compassion ministry project begins with the goal of sharing Christ — humanity’s ultimate Hope — at some point during the process. It is about meeting needs so as to earn the right to share the gospel.

The insight churches and local experts provide gives the Send Relief Serve Tour a unique opportunity for volunteers to make a transformative impact through the various community building and outreach projects. Send Relief coordinates these efforts by providing team trainings, prayer guides, debriefings, and rallies to help encourage volunteers to take their next steps on mission.

There has been an incredible response from churches taking part and working together with camaraderie and fellowship to reach their cities. The measurable impact from these Send Relief Serve Tour events is encouraging and inspiring, but the unseen impact will ripple throughout eternity.

From the launch of Send Relief’s Serve Tour in 2021 until the present, there have been more than 16,000 volunteers who have served 80,848 people and engaged in over 18,000 gospel conversations. The national Serve Tour’s 2026 locations and dates are:

- Miami, Fla.: Feb. 6-7, 2026
- Birmingham, Ala.: Mar. 20-21, 2026
- Salt Lake City, Utah: Apr. 17-18, 2026
- Monroe, La.: Aug. 21-22, 2026
- Toledo, Ohio: Sept. 25-26, 2026

V. Assist churches by providing leadership development

NAMB continues to make pastors our “number one customer.” As we encourage and equip pastors, it will have an exponential impact on their churches and communities. NAMB has several opportunities that allow pastors to engage in leadership development.

Refresh

In 2025, NAMB hosted five Refresh Retreats for pastors and their wives. These were scattered across the United States—Atlanta (2); The Cove (2); and San Diego, Calif. During each retreat, there are general sessions of worship through song and biblical teaching as well as breakout sessions for pastors’ wives and free time for rest and refreshment. More than 1,000 pastors and wives attended these retreats, and they shared numerous testimonies of how the Lord provided much-needed rest, encouragement, and refreshment.

Replant

In 2025, the Replant Team continued to equip pastors, denominational leaders, and churches for faithful renewal and revitalization across North America through strategic training, resources, and partnerships in their effort to see Every Church Renewed.

In February, the Replant Team hosted the AMS Lab 2025 in Alpharetta, Ga., gathering more than 300 Associational Mission Strategists from across the country. This annual training focused on strengthening associational leaders as front-line consultants to declining and plateaued churches. During the Lab, the team officially launched the Renewal Movement Kit, a comprehensive resource designed to help associations cultivate cultures of renewal. The Kit includes a newly developed Handbook for Associational Leaders, providing practical frameworks and tools for leading renewal efforts at the associational level.

The Replant Team hosted the largest Replant Summit in team history with the theme of “Every Church Renewed.” Pastors were encouraged and equipped to continue the work that God had called them to. Jason Mayo, a Replant Pastor in California, was named the Replanter of the Year.

Throughout 2025, the Replant Hub continued its transition into a centralized digital resource for pastors and denominational leaders. New content added this year included Mark Clifton’s course on Reclaiming Glory, resources for launching renewal movements, and materials connected to Falling in Love with Jesus (Again). The Hub remains a growing platform for trusted replant and revitalization resources.

The Revitalize and Replant podcast, hosted by Mark Clifton and Mark Hallock, continued to expand its reach and influence. The podcast remains one of NAMB’s top podcasts, with consistent growth in listenership as it serves pastors engaged in revitalization and replanting work. In 2025, the Revitalize and Replant Podcast released over 75 episodes that saw 116,861 downloads and 48,174 unique listeners.

Significant ongoing work continued across the rural church landscape, led by Andy Addis. Through rural cohorts and targeted events, the Replant Team provided encouragement and practical support for pastors facing isolation, vocational identity, and limited resources unique to rural ministry contexts.

In addition to these efforts, the Replant Team maintained intentional focus on serving often-overlooked leaders, including replant pastors’ wives, bivocational pastors, Spanish-speaking pastors, and urban pastors, walking alongside them with training, encouragement, and contextualized support.

Pastoral Leadership

Since 2023, Ken Whitten has led NAMB's Pastoral Leadership team. Whitten comes alongside pastors to care for them and assist in their leadership development. Whitten's main goal through NAMB's pastoral leadership ministry is to help pastors engage with other pastors, equip them for the daily grind of ministry, and encourage them to live out their calling.

He works with NAMB's Resources and Marketing team to produce resources such as "Equipping Pastors with Ken Whitten" and highlight a variety of practical and free tools for pastors. These are featured on namb.net/pastors.

Next Gen

NAMB's Next Gen ministries through GenSend seek to equip student leaders with the resources they need to develop their abilities to lead their ministries more effectively. Through Shane Pruitt and Paul Worcester, NAMB coordinates the Youth Leader Coaching Network and the Collegiate Coaching Network.

In 2025, NAMB's Evangelism team hosted two cohorts for the Youth Leader Coaching Network (YLCN) led by Shane Pruitt. The Spring semester had more than 370 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions, and more than 180 leaders came to the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB's building in Alpharetta. The Fall semester had more than 400 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions with more than 190 leaders attending the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB. Since YLCN's launch in 2021, more than 1,400 youth leaders have attended the in-person gatherings, and more than 3,000 youth leaders have participated in the online sessions.

The Collegiate Coaching Network (CCN), led by Paul Worcester, had over 220 college leaders attend the Fall semester in-person gathering at the NAMB building in Alpharetta. There were also over 300 leaders who participated in the online sessions. CCN launched in the spring of 2022, and since then has had more than 600 collegiate leaders participate in the in-person gatherings and more than 900 engaged through the online sessions. Both networks equip leaders to engage their students in evangelism and discipleship.

Through GenSend Summer, NAMB trains the next generation in missions and equips college students to live "on mission" for the sake of the Great Commission. In 2025, GenSend mobilized 206 students in 13 cities, serving 40 Send Network church plants. Together they invested 45,480 missional hours resulting in 1,731 gospel conversations. GenSend remains one of NAMB's strong pipelines, with 71% of participants interested in returning for a Second Summer and 62% considering Go2 (a two-year commitment to live on mission with a church plant after college).

VI. Assist churches in relief ministries to victims of disaster and other people in need.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) continues to be a positive and constructive force for creating avenues for practically caring for families, showing the kindness of Jesus, and sharing the gospel. State and local leaders continually seek to engage SBDR for long-term assistance in their communities. Send Relief seeks to catalyze churches for Crisis Response, specifically to support state convention SBDR teams.

In addition to the logistical support provided to SBDR, Send Relief has two web-based trainings for anyone to access: 1) How to Respond to a Crisis and 2) "How to Be a Disaster Ready Church." These resources help a church prepare and respond effectively when crisis strikes. These and other resources are available at courses.SendRelief.org.

Send Relief has also worked with SBDR leadership to strengthen our ability to respond effectively in feeding and crisis response management by updating and continuing to strengthen our training standards.

Throughout 2025 there have been consistent rebuild efforts, post Hurricane Helene, from several states including the North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee Baptist conventions rebuilding hundreds of homes and personal bridges damaged by this destructive and deadly storm.

Send Relief worked to strengthen the ability of SBDR feeding teams to acquire the necessary resources by engaging with The Salvation Army (TSA) to develop and enhance Southern Baptists' ministry partnership with TSA sharing food resources and SBDR supplying chaplains to minister at TSA food distribution sites. In 2025 Send Relief and The Salvation Army signed a national memorandum of understanding and continue to explore ways that we can partner to increase our capacity to bring real help and the hope of Christ to disaster survivors.

SBDR teams responded to 84 crises during 2025. In serving communities during these times, SBDR volunteers contributed to the following statistics:

**SBDR Summary Activity Reported
2025**

Professions of Faith	1,535
Gospel Presentations	18,439
Volunteer Days	44,001
Work Hours	414,322
Total Meals Prepared	233,013

Along with responding to crisis, Send Relief focuses on four other areas of compassion ministry: strengthening communities, caring for refugees, protecting families and children, and fighting human trafficking. Across those remaining four areas, Send Relief engaged 44,566 volunteers, served 201,202 individuals, and impacted 1,931 churches, allowing 84,292 people to hear the gospel.

VII. Assist churches in reaching and mobilizing college and university students in the United States and Canada.

There is massive mission field of teenagers and college students in need of the gospel. The North American Mission Board and the GenSend Team continues to provide relevant next gen resources for youth leader and collegiate leaders as they reach their students and young adults with the gospel and mobilize them to live on mission from middle school all the way through college post-graduation. The resources can be found online at www.gensend.org.

In 2025, NAMB's Evangelism team hosted two cohorts for the Youth Leader Coaching Network (YLCN) led by Shane Pruitt. The Spring semester had more than 370 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions, and more than 180 leaders came to the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB's building in Alpharetta. The Fall semester had more than 400 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions with more than 190 leaders attending the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB. Since YLCN's launch in 2021, more than 1,400 youth leaders have attended the in-person gatherings, and more than 3,000 youth leaders have participated in the online sessions.

The Collegiate Coaching Network (CCN), led by Paul Worcester, had over 220 college leaders attend the Fall semester in-person gathering at the NAMB building in Alpharetta. There were also over 300 leaders who participated in the online sessions. CCN launched in the spring of 2022, and since then has had more than 600 collegiate leaders participate in the in-person

gatherings and more than 900 engaged through the online sessions. Both networks equip leaders to engage their students in evangelism and discipleship.

The Evangelism team and GenSend team created two online courses for Next Gen Leaders, called “Creating a Culture of Evangelism,” with one targeted specifically to youth leaders and the other to collegiate leaders. These two evangelism training courses can be found at <https://learn.namb.net>. The GenSend Podcast and YouTube channel has continued to grow and be a blessing to many next gen leaders. The podcast can be found on every major podcast platform.

NAMB emphasized the fourth annual SBC National Student Baptism Day on October 26, 2025. Churches across the nation gave students an opportunity to take their next steps of faith through believer’s baptism. This year we received a significant number of testimonies about young people being baptized in SBC churches across the nation. It’s incredibly encouraging to see the so many students who are boldly following Jesus.

The team also hosted two live webinars (one in the spring and one in the fall) to train next gen leaders. The spring webinar had over 300 leaders register, and the fall webinar had more than 350 leaders register.

The spiritual lostness in North America with teenagers and college students is great. The need to reach them with the gospel is urgent. In 2026, the Evangelism team will continue sharing our current resources, creating new ones, and promoting online and in-person trainings to help churches and ministries create a culture of evangelism in their church to change the trajectory of the ever-growing number of young people who do not know Jesus.

In 2025, GenSend mobilized 206 students in 13 cities, serving 40 Send Network church plants. Together they invested 45,480 missional hours resulting in 1,731 gospel conversations. GenSend remains one of NAMB’s strongest pipelines, with 71% of participants interested in returning for a second summer and 62% considering Go2 (a two-year commitment to live on mission with a church plant after college).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the listed Ministry Assignment, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how you are accomplishing the listed Ministry Assignments?

I. Assist churches in planting healthy, multiplying, evangelistic Southern Baptist Churches in the United States and Canada.

The biggest challenge Southern Baptists face in the effort to plant more churches is the need for more churches that will cultivate church planting missionaries and become Multiplying Churches. It is critical that Southern Baptists add churches annually to keep up with population growth and stay ahead of church closures. We work with churches and our other SBC ministry partners to assist in these efforts.

Send Network’s Mobilization Pathway helps churches take their next missional step in church planting. The rising generation of church planters will come out of existing churches, and this tool is designed to help a local church participate in the goal of reaching North America through church planting. It highlights the various ways that churches can get involved and grow in the process of church planting.

In 2025, 71 percent of the applicants who completed NAMB’s online church planter pre-assessment scored high enough to receive an invitation to one of our in-person assessment retreats. Of those who attended, 81 percent were approved for moving forward as a church planter. In 2025, NAMB hosted 49 assessment retreats.

While we continue to sharpen our standards for prospective church planters, we also have increasing expectations for Sending Churches. We now require Sending Churches to accompany their planter to his assessment. This helps those churches further understand their role and deepens the bond between church plant and Sending Church.

To turn this challenge into opportunity, we must help churches develop leaders who may one day become church planters. Some churches already have a plan in place for maturing leaders. For those that do not, we need more churches to start church planting residencies. This allows a church to intentionally raise up prepared and qualified planters from within their congregation.

Along with residencies, NAMB and Send Network generate content for newchurches.com, which includes online courses, master classes in church planting, articles, e-books, and podcasts. NAMB's Church Development Library also provides resources and training for Sending churches.

As endorsed church planter numbers increase, so will our need for more Supporting and Sending Churches. NAMB takes every opportunity to encourage each SBC church to be on mission by actively and intentionally starting and supporting new churches.

II. Assist churches in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples.

The biggest challenge in evangelism remains helping churches create and maintain a culture of evangelism rather than just implementing a short-term campaign. A culture of evangelism builds evangelism into the DNA of every ministry, gathering, and aspect of the church.

The NAMB evangelism team is continuing to serve pastors and ministry leaders in such a way that helps them develop the culture of evangelism.

In 2023, NAMB launched the NAMB Evangelism Kit and began hosting evangelism trainings that walk pastors through a process for creating a culture of evangelism. In 2025, the Evangelism team not only continued to provide the NAMB Evangelism Kit to churches across the SBC but also held in-person and online trainings to help provide valuable insights into how to customize the kit to each church's context.

The kit is designed to help churches develop a roadmap for creating a culture of evangelism in the life of the local church. NAMB has distributed 29,446 of these kits in English and 6,361 in Spanish to churches, associations, and state/regional conventions. Over 2,400 churches attended in-person training events in 2025 that were focused on creating a culture of evangelism. Additionally, the Evangelism team has developed online course versions of the evangelism kit for women, youth leaders, and collegiate leaders. These versions are now available as online courses at nambevangelism.com.

Discouragement, loneliness, and burnout among pastors is another great challenge. NAMB hosted five Refresh Retreats for pastors and wives in 2025. These were scattered across the U.S.—Atlanta (2); The Cove, Asheville, NC (2); and San Deigo, California. During each retreat, there are general sessions of worship through song and biblical teaching as well as breakout sessions for pastors' wives and free time for rest and refreshment. More than 1,000 pastors and wives attended these retreats, and they shared numerous testimonies of how the Lord provided much-needed rest, encouragement, and refreshment.

For our next gen evangelism efforts, one of the challenges is to help students live on mission and influence their friends with the gospel. The best evangelists for Generation Z are those in Generation Z who are passionate about Jesus and who have their hearts broken over the spiritual lostness of their generation.

In 2026, our highest priority with middle school, high school, and college student leaders will be to equip, resource, network, and coach leaders to help them be as effective as possible to reach, disciple, and mobilize Gen Z and Gen Alpha with the gospel. We have developed online courses based on the principles found in the NAMB Evangelism Kit that are designed specifically for student and collegiate leaders. Gensend.org is the hub for NAMB's resources and tools that support next gen leaders in their mission fields and ministry contexts. We'll also have coaching networks and webinars for ongoing learning and growth opportunities for leaders.

There is also a concentrated effort to help our churches focus on calling out the called and discipling a whole generation of future ministry leaders through callingoutthecalled.com, which is a hub of teaching videos and mentoring guides for both leaders and students.

III. Assist churches by appointing, supporting and assuring accountability for missionaries serving in the United States and Canada.

As stated in Challenge I, we need more Sending Churches and qualified church planters to meet the goal of planting as many new churches each year as are needed. We continue to evaluate the effectiveness of resources and update them to answer the needs of our missionaries and sending churches.

We will continue to promote, develop, and hone our tools and processes to ensure that the best and most effective missions personnel are appropriately placed, consistently cared for, and held accountable.

Overall, NAMB maintains that the best missional strategy for reaching North America takes place primarily through church planting and compassion ministry.

Lostness is an ongoing problem facing North America as the number of those who report faith in Christ continues declining. NAMB estimates that approximately 281 million people in North America are currently lost and Send Network's vision is to help Southern Baptists start enough new churches over the next 10 years to see Christianity make a one percent gain in North America. This is an enormous challenge.

Currently North America and Europe are two continents on which Christianity is on the decline while others have seen growth in Christianity in recent years.

Send Network's vision is one that, Lord willing, Southern Baptists will be able to rally around over the course of the next decade, which will inspire and encourage more missionaries onto the field for church planting.

As we continue to face the challenge of helping churches discover, develop, and deploy missionaries and planters — especially into under-reached and underserved communities — NAMB continues to engage the next generation through projects like Journeyman and GenSend. These initiatives encourage college graduates to start their careers and live on mission in strategic cities where new plants can benefit from their experience, skills, and passion for evangelism. We continue to mobilize and engage the next generation in evangelism, developing their skills and hearts for missions and discipleship.

NAMB's Journeyman missionary program (similar to the International Mission Board's) is a two-year, fully funded opportunity that places recent college graduates in Send Cities and other significant ministry hubs. Our hope is that these programs, and others, will gain momentum in the coming years and cultivate missionary hearts in many members of the next generation and cause them to want to serve in long-term mission roles.

IV. Assist churches by providing missions education and coordinating volunteer mission opportunities for church members.

An ongoing challenge in this area is making sure that we meet the needs of churches and church members. NAMB receives input and reviews metrics to determine how best to adjust to meet that challenge. As NAMB seeks to enhance our mission education efforts and provide opportunities to engage more Southern Baptists in mission work, we expect to add training and mission education resources, continue increased access for Spanish speakers, and add more focused resources for any size church to engage in missions across North America.

Regarding new training resources, Send Relief has launched and is actively curating and producing training resources (ministry guides, eBooks, and video-based courses from trusted partners) for the Send Relief resource webpage, which offers materials that assist churches in understanding the principles of compassion ministry while also helping them take their next steps in engaging in one of the five focus areas of compassion ministry in their own communities. Send Relief's resources currently offer a range of training materials from ministry guides and eBooks to self-paced video courses. These efforts are intentionally curated or created to resource and inspire churches and individuals towards "living on mission" in their own community through compassion-based evangelism.

Downloadable resources, such as eBooks, are some of the easily accessible training content that are being added for churches and church leaders to develop practical, in-depth knowledge of how and why to pursue compassion ministry. These will continue to be theologically sound resources designed to equip churches that want to engage in compassion ministry in their local context. The eBooks provide resources that complement the video-based Church Guide to Ministry courses that NAMB and Send Relief have produced and continue to develop. We have also published shorter versions of our eBooks that facilitate quick access to theologically sound compassion ministry principles as well as practical steps to engage in compassion ministry locally. They lay the groundwork for guiding churches to replicate compassion ministry in their own context with foundational theological principles as well as practical ministry steps.

Regarding mission education efforts, we realize we must provide opportunities for students and adults to engage in missions in tangible and practical ways by raising awareness about the needs on the field and the ways Southern Baptists can be involved. NAMB and Send Relief have created missions experiences that are currently available, and we are currently developing more opportunities through our ministry centers across the nation.

As we assist churches, our 2026 national goal is to have approximately 234 mission trips available through our various ministry centers. Opportunities to register for these trips are available through SendRelief.org/trips. Each mission trip involves specific training that helps participants incorporate the principles of compassion ministry so they can return and implement best practices and create service initiatives in their own communities.

A constant theme that arises in ministry to the vulnerable is the impact of trauma. Raising the level of trauma awareness for those who are called to serve "the least of these" is a critical component of loving and caring for those who have experienced tragedy.

Send Relief's newest course, *How to Become a Trauma-Informed Church*, offers churches practical and biblical principles to equip ministry leaders to serve the least of these in their congregations and communities. This course is available for anyone who desires to use it to equip staff and volunteers to serve the least of these from a biblical worldview.

Send Relief now has four certified trauma coaches to help train others in how to identify and deal with trauma. Through continued efforts, those coaches will continue to be available to work with churches directly.

Compassion Ministry Catalysts (CMCs) is a new category for endorsed self-funded missionaries with NAMB and Send Relief. These CMCs are a direct part of the ministry and strategy for Send Relief in encouraging the church and inspiring individuals to make a gospel impact. It is through CMCs that gospel ministry and relationships are cultivated across the nation, and these CMCs work directly with their sending church and Send Relief to determine their type and place of ministry work.

V. Assist churches by providing leadership development

NAMB remains committed to equipping and empowering church leaders in diverse and practical ways, addressing the evolving challenges and opportunities that come with replanting and revitalizing churches across North America. Through these efforts, NAMB seeks to strengthen local church leadership and foster a sustainable movement of church renewal in alignment with its ministry assignments.

Enhanced Digital Resources: To allow the best stewardship of travel budgets, NAMB will continue expanding virtual training resources, creating webinars, digital toolkits, and online resource libraries. This approach ensures broad access to quality materials, allowing leaders across North America to access resources at their convenience.

Greater Collaboration with State Conventions: To address the nuanced needs of various communities, NAMB will prioritize collaboration with state conventions to develop tailored leadership development strategies, including joint conferences, localized training, and resource-sharing initiatives.

Focus on Hispanic and African American Leadership Development: Recognizing the importance of equipping leaders from every background, NAMB will increase support for underrepresented groups, including initiatives for African American and Hispanic church leaders. This focus will help our church renewal efforts reflect and meet the needs of a broader spectrum of communities.

Expanding Learning Opportunities for Bi-vocational and Rural Pastors: Given the challenges of rural ministry, NAMB will prioritize creating learning communities and providing context-specific resources for bi-vocational and rural pastors, addressing their unique needs for church renewal and pastoral support.

VI. Assist churches in relief ministries to victims of disaster and other people in need.

Disaster Relief

In 2025, Send Relief continued to supply food resources that enabled SBDR kitchens to provide gap-feeding until other partners could begin supplying food. Send Relief continues to explore creative options with SBDR leadership to ensure our ability to provide much needed food to disaster survivors. Send Relief signed a national memorandum of understanding with The Salvation Army (TSA) in 2025 to strengthen our alliance in feeding and providing spiritual care to disaster survivors as one means of enhancing our SBDR feeding capacity. Alliance with TSA has proved effective and worked well on state and national levels in recent years.

Since there are continued changes in national disaster response capacities by other entities, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) and Send Relief are being asked more frequently to increase the supplies being sent into devastated communities. We anticipate this need for supplies will continue increasing in the future.

SBDR and Send Relief are always working in coordination to improve how we are able to serve communities and churches beyond the initial response period. There are a number of state conventions that have undertaken rebuild initiatives and are doing it well. In that same spirit, we are reviewing how efforts like these could be expanded to incorporate and equip more Southern Baptist partners in providing similar long-term services.

Continued Need for Compassion Awareness and Education

Send Relief had the opportunity in 2025 and beyond to continue expanding our compassion ministry to reach people in need outside of disaster relief. One of the responsibilities Send Relief continues to refine is how to further inspire and encourage the practical application of gospel compassion, as seen through James 1. We are actively developing classroom and experiential training, catalyzing Southern Baptists to better love our neighbors while opening doors for sharing the gospel.

Virtual Training offers the opportunity to multiply the reach to a wider audience through experienced practitioners who are still serving daily in the trenches of gospel work.

In-Person Coaching allows church leaders and lay members to dialogue, consult, and receive training in how to effectively meet physical needs while verbally sharing the good news of Jesus in merciful ways. Send Relief coaches work as advisors who can help churches or associations strategize their missional approach within their local communities.

Trauma Awareness

Trauma is a common issue for the vulnerable, “least of these.” Send Relief has launched a new trauma awareness training that intentionally seeks to guide churches through how they can respond to individuals who have experienced any type of trauma.

Through our ministry centers across North America, we expect to expand our reach to those in need by bringing physical and emotional help to meet those complex needs alongside Send Relief’s efforts to share the eternal hope found in the gospel.

VII. Assist churches in reaching and mobilizing college and university students in the United States and Canada.

One challenge in our role of assisting churches in reaching and mobilizing students is the fact that there is a variety of models, methods, and organizations in our SBC tribe. We have campus-based organizations, large church-based ministries, and collegiate-focused church planting efforts all taking place. This is an advantage in the sense that it takes all kinds of ministry to reach all kinds of students. The harvest is plentiful, and the laborers are few, so having varied ministries helps put more laborers onto the field. The challenge arises when it comes to communicating with the various leaders and influencers in each of these streams and finding meaningful ways to partner with each one of them.

There are also opportunities to bring more unity between the different streams of collegiate ministry. Our GenSend Team, along with our National Collegiate Director and our National Next Gen Director, has been able to help bring a sense of unity and collaboration between the different streams by building partnerships with every major SBC collegiate ministry network across North America. God has given us favor and many open doors to lead trainings and involve leaders in our Collegiate Coaching Network.

The Collegiate Coaching Network (CCN) is revolutionary in the sense that it’s accomplishing something that has rarely, if ever, been done before in the SBC. It is bringing together some of the best leaders and influencers from three different collegiate strategies (campus-based, church-based, and collegiate church planting) and creating one unified learning and networking

community with the shared goal of reaching and mobilizing college students. There also continues to be more opportunities for us to lead one-day trainings for leaders centered on building evangelistic momentum and training college students to live on mission. There is also the Youth Leader Coaching Network (YLCN) for middle and high school student leaders as well. Spring is for YLCN Alumni while the fall is for first time attendees. More information can be found at www.youthleadercoachingnetwork.com.

GenSend.org is the hub for multiple resources and tools to help next gen leaders in their mission fields and ministry contexts. We also have evangelism tools, "Calling out the Called" resources, and webinars (along with other resources) for continual learning and growth opportunities for next gen leaders.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to North American Mission Board during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

"That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year's Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs."

Response: As we have reported for several years in our annual SBC Ministry Report, NAMB strives to ensure its leadership represents the multiethnic landscape of North America and our churches. NAMB also provides resources that equip ethnic pastors and other leaders.

Many of our principal leaders within the Send Network reflect a diversity of ethnic backgrounds, including our vice president of regions and our director for the West Region. Additionally, Send Network Español is dedicated to Hispanic church planting and is led by an individual of Latin American heritage.

Most Send Relief ministry centers are located in non-Anglo or minority-majority communities. Amidst the wide work of Send Relief National, 30 percent of those serving on ministry center teams are of non-Anglo ethnicities.

Puerto Rico is a major focus of attention in NAMB church planting efforts, and a pair of ministry centers on the island focus on responding to crisis, strengthening communities and protecting children and families. One center can house short-term mission teams and has the capacity to serve 100 volunteers on a weekly basis. Long term, this ministry center will support ongoing mercy and compassion ministries with a specific focus on poverty needs. There are more than 50 Southern Baptist churches and church plants reaching the island.

Send Relief has also been active in the Diaspora Missions Collective, a collaboration between different Southern Baptist organizations that focuses on assisting churches to engage people groups who have been scattered internationally and domestically.

In 2023, NAMB hosted a multiethnic evangelism training event that brought together more than 120 participants from 45 distinct language or affinity groups. This event marked a significant milestone as one of the inaugural initiatives of NAMB's newly established multiethnic evangelism team, which is led by an individual of Romanian descent. Additionally, NAMB's personal evangelism team is headed by a leader of African American heritage.

As the ethnic diversity of North America continues to increase, NAMB remains dedicated to engaging and serving this ever-changing mission field. We are committed to partnering with highly qualified, Christ-centered, biblically grounded missionaries and staff who will help advance this mission.

2. SBC Referral: To encourage NAMB to develop and grow special needs ministries available to SBC churches.

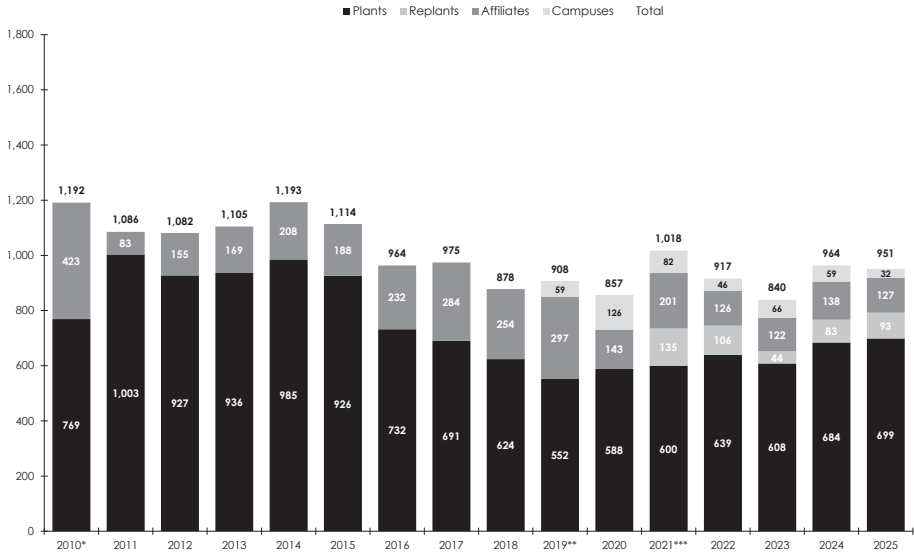
Motion: Shannon Diehl, Maryland

“That the North American Mission Board encourage Send Relief or another entity to develop resources to help churches develop and grow ministries to children and individuals with special needs.”

Response: NAMB firmly believes that every human life is sacred and created in God's image and therefore possesses inherent dignity and value. We commend the many Southern Baptist churches that are already making a meaningful impact through special needs ministries, and we encourage other churches seeking to strengthen their efforts to explore available resources and learn from successful examples.

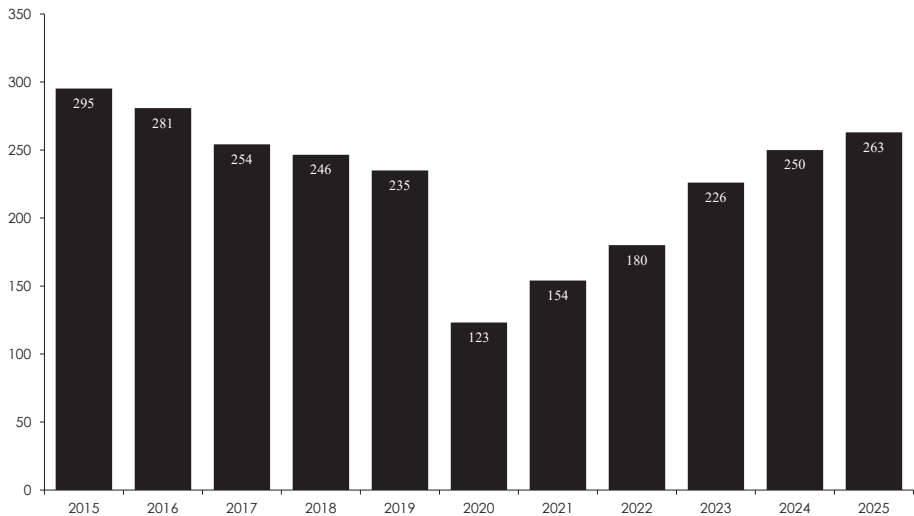
At its September 23 meeting in Nashville, Tenn., the SBC Executive Committee voted to appoint a task force to study the ministry opportunities presented in this motion and present its findings to messengers at the SBC Annual Meeting in Orlando in June 2026. NAMB values the dedication of those serving on this task force and, in deference to their efforts, NAMB declines to take further action on the motion at this time.

Figure 1—New Congregations (Church Plants Plus New Affiliates), SBC, 2010 - 2025



Sources: 1. Reports from State Directors of Missions compiled by the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, GA. 2. New SBCIDs created in SBC Workspace
 * 2010 was the first year a SBC ID # was required for each reported congregation. In 2025, there were 792 new church starts and replants, 32 new campuses, and 127 new affiliates.
 ** In 2019 there was a methodology change to capture new plants, affiliates and campuses. They are now identified at the time the SBCID is created in SBC Workspace.
 *** Beginning in 2021, plants and replants are reported as separate categories. In prior years, those categories have aggregated as plants.

Figure 2—Baptisms Reported by SBC Churches, 2015 – 2025 (In Thousands)



Source: Annual Church Profile, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, TN
 *2025 Baptisms as reported from the LifeWay ACP Statistical Summary, 2026

INSTITUTIONS



GATEWAY SEMINARY

Biblical • Missional • Global

3210 E. Guasti Rd., Ontario, California 91761

PHILLIP KELL, Chair
ADAM GROZA, President

Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention continues to fulfill our mission of shaping leaders who expand God's kingdom around the world. You have six great seminaries, and we are honored to be your seminary in the West.

The fulfillment of our mission is guided by three core values: biblical, missional, and global. We faithfully and joyfully teach the biblical doctrines expressed in the Baptist Faith and Message; truths that unite us as Southern Baptists and propel our collective efforts to advance the Gospel.

At Gateway Seminary, we shape leaders who are confident in the inerrant truth of God's Word and competent to teach it with character shaped by God's Word. Gateway students graduate with a heart for the nations. God's eternal mission is to redeem a people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. This past year, more students participated in fully funded international mission trips than ever before in our seminary's history. These trips, which we call Beyond Trips, are funded by the Go Grant. Students graduate with a theology of missions from the Bible, and an experience on the field working with IMB missionaries to see firsthand the missionary task. Some students return home with a call to serve full-time on the mission field, but all students return better equipped to advocate for our collective efforts in global missions.

Gateway is launching a new 4+1 mission degree in partnership with California Baptist University. This new degree, called the Master of Missions Essentials, allows any student to add a mission degree that meets IMB requirements for full-time missionary service. Any student with a degree in engineering, health care, or business can add a mission degree and be qualified to use their training in the mission field. Gateway is your mission's pipeline from the West to the world.

Gateway Seminary remains committed to contextual and decentralized theological education. We bring seminary to people through a network of campuses. Our main campus, with residential housing, is located in the Los Angeles area, with additional full-degree-granting campuses in Phoenix, Denver, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Portland/Vancouver. We want students to be able to access in-person theological education without leaving their church or mission field. This fall, trustees of Gateway Seminary unanimously approved the start of our first new campus in 30 years. The Hawaii Campus of Gateway Seminary will begin offering classes in Fall 2026. It will allow students from churches in the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention to complete their seminary degrees in person while continuing to serve in their churches and advance the Gospel in their communities.

Gateway is also launching a teaching site in San Diego, California. This new teaching site will serve the 3.3 million people who live in the send-city of San Diego and surrounding communities. We also launched Gateway Español, allowing students to complete a master's degree at Gateway in Spanish.

For the first time in our history, Gateway has a theological journal. This fall, we launched the Gateway Journal of Theology. At the Annual Meeting in Orlando, we will have copies of the

Gateway Journal of Theology. We hope you can stop by the booth to pick up a copy and read articles that strengthen ministry leaders.

Fellow Southern Baptists, praise God and thank you! All of this is possible because of God's grace and your generous support of Gateway Seminary through the Cooperative Program. Thank you for the support you provide, the students you send, and the prayers you offer.

Yours in Christ,
Adam Groza
President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of Gateway Seminary.)

Please describe accomplishments, relative to each of your convention assigned Ministry Assignments, in the past year that create "value added" to the Cooperative Program dollars that Gateway Seminary receives.

I. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Gateway continues to deliver quality Christ-centered theological education with an emphasis on contextualization and leadership development. Gateway operates five full degree granting campuses in the urban centers of the West (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Portland, and Phoenix), and also offers face-to-face instruction at teaching sites in Sacramento (CA), Fresno (CA), Salt Lake City (UT), Las Vegas (NV), Boston (MA), and in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Ukraine. Gateway Trustees also voted to approve a new regional campus during the fall 2025 board meeting that will begin offering in-person classes in Hawaii in fall 2026. All of our master's program are also available fully online.

In addition, many courses are also available remotely as students can join them via video conferencing. Online, remote and regional campuses extend the Gateway ministry across the western US and beyond. Students are enabled to remain in their ministries while receiving quality instruction with abundant professor-to-student and student-to-student interaction. Gateway has full ten-year accreditation with both WSCUC and ATS. In fall 2024 Gateway Seminary launched a new 36 credit master's degree, the Master of Biblical and Theological Studies (MBTS). The MBTS was primarily designed as a +1 degree to provide ministry training to students from California Baptist University who are serving churches in California. We also launched the first year of Beyond Team trips in which 58 Gateway students and faculty went on fully-funded international mission trips for credit. Every Gateway Seminary student can go on a fully-funded international mission trip as part of their studies because of a generously funded four million dollar endowment.

II. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Gateway continues to deliver multiple DMin cohorts annually. Some DMin cohorts provide focused advanced leadership training through specialized seminars concentrating in a particular area of ministry. DMin also offers cohorts face-to-face, remotely by video conferencing, and in blended modes. In all, in the 2024-25 academic year, the seminary provided professional doctoral education to a total of 233 DMin candidates. DMin students at Gateway mature in ministerial leadership and grow in meaningful peer relationships.

III. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Gateway continues to offer a PhD in Biblical Studies and a PhD in Theological Studies. Graduates of Gateway's PhD program serve in Christian educational institutions and in local churches. The program is designed for students to remain in their ministry leadership position and to commute to campus for seminars. Each semester begins with an intensive seminar week and then continues with monthly Saturday meetings to the conclusion of the semester. This scheduling has allowed Gateway to serve not only student living in proximity to the Ontario campus, but also leaders across the SBC. Gateway's PhD program is designed challenge students academically, grow their network of like minded colleagues, and equip them to expand God's kingdom through a teaching ministry. In all, in the 2024-25 academic year, the seminary provided research doctoral education to a total of 41 PhD candidates.

Based on each of Gateway Seminary's Convention-assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how Gateway Seminary is accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

I. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Gateway Seminary offers 9 master's degree programs that combine the best of academic studies with significant professional training to prepare men and women called to a multiplicity of ministry expressions. Done within small class settings, professors join students in a pilgrimage of learning that often resembles a mentoring relationship. Gateway's most comprehensive master's degree program continues to be the 90 credit hour Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree, designed to equip pastors, church planters, and other ministry leaders for the local church. Gateway will also launch a fully revised 36-credit mission degree in fall 2026 in order to better train recent college graduates who are called to the mission field. Spring 2026 will also mark the launch of Gateway Español, full degree programs offered online in Spanish. In spring, 2026 we expect to send 73 students and faculty on fully funded Beyond Team international mission trips. We will also launch a new teaching site in San Diego in spring 2026.

II Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Gateway continues to offer a strong DMin degree emphasizing personal growth as well as leadership training. It operates with the premise that a person ministers out of who they are as much as out of what they know. Gateway continues to launch new DMin cohorts in English as well as Korean and Mandarin. Studies are being conducted to explore the feasibility of a DMin in Spanish. In summer, 2025 Gateway hired David Johnson, former director of the Arizona Mission Network of Southern Baptist, to be our new Director of the DMin Program.

III. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Gateway continues to offer a stable PhD program utilizing full-time and affiliated faculty. The work of the Jonathan Edwards Center at Gateway, a strong relationship with California Baptist University, and a strong presence at professional society meetings (such as ETS) provide growing avenues of recruitment to the program. In addition, a renewed focus on resourcing and promoting faculty scholarship has also raised Gateway's research and academic profile. Gateway is developing plans to launch a PhD in Church History alongside its current doctoral degrees in Biblical Studies and Theology.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Campus	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
	Total Enrollment	Total FTE	Total Enrollment	Total FTE	Total Enrollment	Total FTE
Ontario	800	237	876	209	861	187
Arizona	73	27	83	26	66	19
Bay Area	30	8	81	14	32	9
Pacific Northwest	26	4	20	3	24	3
Rocky Mountain	46	9	32	9	31	6
International/Other	--	--	41	11	132	21
Advance Ministry Training	643	187	561	146	587	60
Online Program	386	208	320	170	314	142
Video Access Program	156	106	133	92	183	70
Online/Video Combined	99		93		86	
Totals	2,259	785	2,240	680	2,316	517

Enrollment Report by Degree Program
Prebaccalaureate

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Diplomas	155	158	240
Diplomas – Advance	843	844	870

Basic Degrees

Master of Divinity	311	265	244
Master of Arts	475	486	539
Special Status	170	202	141

Advance Degrees

Master of Theology	14	11	8
Doctor of Ministry	263	239	233
Doctor of Philosophy	28	35	41

Totals	2,259	2,240	2,316
---------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

Enrollment Report Summary

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total Enrollment	2,259	2,240	2,316
Total FTE Generated	785	680	517
SBC Fundable FTE	242	195	236
SBC Formula FTE	400	400	400
New Students - FALL	413	591	570
Total Graduates	402	406	272

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to Gateway Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: With campuses in the major urban areas of the Western United States, Gateway Seminary is one of the most ethnically diverse student bodies in the world. We believe that our ethnic and cultural diversity aids in the fulfillment of our mission of shaping leaders who expand God’s kingdom around the world. Through the Go Grant, students at Gateway are able to go on an overseas mission trip to develop a greater appreciation for global missions and love for the nations. Throughout the curriculum, Gateway faculty speak to the global problem of racism. A document adopted by Trustees in May 2021 titled “Addressing Racism and Racial Issues Throughout the Curriculum at Gateway Seminary: A Sampling of Faculty Practices” is available at gs.edu/transparency.

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer, and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: Gateway appreciates the great necessity and importance of prayer. All Gateway students are instructed in the biblical theology and faithful practice of prayer in courses such as Evangelism (I1311), Spiritual Formation (P1115), Church History (L1112), NT Introduction (S1312), Strategic Discipleship (E1116), Bible Teaching (E1113), Pastoral Ministry & Leadership (P1511), Songs & Prayers of the Christian Faith (P2564), The Doctrine of Prayer (L2217), Missions and Spiritual Conflict (I2150), and Spiritual Sources for Mission (I2213). Additionally, prayer is a priority in the community life of Gateway students, faculty, and staff, including designated time for small-group prayer in weekly chapel services, a midweek on-campus prayer service, and online events for students that regularly include prayer. Trustee meetings also include regularly scheduled times of prayer.



5001 North Oak Trafficway, Kansas City, Missouri 64118

CHAD MCDONALD, Chair
JASON K. ALLEN, President

Greetings from Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College. Each year when preparing the President's report, I am reminded anew of God's kind providence that He continues to show this great institution.

We continue to strive with all our God-given might to equip pastors, ministers, and missionaries for service in Southern Baptist Churches both stateside and around the world. This mission impacts everything we do, as we remain committed to equip men and women For the Church and For the Kingdom.

This year, we celebrated several institutional wins that I am thankful to get to share with you. We are pleased to report our 13th consecutive year of record enrollment. Our enrollment for the 2024/25 academic year totaled 5,540 and our Southern Baptist FTE number was 1,953. We also enjoyed another healthy year financially, with our net assets increasing to \$113,402,965 from \$102,856,387.

Though there are likely numerous reasons for our continued growth, one important reason is our faculty. Each faculty member is strong in their conviction to adhere to God's Word, to Southern Baptist beliefs, and to train a new generation of pastors, ministers, and missionaries. No theological institution rises higher than the caliber of its faculty. With the additions of Dr. Peter Gurry, associate professor of New Testament, Dr. John Meade, professor of Old Testament studies, Dr. Matthew Boswell, professor of Worship Ministries, and Dr. Ronni Kurtz, assistant professor of Systematic Theology we took a tremendous step forward to position Midwestern Seminary well for years to come. In God's kind providence, He has assembled a gifted generation of scholars on this campus. I could not be more proud of the incredible men and women called to teach here.

In February, we held our first Preaching and Preachers workshop in Celina, Texas at The Trails Church. Pastors and ministry leaders from across the north Texas region gathered to discuss "Preaching Tough Texts." Midwestern Institute for Preaching and Preachers advances Midwestern Seminary's mission to train leaders for the Church by equipping and encouraging preachers of God's Word. Through regional preaching workshops and an array of online resources, the Midwestern Institute for Preaching and Preachers aims to equip current and aspiring preachers through developing a supportive community of preachers, cultivating preaching skills, and encouraging preachers in their task. Throughout the year we have hosted additional workshops located in O'Fallon, Missouri; Mustang, Oklahoma; Wichita, Kansas; and two here on our Midwestern Seminary Campus. I am thankful to the many workshop speakers who have given their time to serve not only the students we train but the churches we serve.

Our Spring trustee meeting overlapped with Great Commission Week. The meeting highlighted the institution's ongoing stewardship to equip and send out faithful ministers for the Church. It is always meaningful when trustees and students come together—trustees to witness campus life firsthand, and students to see those who champion their education.

Spurgeon College commissioned 13 missionary teams to overseas service through the Fusion Program. The Fusion Commissioning Service is one of the most encouraging events of the academic year at Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College. To see young men and women commissioned for international missions to hard places after completing an intensive 9-month

training program is incredibly moving. These students have committed to taking the gospel to the nations, and I am so proud of them. Our Fusion teams spent summer 2025 serving the Great commission in Africa, Asia, Central America, the Middle East, and Europe.

On the athletic front, our men's basketball team secured their first regional championship victory over Kansas Christian College that earned them a spot in the NCCAA DII National Championship Tournament for the second consecutive season. I am extremely proud of Coach Bill Livezey and the team for the incredible season they had. The team ended up taking second place in the NCCAA Division II National Tournament. Additionally, the Spurgeon College Cross Country teams ended their season on a high note at the NCCAA DII National Championship. The men finished fourth and the women finished seventh in the nation. I am very proud of these athletes and coaches for their hard work in the classroom as well as on the course.

In other news, Midwestern Seminary recently acquired the Butler Collection, a treasure of historic songbooks, modern hymnals, and worship resources. Named after the beloved Southern Baptist church musicians Dr. A.L. "Pete" Butler and his wife, JoAnn, the collection highlights their historic contributions to church music worldwide, to the Southern Baptist Convention, and to training church musicians at Midwestern Seminary. It is an honor to be chosen to house such an amazing collection of music history.

In Institutional Relations, Spurgeon College hosted another successful Ready Conference which welcomed more than 1,000 youth and youth ministry leaders to campus on January 24-25. The attendees heard sermons on Matthew 5:1-16 by Adam Donyes, Brian Davis, Samuel Bierig, Jared Bumpers, and Jared Wilson. These great speakers were an encouragement to the youth seeking to stand firm in their faith. Investing in future generations is critical in our work here at Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College.

This fall, Midwestern Seminary hosted our National For the Church Conference with featured guests H.B. Charles, Jr., Tony Merida, Dean Inerra, Juan Sanchez, and Jared Wilson. The event also featured a Women's Pre-Conference with Jen Wilkin, a Student Pastor Summit, and sessions geared toward equipping student pastors for faithful ministry today. This year's theme, "Kingdom Come," called attendees to minister by faith, drawing strength from God's promises and persevering for the joy set before them. It was a remarkable time as we welcomed almost 1,100 ministry leaders to campus. I am grateful for all that God did over the two conference days, and I am hopeful that the effect upon the Church will be great for months and years to come.

During our fall trustee meeting we welcomed five new trustees to our board. We are thankful for those who generously give their time in service to our great institution. During this time, we celebrated the completion of the most significant campus project of the year—the transformation of the former Library Annex, located in the Koehn-Meyers Hall, into a purpose-built dormitory for the Fusion Program at Spurgeon College. We are proud to be associated with both Bill Koehn and Martha Meyers, martyred missionaries who also were alumni of Midwestern Seminary. We pray their legacy endures for generations at this institution.

We have also been honored to host a number of notable chapel speakers and guest lectures on our campus this year. During the spring semester, Dr. Peter Williams brought us the Sizemore Lectures, Dr. Robert Smith Jr. delivered the Spurgeon Lectures, and Dr. Kevin Ezell lectured during Great Commission Week. We also heard from guest lecturers Dr. Andrew Walker, Dr. Brian Tabb, and Dr. Jamie Dew. In our chapel services, we were thankful to hear the preaching of God's word from guests such as Dr. Jeremy Pllum, Dr. Adam Groza, Dr. Nathan Lino, and Mr. Tim Challies among many others.

Finally, we have also been pleased to announce a new endowed chair at Midwestern Seminary, the Bill and Connie Jenkins Endowed Chair of Historical Theology and Spurgeon Studies. Our

endowed chairs are crucial to the long-term health of Midwestern Seminary, and we are so thankful for God's kindness in providing faithful and generous donors to bring these chairs to fruition. Additionally, we had two professors installed in endowed chairs this year. Dr. Matthew Swain in the Wayne and Berna Dean Lee Endowed Chair of Church Music and Worship Ministries and Dr. Michael McMullen in the Lee and Tammy Roberson Endowed Chair of Church History. We rejoice in the faculty that the Lord has provided us with and the generous donors who made these endowed chairs possible.

As I conclude this letter, let me say that it is an honor to serve Southern Baptists. Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College exist to serve the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. We are incredibly grateful for the stewardship that is ours. Please continue to pray for Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College as we strive to equip students For the Church and For the Kingdom.

Sincerely,
Jason K. Allen
President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of pre baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Through the Fusion program, Spurgeon College equips students to take the gospel to difficult places. This past summer, we sent 76 travelers (23 high school, 49 college, 4 master's) to nine countries, resulting in 2,195 gospel presentations, 304 professions of faith, and 531 national believers trained. These students were able to come alongside current IMB missionaries to advance the SBC's collective work.

The Spurgeon College campus continues to be a thriving environment for spiritual growth and community. The cohort program allows every residential student to experience intentional fellowship, community, and equipping. Through fun activities and regular meetings around a spiritual discipline, students grow together as faithful followers of Christ. Students also attend our weekly chapel services, exposing them to regular faithful preaching by many SBC pastors. The Christian Life and Worldview Program seeks to equip Spurgeon College students for a lifetime of faithful kingdom service by integrating students' theological and vocational training with spiritual formation. Every residential Spurgeon College student has the opportunity, through our on-campus cohorts that gather regularly, to discuss a specific spiritual discipline led by a faculty member in a student's particular degree program. Through this program our prayer is that we would not only give students a world class education possessing theological knowledge, but to also give them the skills and training to continually develop in their walk with the Lord.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

At Midwestern Seminary, we recognize the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree as the standard and most appropriate for preparing students for ministry. The Midwestern Seminary MDiv serves as the standard academic program for our institution. At 81 credit hours, this degree includes 72 Foundational-Core credit hours and 9 Elective hours.

We also recognize that students learn best in community and partnership with local churches. Through our Shepherds Fellowship program, residential students can earn their degrees while

gaining invaluable ministry experience. Shepherds Fellowship students intern at local churches in their first years of seminary, providing cost-efficient, hands-on education that helps students make the most of their time.

Shepherds Fellowship is just one of several learning cohorts available to students at Midwestern Seminary. Our Residential cohorts, Biblical Counseling (with Drs. Dale Johnson and Marshall Adkins), Women in Scholarship (with Dr. Leslie Umstadd and Mrs. Kristie Allen), Shepherds Fellowship (with Mr. Aaron Trent), Spurgeon Fellows (with Dr. Geoff Chang), and Biblical Studies (with Dr. Tyler Sykora), meet weekly for instruction and fellowship.

At Midwestern Seminary, we value the opportunity to train students in Kansas City, but we recognize that many God-called leaders are already gainfully employed worldwide. Our Global Campus students serve faithfully in their local contexts on nearly every continent, and we serve them by offering the same courses and content as our residential students but through dynamic discussions and video interaction. Just like Midwestern Seminary residential students, our Global Campus students may choose to participate in special on-campus events, such as our National For the Church Conference, or in their local region at one of our Midwestern Institute for Preaching and Preachers events. Many Midwestern Seminary Global Campus students come to Kansas City for intensive courses, as evidenced by record enrollment in the 2025-2026 Winter Term.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Since 1971, Midwestern Seminary has equipped churches through professional doctoral programs designed to enhance ministry effectiveness and address real-world challenges. Degrees like the DMin, DEdMin, and EdD emphasize leadership, practical problem-solving, and data-driven decision-making. Offered in a modular format, these programs allow students to remain actively engaged in their ministries while studying. With options in English, Korean, Spanish, Mandarin, and Romanian, Midwestern Seminary serves churches worldwide. A key feature of the program is a ministry project, which culminates in a dissertation and focuses on areas such as preaching, discipleship, education, revitalization, and biblical counseling.

In 2025 Midwestern Seminary offered over one hundred seminars in our professional doctoral program to better equip those in the courses to more effectively serve in their ministry settings. Additionally, seventy students graduated in 2025 after completing their dissertations that had real world ministry impact from educational training to increased effectiveness in areas such as evangelism, leadership training, discipleship, and care ministry.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Midwestern Seminary offers research doctorates in Biblical Studies (NT, OT, Biblical Theology), Theological Studies (Systematic Theology, Ethics, Preaching), and Applied Theology (Counseling, Apologetics, Leadership, Missiology, Ecclesiology, Biblical Spirituality). While Applied Theology emphasizes practicality, all programs aim to equip highly trained servants for SBC ministries. Graduates are prepared to rightly handle God's Word and address the challenges of local church ministry, education, and missions. With flexible formats—on-campus, modular, and online—Midwestern Seminary allows students to remain active in their ministries, supported by their churches, while receiving affordable, transformative training.

In 2025, well over 100 seminars were offered in the research doctoral program that sharpened our student mental acuity, while training them for front line ministry for the church. Midwestern Seminary graduated seventy research doctoral students in 2025 whose dissertations addressed areas from leadership to systematic theology.

*Based on each of *Midwestern's* Convention assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how *Midwestern* is accomplishing the listed Ministry Assignments?*

I. Assist churches by programs of pre baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

The current season continues to be one of blessing and growth from the Lord. With this in mind, Spurgeon College will form its future plans (additions, changes, new directions) in line with methods that have proven beneficial to our mission, enrollment, and overall institutional strength over the past several years.

We will continue to strengthen our new degree programs, particularly our marketplace degrees. Our new Christian Education programs have much potential for serving students in the years to come.

We also look forward to continuing to invest in our Spurgeon College campus community through our cohorts, athletics programs, and events. With a robust campus community, students experience a biblically-grounded community that they can take to their respective ministry or vocational callings after graduation.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

First, we acknowledge that as an SBC institution, we are responsible for ensuring our curriculum reflects historic SBC values and aligns with The BFM2000. To maintain consistency with historic SBC principles, we have made Biblical Spirituality, Evangelism, and Missions courses explicit in our Master's degree programs. These courses also align with the IMB Field Personal Orientation (FPO) process that all new IMB appointees complete. The MDiv remains the flagship degree within our Master's curriculum at Midwestern Seminary. Credits from the 36-hour Master of Christian Studies or 45-hour Master's degree can transfer into the MDiv. In these programs, we are equipping students with video technology. We continue to offer Residential+ classes, enabling our Global Campus students to participate via live video alongside residential students on the Midwestern Seminary campus. Our Residential+ format has proven especially beneficial for students taking language courses.

Second, we recognize that students want to learn through various formats, including video technology. Midwestern Seminary will continue to innovate our academic programs to provide quality education using the latest video technology. The Midwestern Seminary Global Campus will keep improving our Online Live courses, which feature live video lectures from residential faculty. Our Residential+ classes offer online students live video for courses with residential students present in the room. Our Residential+ format has proven especially helpful for students taking language courses.

Third, we recognize that students in every generation face financial challenges that could hinder their seminary education. Through strategic fundraising, Midwestern Seminary has obtained resources to allow new Master's residential students to receive a full tuition discount for their first year if they join one of our cohort learning groups. God's favor on Midwestern Seminary is evident in these gifts, and we believe they will bless students as we train them For the Church.

Finally, we recognize that a faculty deeply rooted in the SBC and committed to collegiality is a safeguard for doctrinal faithfulness in a cultural moment prone to superficial and divisive statements. During the 2025-2026 academic year, the faculty will meet quarterly to reflect on the 100th anniversary of the Cooperative Program and to think strategically about our partnerships with entities like the IMB, NAMB, and B&H Publishers.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral programs at Midwestern Seminary faces similar challenges in 2026 that were encountered in 2025 and are related to the wider shifts seen in higher education globally. Midwestern Seminary's professional doctoral program must continue to champion an irenic orthodoxy that stands firm on the truths of Scripture in the face of a culture that continues to run contrary to biblical truth in many areas. The professional doctoral programs will need to continue to assess the level of preparedness of its students as more followers of Christ are making a commitment later in life and without a church background growing up.

Midwestern Seminary's professional doctoral program has experienced strong enrollment over the past year, but each year brings a new set of challenges in recruiting and retaining students with the wider demographics of higher education, coupled with increased costs, making it more difficult each year to recruit and retain students. Midwestern Seminary will need to continue to keep the cost of its educational offerings affordable, while demonstrating the real-world benefits of its educational offerings to its students and their ministry settings.

Finally, Midwestern Seminary will need to stay abreast of the swift changes being seen in educational trends and technology. While the doctoral program will continue to leverage its LMS resources, a crucial area of concern is the rise of AI in education. Midwestern Seminary has already taken steps to address the improper use of AI, but there will need to be an ongoing assessment and response to the swiftly changing nature of AI and its use in education, including both its ethical and unethical usage.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

As is typical for graduate schools in the United States, the research doctoral program at Midwestern Seminary faces several challenges in 2026 that are related to the wider shifts seen in higher education globally. The research doctoral program is uniquely positioned to assess the growing secularization of society and offer high level solutions to these issues that can then be implemented at the local church level. The research doctoral program will offer biblical robust answers to the pressing theological questions of our day in ways that will benefit not just those in the Academy, but also those in the pews of our churches.

As has been the case for many years, the research doctoral program will need to work diligently to both grow and maintain its current enrollment numbers. The wider demographics of higher education, coupled with increased costs, have multiplied the challenges of recruiting and retaining students. Midwestern Seminary will need to continue to keep the cost of its educational offerings affordable, while demonstrating the real-world benefits of advanced theological education.

Finally, like the professional doctoral program, the research doctoral program will need to stay abreast of the swift changes being seen in educational trends and technology. While the doctoral program will continue to leverage its LMS resources, a crucial area of concern is the rise of AI in education. Midwestern Seminary has already taken steps to address the improper use of AI, but there will need to be an ongoing assessment and response to the swiftly changing nature of AI and its use in education, including both its ethical and unethical usage.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2024-25</u>
Prebaccalaureate (MWI and Korean Media)	71	86	110	144	122
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	459	463	608	709	734
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	780	862	863	963	1,002
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	1,910	2,002	1,954	1,988	1,809
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	1,503	1,504	1,609	1,612	1,783
Total	4,723	4,917	5,144	5,416	5,540

Credit Hours

Prebaccalaureate (MWI and Korean Media)	192	319	341	500	1,275
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	1,947.20	1,566.3	1,270.1	1,558.2	1,429.6
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	14,444	15,468	15,960	16,971	18,137
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	22,841.5	23,305.5	21,120	21,780.5	22,224
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	9,943	9,993.5	10,616	10,664	10,652.5
Total	49,367.7	50,652.3	49,307.1	51,473.7	53,718.1

SBC Annual Formula FTE

Annual Total	1,615	1,674	1,733	1,862	1,953
Three-year rolling average	1,542	1,635	1,674	1,756	1,849

New Student Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment

Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	51	61	55	64	96
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	386	346	464	446	426
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	330	357	347	388	419
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	686	706	646	636	732
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	455	464	585	531	484
Total	1,908	1,934	2,097	2,065	2,157

Graduates

Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	5	6	13	5	15
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate (Bachelor's & Associate [CLD graduates])	162	160	99	111	186
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	338	384	380	344	359
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	151	191	189	208	214
Total	656	741	681	668	774

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary celebrates the oneness in Christ and the unity in mission that Christians enjoy through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Likewise, Midwestern Seminary celebrates and seeks to serve the many different peoples who comprise the ministries and mission of the Southern Baptist Convention. In accordance with our own policies and the Southern Baptist Convention’s expectations, we hire faculty and train students in accordance with our confessional standards.

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer; and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary affirms the importance of prayer in the life of every Christian, especially those called to gospel ministry. To this end, in 2024 Midwestern Seminary revised its curriculum and added the required course Biblical Spirituality. The Biblical Spirituality course assists students in pursuing intimacy with and conformity to Jesus Christ through personal spiritual disciplines such as Bible intake, prayer, fasting, silence and solitude, and journaling.



NEW ORLEANS
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



LEAVELL
COLLEGE

3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70126

EDDIE WREN, Chair
JAMIE DEW, President

At New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College, we are grateful for the continued support of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program. For 108 years, NOBTS has been able to accomplish the work you have assigned to us to prepare men and women for the work they are called to do in the Kingdom. This is possible because of your cooperative partnership. We are a people who are committed to the work of Kingdom and the how we do that together as Southern Baptists. At NOBTS and Leavell College we are joyfully Southern Baptist because of the doctrinal commitment of the SBC, our cooperative together, and our desire to take the Gospel to the nations.

We have had a great year at NOBTS and Leavell College. We have seen growth across the institution in very encouraging ways. We have seen an increase in our enrollment and most importantly, an increase in our credit hours sold. This means we have more students taking more hours toward their degree. When students take more hours each semester, they are more likely to complete their degree in a timely manner. We have been working hard to make sure that more students persist toward completion.

I am especially grateful for the caliber of student arriving on the New Orleans campus. They are coming here to study hard and to serve faithfully in the churches and ministries in our city. In particular, I am encouraged by the number of young men arriving here for preparation in ministry that are expressing to us a very clear call to pastoral ministry. We need more pastors serving the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. I am excited about what God is doing in the hearts of the young men studying here at NOBTS and Leavell College.

This past year, God has entrusted to our care relationships with donors contributing to support the efforts of our students preparing for ministry. We have just celebrated a significant fundraising goal on Giving Tuesday. We surpassed our goal of \$500,000 this year thanks to the generosity of so many Southern Baptists.

You should be proud of the seminary family at NOBTS and Leavell College. The students at NOBTS and Leavell College are studying hard and working diligently in local churches. I am so proud of the way they are focused on their studies and committed to serving in their churches. The faculty and staff of the institution are exactly the same, committed to the task of preparing men and women for ministry and serving faithfully in the local churches in our region.

Thank you for the ways in which you support the men and women of this institution. I am grateful for you. Come and see what God is doing here at the School of Providence and Prayer. Pray for us and send us students.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College are here to serve you.

Your Servant,
Jamie Dew
President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of pre-baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Leavell College continues to prepare men and women pursuing an undergraduate degree for ministry. Last year, Leavell College of NOBTS trained 1,170 undergraduate students through courses for credit on the main campus, online, and at extension centers. This total does not count a number of certificate students enrolled in not-for-credit courses offered in church and associational settings.

Leavell College serves both traditional college students and non-traditional students. Leavell College continues to see an increase in the number of traditional college age students. However, we still have some of our undergraduate students that are non-traditional, older, and second-career individuals called into ministry later in life. These non-traditional students are excellent candidates to fill the many bi-vocational and small church ministry positions in the SBC. Leavell College also represents a high concentration of ethnic or minority students who can serve in diverse church settings, particularly African-American, Hispanic, and Korean students. Last year, Leavell College trained 172 for-credit certificate students. Many of these certificates were for pastors who will not otherwise receive any theological education. In addition, our certificates include laypersons from large and small churches. Our certificate programs are our most ethnically diverse programs and address SBC initiatives in this area.

Leavell College continues to strive to make training accessible in many ways. Students can pursue their bachelor's degree in a variety of delivery formats, including traditional in-person courses, a regular online format, and through Flex courses. These flex courses allow our students to participate in live classes or view the class meeting later during the week the class is taught. A number of our undergraduate students take advantage of this delivery format. Our hybrid classes combine online instruction with one weekend in person to allow students with the availability the opportunity to experience a traditional class setting. Leavell College also offers mentoring classes which allow students to learn the basic content of a class online while doing ministry in a local setting, meeting weekly with a local mentor. These classes combine theological training with practical ministry and have proven to be a valuable training option for students.

NOBTS also offers the BA + MDiv program to allow undergraduate students at Leavell College to get a head start on their MDiv degree by taking master's classes in their last year of college that count for their bachelor's degree as well as the MDiv. Many students will be able to earn their bachelor's degree and MDiv degree within five years. Participating students save significant time and financial resources with this program, and they can move to the ministry field more quickly. We also offer this option in the BA + MA in Counseling for our students.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

One of our primary assignments from the convention is to train master's-degree students. The seminary master's programs do not require an undergraduate degree in Religion or Christian Studies; therefore, the training is typically broad. We have a significant number of students who come to seminary for master's level preparation from secular colleges and universities. The students have a faith background, but have not pursued theological education before. All of our students receive a solid biblical and theological foundation along with practical training in areas like discipleship, pastoral ministry, and counseling. We measure the success of our programs

by the health of the churches and ministries our graduates lead, and we strive to prepare them to serve effectively in ministry. We have designed our degrees with a ministry core that ensures that all students are exposed to foundational biblical, theological, and practical ministry. At the same time, the variety of degree options offered by the seminary allows students to choose classes that train them in specialized areas of ministry.

NOBTS had 1,265 master's-level students last year, 624 of those were MDiv degree students, which we consider the standard degree for ministry preparation. Many students at NOBTS and other seminaries are pursuing shorter MA degrees in part because of the cost and time necessary to earn the traditional MDiv. The remaining 641 master's-level students were in various degree programs that provide focused training for discipleship ministry, music ministry, specific areas in theological and biblical studies, or counseling ministry.

Students who study at NOBTS receive an exemplary education from faculty who have built their lives upon the Word of God. The faculty at NOBTS not only teach and publish in their areas, but they are involved in local church ministry and missions. Thus, students have the opportunity to learn from those who are doing ministry.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The DMin (Doctor of Ministry) and DEdMin (Doctor of Educational Ministry) at NOBTS continue to be among the strongest such programs in the nation, with 287 students enrolled last year. The DMin program continues to be one of the largest and best such programs, with 265 students enrolled. Of that number, 35 are Korean DMin students. The NOBTS DEdMin is one of just a handful of such programs in the United States. The DEdMin has 22 students enrolled.

In many churches, the DMin has become the preferred degree for consideration of prospective pastors. This program provides students with those credentials, and does so with excellence. Since our DMin and DEdMin students are serving in a ministry capacity while pursuing the respective degree, these degrees probably do more than any academic degree to help ministers make mid-career adjustments that positively impact the churches and ministries in which they serve.

Professional doctoral education provides an opportunity to impact churches immediately. Students pursuing the DMin and DEdMin degrees are able to study while continuing to serve in their local churches. NOBTS provides training in a workshop format that allows students unable to travel to New Orleans to participate in each seminar through live video format.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

NOBTS strives to offer an academically rigorous and accessible research doctoral program. Through video format, students are able to participate in the PhD program making the degree more accessible to students who are at a distance from NOBTS. Many students do relocate to New Orleans for the program and a number of the distance students travel to the campus for parts of their program. In the midst of these efforts, NOBTS maintains an academically challenging program that prepares students for leadership through the research doctoral program.

In part, because of the availability of the degree, NOBTS has seen continued growth in the research doctoral programs in recent years. Last year, 255 students enrolled in the ThM, EdD, DMA, and PhD programs, a historically high enrollment. Each doctoral student is assigned a supervisor from the first day of the research doctoral program to guide their studies. NOBTS is training the next generation of seminary and college teachers and providing highly trained practitioners in every area of ministry.

Based on each of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Convention assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is accomplishing the listed Ministry Assignments?

I. Assist churches by programs of pre-baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

An ongoing challenge, that is perhaps the major challenge for all degree levels is degree affordability. This is a particular challenge for our undergraduate students. They are just beginning their educational pursuit and are also learning to balance limited resources. The CP, scholarships, and other funding sources help the institution to keep costs manageable. The undergraduate programs at the SBC seminaries remain some of the most affordable programs in the country, however students still carry a significant cost. The seminary works to do our part, but keeping costs down, creating programs like the BA+MDiv (which shortens the two degrees, thereby lowering long-term costs), fundraising for scholarships, and creating a tuition cap (allowing students to take more hours at the same tuition between twelve and eighteen hours).

Inability to afford theological education begets another concern for students. In order to afford per-semester costs, students take fewer hours. When a student takes fewer hours per semester they are less likely to complete the degree because they have stretched the number of semesters required to complete the degree. Leavell College regularly evaluates ways to assist students in every delivery format, whether on-campus or at a distance, to persist to degree completion.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Master's level theological education at NOBTS continues to provide great opportunities for our students as they prepare for ministry. Students across the globe are enrolled in master's programs at NOBTS. Delivery methods have multiplied through the years in order to make theological education as accessible as possible to the greatest number of students. Each of the SBC seminaries offer multiple delivery formats to provide accessibility. The joy of these delivery methods is the expansion of access for students from around the world. This expansion also means that personal interaction with students has been reduced. The faculty of NOBTS works to serve every student and provide personal engagement to encourage students to persist to completion.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral programs at NOBTS allow students who are already serving in ministry an opportunity to sharpen their skills, network with peers, and gain further theological training. Students who have earned a master of arts degree may pursue this training along with MDiv graduates. Our professional doctorate programs are among the best in the country, and we want to involve as many students as possible.

Maintaining excellence with the responsibility of a large student body that requires a great deal of individualized attention remains a consistent challenge. NOBTS continues to utilize every means available to make professional doctoral training available to those who are interested as well as to equip students to succeed. Students who are unable to come to New Orleans for classes are able to use webcasting technology to participate in most of the professional doctoral classes enabling them to focus their energy and time in the local church setting.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

The PhD program at NOBTS continues to grow, largely because of the quality of the program and its accessibility. Every PhD student is under the supervision of an NOBTS faculty member from the first day of their program. Every degree major is available to students who do not live in New Orleans through web conferencing technology. Students appreciate the ability to participate in the class as if they were there in person while remaining on the field of ministry.

In addition to the overall cost of pursuing a research doctoral degree, one of the ongoing challenges for PhD students is the lack of full-time positions in academia. Many of the students at NOBTS are preparing to be pastor-theologians and may teach as an adjunct, but for those preparing to teach full-time, NOBTS works hard to prepare them for a difficult job market.

STATISTICAL TABLES

Enrollment

Basic Degrees	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Graduate Certificate	42	28	24	12	0
M.Div	730	688	652	653	547
M.A.C.E.	92	85	67	57	--
M.M.C.M.	9	7	14	19	18
D.Min.	250	262	281	279	233
D.Ed.Min.	37	28	30	28	22
Th.M.	67	53	63	69	13
Ph.D.	106	104	135	143	144
D.M.A.	21	21	22	21	25
EDD	11	15	25	30	34
M.A.M.F.C.	98	112	119	132	--
M.A.	305	293	329	331	420
MTS	59	68	78	79	64
Certificate	515	460	232	204	136
Associate	110	101	98	82	36
Baccalaureate	641	623	678	738	678
Internet	*627	*610	*572	*540	*1,578
Nondegree	75	43	148	166	143
Formula allowances for off campus programs	121	124	213	135	152
Total FTE Enrollment	3,168	3,072	2,995	3,043	3,943

**This amount is included in the degree programs.*

Annual Accumulative Enrollment (nonduplicating head count) 2024-2025: 3,943

Graduates	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Prebaccalaureate	70	84	67	67	85
Baccalaureate	127	121	123	126	89
Graduate	266	198	236	211	219
Doctoral	70	66	84	72	94
Total	533	469	510	476	491

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is committed to training the men and women that the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention send to the institution and who meet the admission qualifications. NOBTS functions as an open enrollment institution, meaning that unless there is a compelling reason, a student recommended by a Southern Baptist Convention affiliated church will be admitted to the course of study. NOBTS actively recruits students in a variety of locations and at numerous events. We currently offer an undergraduate and graduate degree for Spanish speakers and undergraduate, graduate, and doctor of ministry degrees for Korean speakers. Since 2021, SBC entities have reported on ethnic leadership and their efforts to increase ethnic participation. NOBTS has reported in the annual ministry report submitted to the Executive Committee at the request of the messengers at the annual meeting in 2011 in Phoenix, Arizona and have continued every year since 2011. The data referenced in this motion can be found in the 2025 NOBTS ministry reports and those dating back to 2011. The Ministry Reports of NOBTS and other entities are posted on the Executive Committee website at: <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/ministry-reports/>

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer, and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: The trustees of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary heartily agree that prayer should be a priority for all followers of Jesus Christ. NOBTS does address prayer within a number of courses in the curriculum. Additionally, NOBTS emphasizes prayer in the daily rhythms of the institution through regular chapel services, faculty prayer meetings, student organized worship gatherings, and the overwhelming majority of classes beginning with prayer each class session. Prayer is an integral part of the daily life of the students, faculty, staff, and administration of NOBTS.



120 South Wingate Street, Wake Forest, NC 27587

ROGER A. (ANDY) TAYLOR, Chair
DANIEL L. AKIN, President

At Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, we exist to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission.

I want to begin by saying thank you for giving to the Cooperative Program, from which Southeastern received \$6.3 million this last year. Without your generosity and your support, we could not do what we do to train men and women for ministry in our local churches as well as ministry around the world. We at Southeastern are passionate about preparing Great Commission-minded pastors, missionaries, counselors, and church leaders.

Our Great Commission-minded curriculum equips students for a lifetime of making disciples. This year, we updated our flagship Master of Divinity degree. Among the changes, the new MDiv core doubles down on rightly interpreting the word of God, the foundation of faithful ministry. As the cultural landscape shifts, Southeastern remains rooted in the infallible, inerrant, all-sufficient word of God. This is where we stand, and this is what we believe. Our new MDiv core reflects this commitment. This love for the Scriptures drives our Great Commission focus in everything that we do.

Because of God's provisions, we also have been able to offer full tuition scholarships for residential MDiv students. In fact, there has never been a better time to come to Southeastern Seminary to pursue the MDiv degree. The Lord has also blessed us with new Great Commission-minded faculty to help us fulfill our purpose to equip students:

- Landon Dowden in Preaching
- Kelly King in Women's Ministry
- Rhyne Putman in Theology
- Jason Engle in Christian Ministry and our EdD studies
- Olivia Rall in English at Judson College
- William Brooks in Missions and our Global Theological Initiatives

They join our already stellar faculty and take up the mantle of precious friends and colleagues like Jim Shaddix, Keith Harper, and Adrienne Miles, all of whom have gone home to be with our Lord Jesus over this past year and a half. Each of them finished their race well, and they left an enduring Great Commission legacy at Southeastern Seminary.

We take seriously this call to prepare future pastors, missionaries, and church leaders. We are grateful to God for the ways he has grown our student body through the support of brothers and sisters like you. In the fall, we surpassed more than 5,400 total students. Enrollment is up 9.5% across all of our degree programs. All three of our doctoral programs are stronger than they have ever been.

Judson College at Southeastern has also experienced unbelievable growth. At Judson, we want to equip students to give their lives for the cause of Christ in the church, among the nations, and in every aspect of society. Enrollment is up 30% in the past three years as unprecedented numbers of students are recognizing the importance of biblically faithful ministry, missions, and marketplace training for wherever God calls them.

We are experiencing growth not only in our student body but also in our degree programs and our campus facilities. Judson College now offers a growing number of marketplace degrees. Additionally, the Akin Student Center is undergoing an expansion to accommodate the incredible growth of our student body. All of these are good things happening at Southeastern and particularly at Judson College.

This past year, Southeastern's Center for Great Commission Studies sent out more than 150 men and women on 14 school-sponsored mission trips all around the country and all around the world. The passion and faithfulness of these students is evidence of their deep formation in the classroom and of the Great Commission heartbeat they are learning to cultivate at Southeastern. These trips help our students recognize their place in God's mission and connect them with opportunities for service around the globe.

As we reflect on the privilege of investing in the next generation, we must not forget how far Southeastern has come. In 2025, Southeastern celebrated its 75th anniversary. Southeastern was chartered in 1950 by the Southern Baptist Convention as the East Coast seminary for Southern Baptists. In its early days, Southeastern was very different theologically than it is today. We celebrated how God led Southeastern to recover biblical fidelity, to renew a commitment to the local church, and to reignite its missionary fervor. Southeastern's conversion is nothing short of a miracle, and we give God all the glory for making it the school that it is today.

Now, as most of you know, I recently announced that I plan to retire at the end of this academic year, and this will be my last year as president of Southeastern Seminary. The past 22 years for Charlotte and for me have been some of the sweetest and most blessed days of our lives. We are humbled and grateful that God in his providence allowed us to serve our beloved seminary and to have a front row seat to see all that God has done and continues to do through our students, staff, faculty, and our rapidly growing alumni.

Charlotte and I will continue to serve Southeastern. I will continue to teach, serve as a Southeastern ambassador for at least five years, and serve as the president emeritus. But the time has come to pass the baton to Dr. Scott Pace to lead this wonderful institution. I know that the future is bright for Southeastern. Charlotte and I cannot wait to see what the Lord Jesus does through this institution to equip generations of future pastors, missionaries, and church leaders to serve the church and to fulfill the Great Commission.

So, Southern Baptists, thank you for loving us. Thank you for serving us. We love you. We could not do all that we do without your love, your prayers, and your support.

With gratitude in Christ,

Danny Akin
President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of pre-baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

In order to assist churches through our programs, Judson College at Southeastern is doing the following:

- Continuing work to capitalize on our distinction in North Carolina as the only four-year accredited, conservative, and confessional undergraduate program in the state

- Continuing long-standing partnerships with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC) and bordering Baptist State Conventions to strategically recruit students
- Continuing to offer annual events and conferences to further equip students to fulfill God's calling in ministry, missions, or the marketplace
- Continuing to operate extension centers for women incarcerated in both North Carolina (North Carolina Correctional Institute for Women) and Florida (Marion County Correctional Institute for Women)
- Enrolling our eighth cohort of male students into our North Carolina Field Minister program at the Nash County Extension Center located at the Nash County Correctional Institution in Nashville, North Carolina
- Increasing intentional efforts to recruit full-time students from our Dual Enrollment Academy
- Increasing access to ministry training by adding a fully online Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry
- Expanding existing partnerships with churches for ministry placement of those students preparing for pastoral ministry in our 5-year BA to MDiv Timothy Scholars program
- Continuing our partnership with Fruitland Baptist Bible College (associated with the BSCNC) as an extension center to equip those preparing for vocational ministry
- Expanding "marketplace" degree programs (majors and minors) to better equip students in a broader range of platforms to accomplish our institutional mission
- Reorganizing student success efforts to better meet ever-increasing academic assistance needs at the pre-baccalaureate level
- Responding to feedback from local churches regarding a need for more vocationally trained worship pastors by revamping our BA in Worship Ministry

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

We have continued to work directly with churches through partnerships that train and equip students for ministry through our EQUIP program. These partnerships emphasize field training in the local church by offering courses through qualified pastors and leaders in a ministry context.

We continue to expand 5-year pathways for students at Southeastern to pursue graduate-level training concurrently with their undergraduate degree as they seek to be equipped to give their lives for the cause of Christ in the church, among the nations, and in every aspect of society.

Finally, we now offer seven different distance learning formats, so students can easily access master's-level theological education from anywhere in the world.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

In the previous calendar year, the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program graduated 37 students, and the Doctor of Education (EdD) program graduated 12 students who received world-class theological education and ministry training, specifically designed to help them:

- Strengthen their biblical literacy, theological integration, and practical ministry skills
- Develop new tools, strategies, and techniques to increase effectiveness in fulfilling their vocational calling
- Assess their own spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational health for the purpose of increasing their ministerial longevity
- Serve in both church and para-church settings, making disciples through educational and counseling leadership opportunities

The DMin program experienced significant growth, increasing the average number of approved applicants for the year. Key updates include:

- Developing new specializations and cohorts within each program to more effectively address the contextual needs of Southern Baptist churches and sending organizations
- Continuing collaboration with congregations, associations, and state conventions to enhance student recruitment and more effectively meet the needs of Southern Baptists
- Maintaining a strong emphasis on ministerial well-being by shaping all DMin seminars and workshops around a holistic vision of theological education and ministry development
- Developing a new partnership between the Doctor of Ministry program and the East Tennessee and South Carolina conventions as well as the Youth Pastor Metro Conference, which resulted in the creation of three new cohorts dedicated to improving preaching and teaching effectiveness in pastors and ministry leaders

In the 2024-25 academic year, the EdD program experienced continued growth. Key updates include:

- The continuation of a new specialization and cohort (Organizational Leadership) to better meet the contextual needs of Southern Baptist churches and sending organizations
- Continued partnerships with local congregations, associations, and state conventions that have proven fruitful in recruiting students and better meeting the needs of Southern Baptists
- Continued emphasis on ministerial health by ensuring that all seminars and workshops in the EdD program have a holistic approach to theological education and ministry preparation
- Continued emphasis on the use of educational technology and relevant pedagogical practices, primarily via synchronous seminars twice a year and the required use of educational technology within seminars
- A continuation of two of the four quarterly seminar weeks being offered entirely synchronously, enabling more of our distance students to attend class without traveling, and providing a “level playing field” for our students serving overseas (Students have consistently reported their appreciation for this shift.)

The EdD office personnel continue to explore ways to connect with past, current, and future students through avenues such as “Lunch and Learn” events, social media engagement, doctoral symposiums, and various other in-person or virtual events.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Following a comprehensive review of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Theology (ThM) programs to determine effectiveness and efficiency in equipping students for ministry, we have expanded our options for synchronous online learning for students currently engaged in ministry. By further expanding those opportunities, we have been able to limit disruption for students in churches.

- We have increased our efforts to engage students in international teaching opportunities, offering our first mission teaching experience for PhD students as a part of PhD9102: Teaching in Higher Education.
- We have re-launched a PhD in Evangelism to train graduates for local church and denominational ministry as part of our Great Commission emphasis. As part of our commitment to work with state conventions associated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), we have offered scholarship assistance for state convention leaders wanting to earn this PhD in Evangelism.
- The ThM has been integrated with the PhD to serve as an on-ramp for students who want to move into research doctoral education but need advanced work before the PhD.

- We continue our program design to equip students to serve their congregations well and live out the Great Commission both in their local setting and among the nations. To serve missionaries well, we offer scholarship assistance for every International Mission Board staff member or missionary enrolling in our PhD program.

Based on each of Southeastern's Convention-assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how Southeastern is accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

I. Assist churches by programs of pre-baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

The higher education landscape, in general, continues to be in a state of flux with factors ranging from lower birth rates to the rise in artificial intelligence in and out of the classroom. Though Judson College enrollment numbers continue on an upward trajectory, we believe that it is crucial that we maintain a watchful eye on the current trends in higher education while doubling down on our mission to train and equip the next generation of Christian leaders for a variety of vocations. The single most important thing that we can do is be exactly what the convention has commissioned us to be, a college that equips students to give their lives for the cause of Christ in the church, among the nations, and in every aspect of society. In partnership with the Cooperative Program, our goal is to provide a low-cost, high-value education to anyone who wants to see that mission lived out in their personal lives.

With these challenges and goals in mind, Judson College at Southeastern desires to do the following:

- Increase brand awareness efforts both locally and nationally, which factor prominently in pre-baccalaureate growth.
- Streamline course offerings to provide clarity to students who seek the most efficient way to complete their degree.
- Explore creative and unique vocational pathways for our students (i.e., 3 + 3 programs, additional 5-year bachelor's to master's tracks, etc.)
- Continue to consider ways to steward Southeastern's physical campus to meet current and future growth, particularly in the pre-baccalaureate population.
- Continue to consider ways to expand student success — both in person and online — to meet the current and future need.
- Wisely explore the balance between adapting to online education while prioritizing the on-campus experience.
- Continue to understand and clarify the appropriate use of artificial intelligence in ministry preparation.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Like most educational institutions, Southeastern continues to face the challenge of educating a class of students who are approaching their education differently. Students are balancing family, work, and ministry responsibilities as they pursue ministry preparation. This impacts the hours they can take and how they interact with our institution. With these challenges in mind:

- We are seeking to make theological training as accessible as possible and offer opportunities for students to apply what they are learning to their current ministry.
- In particular, to help our students remain faithful to their calling, we have established an institutional initiative to increase students' persistence and retention from semester to semester.

- While exploring various learning formats, we have also sought to encourage students to maximize the effectiveness of their ministry preparation by incentivizing on-campus degree programs, particularly our flagship ministry degree, the Master of Divinity.
- In this current situation, we have an incredible opportunity to train men and women with ministry-focused education who are passionate about making a difference for Christ and his kingdom. In many cases, these students are already engaged in vocational ministry.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The DMin and EdD programs are excited about various new opportunities to serve the church, specifically:

- Increasing awareness of access to doctoral education within our convention
- Facilitating new modes of educational delivery to reach more students
- Continuing geographically and affinity-based cohorts that have proven very successful in the past year
- Remaining connected to existing students to facilitate continued learning during courses and while students are writing their final projects or dissertations
- Fostering ongoing relationships with students throughout their educational experience
- Promoting new pathways to doctoral education within the SBC

There are two areas of potential challenge that Southeastern is seeking to address at the advanced degree level:

- As in the previous year, rising expenses have strained discretionary funds of students, hindering steady progress in their doctoral programs. Helping students access additional financial resources will remain a significant challenge in the years ahead. Notably, more students withdrew from the DMin program due to financial hardships in the past decade.
- Maintaining a balance between accessibility and quality in the DMin program is essential. Advances in technology have made theological education more widely available than ever before; however, this increased accessibility necessitates ongoing evaluation to ensure academic and formational standards are maintained. As more theological institutions shorten the length of their programs to enhance accessibility, there is an inherent risk of compromising the depth and quality of training.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

The PhD program continues to train students to serve churches and the convention on the mission field. The PhD office will work to increase awareness of the opportunities for students on the mission field and in churches.

- The PhD office will develop additional ways to keep students currently in ministry contexts connected to one another and to the faculty for encouragement and mutual benefit. A fully synchronous online option for students is an important part of this offering.
- As students proceed through their program, they benefit greatly from mentorship relationships with alumni. The PhD office is looking to develop formal and informal ways to connect PhD alumni with current students — both to aid students and provide ongoing training and encouragement for graduates. We have created our first group of alumni to serve this function.
- The cost of education continues to be an obstacle for some potential students. In addition to emphasizing Cooperative Program funds for students in Southern Baptist churches, we will continue to work in conjunction with our Financial and Alumni Development office to secure scholarship funds to support this program.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Figures by Degree Programs and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Students
as Per the SBC Funding Formula

	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024	2024- 2025
Special Students					
Credit Only	1,455	1,201	607	803	1,018
Certificate/Diploma	923	937	785	985	1,031
Special Student Total	2,378	2,138	1,392	1,788	2,049
Prebaccalaureate & Baccalaureate					
Associate of Divinity	23	16	12	6	8
Associate of Art	23	11	9	13	10
Bachelor of Arts/Science/Business Admin	600	544	502	546	595
Prebaccalaureate & Baccalaureate Totals	646	571	523	565	613
Basic Programs					
Master of Arts	980	955	882	986	1,018
Master of Theological Studies	210	184	236	224	226
Master of Divinity	1,100	951	878	905	908
Basic Programs Total	2,290	2,090	1,996	2,115	2,152
Advanced					
Master of Theology	69	67	60	50	40
Doctor of Ministry	247	230	253	285	323
Doctor of Education	89	92	98	91	103
Doctor of Philosophy	190	182	162	160	173
Advanced Total	595	571	573	586	639
Total Unduplicated Headcount	5,909	5,370	4,484	5,054	5,453
Cooperative Program Funded FTEs					
Full-Time Equivalent Students	2,800	2,515	2,230	2,336	2,680
Unfunded FTEs					
Over 70 Hours BA Deduction	(75)	(54)	(57)	(41)	(42)
Online SBC FTE Students	(855)	(714)	(663)	(699)	(750)
Adv Degree Students Past Time Allowance	(307)	(267)	(258)	(254)	(259)
Other Non-Countable SBC Students	(98)	(123)	(82)	(86)	(99)
Non-SBC FTE Students	(640)	(594)	(462)	(502)	(660)
Total Unfunded FTEs	(1,975)	(1,752)	(1,523)	(1,582)	(1,810)
Total Cooperative Program Funded FTEs	825	763	707	754	870
Graduates					
Prebaccalaureate & Special	33	56	86	218	175
Baccalaureate	107	70	102	74	51
Basic Programs	454	405	359	375	349
Advanced	87	88	85	74	59
Total Graduates	681	619	632	741	634

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: The efforts of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Southeastern) to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from ethnically diverse backgrounds flow directly from our institutional mission: to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission. This mission is grounded in two key Scripture passages—Matthew 28:18–20 and Revelation 7:9.

Because Jesus commands us in the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations, our institutional commitment is deeply theological: we seek to train men and women from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Rev. 7:9) to be faithful disciple-makers (Matt. 28:18–20).

At the same time, and in full alignment with the November 2020 statement issued unanimously by the presidents of the six Southern Baptist seminaries, Southeastern explicitly rejects Critical Race Theory (CRT)—whether as a philosophical method or as a valid transcendent worldview—as a framework for guiding our practices in recruitment, hiring, training, or leadership development. This rejection also applies to any Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts that emerge from CRT’s assumptions, arguments, or conclusions.

When CRT is addressed in any context at Southeastern—whether in the classroom or in employment settings—it is engaged critically, analyzed rigorously, and ultimately rejected in accordance with the apostolic instruction found in 2 Corinthians 10:3–6: “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.”

For this reason, we state unequivocally that Southeastern’s efforts to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from ethnically diverse backgrounds are carried out in full accordance with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

For additional information, please note that each year in the SBC Ministry Report, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary provides an update on our ongoing efforts to promote ethnic diversity.

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer, and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: Southeastern Seminary is committed to teaching and leading our students to pray through various means. Our core MA and MDiv curriculum includes a required class on Evangelism and Discipleship that intentionally focuses one section on the importance and practice of prayer. Each week, the office of the VP for Spiritual Formation produces a prayer guide for professors to use in their classes. Every chapel also includes a prioritized prayer time for missionaries and unreached people groups, with the Cabinet-level stated goal of ultimately producing graduates who pray regularly for work among the nations. In addition, the VP for Spiritual Formation coordinates a campuswide prayer meeting at least once each semester, encourages all offices on the campus to meet regularly for prayer, and sponsors a student-led prayer group, “The Prayer Initiative,” that prays together weekly. With our commitment to be both a “Great Commission Seminary” and a “Praying Seminary,” we will continue to seek ways to train praying gospel workers around the world.

3. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of SEBTS to inquire into the distribution of story regarding sexual abuse.

Motion: Charles Johnson, Kentucky

“That the messengers to this Convention request the board of trustees at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary to inquire into the involvement of its current and any former personnel in the unauthorized distribution in 2022 of the personal story written by the wife of a Texas pastor that identified her as a survivor without her permission. And that this requested inquiry includes direct communication between the board and the survivor’s family, understanding that previous attempts at reconciling this matter did not do so, but was abruptly cancelled. This inquiry should be conducted in the spirit and leadership of Southeastern’s own president who boldly and courageously stated in the summer of 2021 that, “It is hard to imagine under any circumstances that a body of believers in the Lord Jesus would vote to limit in any way an investigation to find the truth when there are serious allegations related to sexual abuse.”

Response: The Southeastern Board of Trustees responded to a similar referred motion from the 2022 Annual Meeting, and that response was reported to the Convention at its June 2023 Annual Meeting. As a result, the Board of Trustees, after considering the referred motion at their October 2025 meeting, takes no further action regarding this motion.



**THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40206

KEITH DANIELS, Chair

R. ALBERT MOHLER, JR., President

Once again, it is my great honor to bring you a report on behalf of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. It is the great mission of this institution to serve the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches.

First and foremost, we are The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, established in 1859, and that brings us great joy and a tremendous sense of stewardship. The Lord continues to do remarkable things through this institution. In the totality of our work, we will enroll more than 6,000 students this year. The founding faculty of this institution, towering figures as they were, could never have imagined the institution enrolling that many students in a year.

I wish every Southern Baptist could see what I have the privilege of seeing on a daily basis on this campus. Just weeks ago, we marked our May graduation. It is a glorious affair. But what made this commencement even more heartwarming was to see hundreds of ministers of the gospel sent out around the world for the sake of Christ and the Church.

This academic year, graduates came to us representing every corner of the globe: Chile, Columbia, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, India, Iraq, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, the People's Republic of China, Peru, Puerto Rico, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Canada, and the United States of America. I hope it brings great joy to you to know of the global impact of what we are doing. Just imagine how the Lord will use these graduates and their families for decades to come.

Southern Baptists, thank you for making all of this possible. The world of theological education is in decline, and frankly, this institution is an exception to the rule because of the strength of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. We are monomaniacally committed to serving the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention through the training of God called ministers of the gospel, which includes an unwavering commitment to the priority of preaching and to the office of pastor. Our assignment from you is to teach the faith once for all delivered to the saints. It is to stand upon the prophets and the apostles and to affirm the absolute perfection and inerrancy of the Word of God.

We belong to the Southern Baptist Convention. That is clearly in our name, and it is an incredible stewardship. I am just about to complete my thirty-third year as president of this institution. I have received this stewardship as the calling of my life, and it is my great joy to see how the Lord has blessed this work. More than anything else, I want to say over and over again, thank you.

Your faithful stewardship and generosity channeled through the Cooperative Program to this institution is reaching all over the world for the cause of the gospel and to the glory of Christ. I am honored to serve Southern Baptists, and I am thankful for this opportunity to offer the report of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Sincerely,

R. Albert Mohler, Jr.
President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Boyce College, the undergraduate school of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, continues to serve a growing student population of Southern Baptist college students. These students are receiving a Christian education of the highest quality and relevance. The aim of Boyce College is to raise up a new generation of leaders for faithful service in our churches and the mission field. Boyce attracts students who are already serious about their faith and challenges them to grow in their commitment to Christ and his church while they pursue undergraduate education. This depth of conviction has resulted in healthy growth as more and more students are drawn to Boyce's theological clarity and academic rigor. The non-duplicating headcount at Boyce College was 1,305 students in 2024-2025.

The professors at Boyce College are not only recognized experts in their scholarly fields, but they also possess a clear commitment to shepherd and mentor their students. This is why Boyce students receive excellent instruction in the classroom, as well as a vibrant all-around student experience. In 2024–2025 we recruited three new faculty members to join Boyce College to begin during the 2025–2026 academic year. Resident advisors work to cultivate biblical community within the residence halls, offering a full slate of student life activities for our students. Students are exposed to a number of Southern Baptist pastors and leaders through weekly dorm meetings and chapel services. Student groups, such as the student council, provide students with opportunities to develop leadership skills and experience that will serve them and our churches in the future. Our athletic teams provide another key experience for many of our students. In 2024-2025, both our women's volleyball team and men's soccer team won their region and competed in the national tournament, with the soccer team finishing as the national runner-up. Our cross country team qualified for the national meet, and one of our runners qualified as an All-American. The men's basketball team put together one of the most competitive seasons in Boyce history, with numerous players being recognized for their individual accomplishments. The Augustine Honors Collegium also continues to grow and gives students in the program an opportunity for a deeper and more challenging academic experience, attracting some of the sharpest young minds in the SBC.

The programs offered by Boyce College are the extension of the founding vision of Southern Seminary. The continued strengthening of the programs is evident in recent developments such as the creation of a new internet technology emphasis within the Business program; four marketplace Seminary Track programs, Business (MDiv), Communications (MDiv), and Teacher Education (MDiv and MACE). The college continually reviews all academic programs to ensure that each serves the church in a distinctive way, preparing the coming generation for faithful Christian service and leadership.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

The central mission assignment for the seminaries is the education of pastors, which reaches back to our founding in 1859. The Master of Divinity program forms the core of Southern's efforts to provide master's level theological education. This is then supplemented through various master's level offerings, such as our Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling, Missiology, Theological Studies, and more. The Global Campus continues to expand as a vehicle for delivering theological education to master's students around the world. Students from all fifty

states, the District of Columbia, and seventy-two countries are enrolled in degree programs from undergraduate to doctoral. In 2024-2025, we began offering our Experiential Modular courses, which allow online students to come to Louisville during a regular term to take a course while also experiencing our weekly campus life—chapel, meals with other students and professors, and the beauty of our campus. Last year, we had over 200 students take advantage of this new way of taking courses, and we have seen many of them both appreciate becoming a part of campus life and express interest in moving to Louisville for residential studies.

Within the Global Campus, the Online Hispanic Program has grown exponentially, which helps prepare and train ministers of the gospel in the Spanish-speaking world. This Hispanic program provides theological education of the highest quality to Spanish-speaking students at both the masters and doctoral levels, both in the United States and around the world. More than 1,300 students have already been enrolled in the program, and almost 260 have graduated, coming from nations including Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Chile, and the Dominican Republic.

The significance of the M.Div. centers the entire institution on the preparation of pastors. The M.Div. program continued as the largest program at the seminary with a total enrollment of 2,248 students for 2024-2025. In Spring 2024, we simplified our M.Div. to include three areas of study—biblical, theological, and practical—totaling 84 hours. This improved M.Div. offers the same comprehensive and effective training in a format that is more accessible than ever. Within this program, students are able to pursue a number of Graduate Certificates in areas like Greek Exegesis, Biblical Counseling, Systematic Theology, Missions, and more. Through this change, we have expanded our reach and provided more tangible opportunities for continuing education and training for pastors, missionaries, and ministry leaders around the world. We also continue to offer a discount opportunity for students taking residential courses in Louisville. While we are committed to providing the best theological education online to students around the world, we nevertheless want to encourage students to come to our campus and study with our faculty in person, providing financial help to make residential seminary education more accessible to more students.

In an era when the M.Div. is experiencing widespread decline, we are particularly proud of the work the Lord has done in raising up so many current and future pastors and entrusting us with their education. Southern Seminary also maintains an unparalleled faculty whose focus remains on instructing master's level students. In addition to their classroom responsibilities, our faculty continue to set the pace for serving in local SBC churches, speaking at conferences, and contributing to evangelical scholarship through writing books and delivering academic presentations. In 2024-2025 alone, Southern Seminary professors published numerous books and contributed many articles to various academic journals. Last year, we began a focus on faculty development and held two Faculty Development Forums, in which we trained and discussed excellence in teaching both residually and online. When you enter a classroom at Southern Seminary, you will find one of many Christian scholars whose commitment to the gospel, to the church, and to the Lord Jesus Christ is translated into a love for students and the task of teaching.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Southern Seminary offers professional doctoral education through the Doctor of Ministry and the Doctor of Educational Ministry. For the 2024-25 academic year, the total annual headcount for all Professional Doctoral Studies degree programs was 366 students. Specific attention was paid to prospective student recruitment efforts. Completing a degree while in full-time ministry can be challenging, so at Southern professional doctoral students begin their program with a plan. Trained mentors guide students toward completion at a healthy pace, ensuring a greater

number of students not only complete the program but achieve the level of growth they desire. Southern Seminary continues to add value to the student experience through chapel services, focused panel discussions, and writing mentors throughout the program. Our graduates continue to hold key leadership positions in our SBC local associations, state conventions, and national entities and are pastoring hundreds of established SBC churches and planting churches all over the world. New programs in recent years have expanded our ability to provide quality professional doctoral education around the globe. In 2025, we launched a Hispanic Doctor of Educational Ministry degree to diversify the doctoral options for our Spanish-speaking students.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Southern Seminary offers research doctoral education through the Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Missiology, and Master of Theology. These academic programs are among the most highly respected in the nation and continue to produce well-trained pastor-scholars who serve in local church, academic, and entity leadership. In recent years, Research Doctoral Studies has expanded our modular PhD programs to include Biblical Studies, Historical and Theological Studies, and Philosophical and Theological Studies. These additional programs allow students to receive the highest level of education in a number of doctoral concentrations through intensive on-campus courses taken with a cohort. In addition, we revised our Master of Theology degree in recent years to make the degree more flexible and efficient for our students. In recent years, we made a number of changes that continue to bear fruit. We implemented a new rolling admissions process for our PhD program, which resulted in an increase in accessibility for potential students. We also made improvements to our recruitment efforts for our EdD program, which attracted a quality incoming class of students. We built on these innovations with the addition of a fully-online PhD in Christian Studies, which admitted its first cohort of students in fall 2025.

For the 2024-2025 academic year the total annual headcount for all Research Doctoral Studies degree programs was 414 students. The program, however, is not merely large but of the highest quality. Our faculty and students presented in over forty sessions at the prestigious national meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society and continue to shape the entire evangelical academic landscape. The weekly 1892 Club continued to attract many students each week for fellowship and interaction with a visiting scholar. Modular students are provided chapel experiences and lunches during their time on campus to facilitate further learning and fellowship between other students and scholars.

Southern is equipping many of the most gifted academic and church leaders within Southern Baptist life. In an academic job market considered severe by almost any standard, Southern doctoral graduates are continually sought after to serve in both traditional academic and church-based posts. Among member schools of the Association of Theological Schools, Southern Seminary has continued to produce a high number of students now teaching at member schools. In addition to this, many of our graduates hold administrative positions of leadership in institutions of higher learning all over the country. As with our other programs, graduates are giving leadership throughout the SBC at the local, state, and national levels. This is a great testimony to the strength of our program and the quality of our students.

Based on each of the convention-assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2024 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how Southern will accomplish these assignments.

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Boyce College has experienced growth in terms of enrollment, educational excellence, and opportunities for students outside the classroom. The opportunity for 2026 primarily consists of building on the momentum already present to expand the reach of Boyce College among prospective students in order to maintain healthy growth. We believe that our current students are our best drivers for future growth. So Boyce aims to deliver excellent educational offerings, as well as extracurricular activities, with the goal of forming godly and well-equipped future Southern Baptist leaders. In 2025–2026, Boyce College experienced a record enrollment, including over 530 students living in the dorms, representing the continued strength of the residential community. Serving these students well, therefore, while growing our capacity and improving their educational experience, is our key opportunity moving forward. Our newest Seminary Track program, combines the strength of our undergraduate program in biblical counseling with the opportunity to earn a master of divinity or master of arts with an emphasis in biblical counseling. In addition, as we maintain our commitment to abstain from government funding, we will need to carefully structure Southern Seminary and Boyce College in terms of personnel and facilities to make sure we are able to offer a program that is the highest in academic quality and competitively priced.

II. Assist churches by programs of masters' level theological education for ministers.

Southern Seminary is committed to providing the best possible theological education for current and future pastors and ministry leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention. This means not only maintaining an excellent faculty but providing an education that aims at the formation of ministry leaders who are intellectually capable, morally faithful, and walking closely with the Lord. In the coming years, we hope to build on the momentum of our new, simplified M.Div. curriculum, providing the same trusted theological education in a more accessible format. With the included Graduate Certificates, we continue to innovate and provide training in areas that will serve our churches and the SBC as a whole.

We are also constantly seeking improvement in our online and residential masters-level coursework. For our online coursework, we have continued to develop tools for course communication, layout, and workflow in support of the rich theological content our faculty works so hard to provide. These tools have helped us find efficiencies for residential courses as well, which are already rich in both content and relational investment in students. For our residential students, ministry training opportunities we offer through our different Centers on campus, including evangelism training to Muslim communities, missions trips across the globe, and pastoral training for church plants and revitalizations are also key ways of building community and training students as ministers during their time in Louisville. Each of these Centers have significantly increased their events, influence, and resources in the last few years and will continue to do so this coming academic year.

Another opportunity that comes out of our commitment to providing the best theological education available is to continually improve not only our on-campus efforts but also opportunities for our online and modular students to be mentored, trained, and served both inside and outside of the classroom. As increasing numbers of our students are attending through our Global Campus program, Southern Seminary leadership, faculty, and staff must respond to the calling to bring excellent education through this growing opportunity. The high quality of our

online program is rooted in the high quality of our on-campus program. We will continue to improve and expand our Experiential Modular program and work to give more and more online students the opportunity to experience the value of residential theological education.

Professors are also continuing to improve their pedagogy through provided training, not only in the classroom, but also for their online teaching. The unique pedagogical challenges inherent in online learning require that our professors receive additional training and instruction in order to provide the best possible experience for our online students. We will continue our Faculty Development program this year in order to ensure our faculty are constantly growing and developing as teachers and scholars in order to serve both our students and the churches of the SBC.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral studies team continuously strives for excellence and innovation in serving those seeking to develop their ministry competencies and skills. One of the challenges that most professional doctoral programs face is maintaining a high rate of degree completion. Southern Seminary continues to see rising graduation rates and will seek to improve even more. Students are being assigned writing mentors and are helped with a project strategy immediately as part of their first week of classes. This helps students to focus on their project throughout their entire program. This focus allows the student to begin the writing process earlier and has been effective in helping them complete the degree program. We will continue to increase the quality of program orientation and introduction to doctoral writing as part of our efforts to ensure successful graduates.

New programs—including the Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Educational Ministry offered in Spanish, and the new Doctor of Educational Ministry concentration in Professional Leadership—have already begun to further our reach and allow us to serve more churches through the training of ministers and leaders. We are particularly excited about our Doctor of Educational Ministry in Professional Leadership, which will train students with a professional doctorate to apply a theological framework to the ethical and practical issues unique to their vocation. We have also begun to offer seminars in innovative formats, like our Pastor's Workshop, where students come to campus for cohort-based times of lectures, reflection, and fellowship. Students have expressed appreciation for this new format, and we are excited to continue to offer new iterations of these unique seminars in years to come.

IV Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

While Southern's research doctoral program remains one of the strongest in Christian higher education, the aim is always to increase the quality and reach of the program. In recent years, we have revised our admissions process for both the PhD and EdD in order to provide greater accessibility without compromising the highest academic standards. We are also currently evaluating the PhD colloquium and developing a revised format to prepare students more effectively for comprehensive examinations and to provide a more consistent experience for residential and modular students.

The most significant development for our research doctoral program recently is our fully online PhD in Christian Studies, announced in Fall 2024. We welcomed our first cohort in the program this fall of 2025. The Ph.D. in Christian Studies consists of seminars in both Practical Theology and Biblical and Theological studies, preparing students to faithfully serve at the highest levels in the church or the academy. It is offered in a fully online, synchronous format, offering the same level of rigor as our residential PhD but in a format accessible to students all around the world.

The faculty has also recently approved a Ph.D. concentration in Islamic Studies, intended to be a unique and leading research degree for Christian engagement with Islam. Southern is uniquely positioned to produce scholars capable of addressing the theological tenets of Islam from those of historic Christian doctrine, for the ultimate purpose of evangelism to the growing global population of Muslims.

Southern Seminary continues to develop partnerships related to international student teaching opportunities with the intention of student deployment. There is a growing need and opportunity for international theological education. Thousands of pastors around the world have no means to be trained. A continued focus on developing the pedagogical skills of our students will be paired with a continued commitment to encourage research doctoral students to exercise their academic gifting in the service of local churches. The extensive pedagogical training that Southern Seminary students receive allows them to become even more competitive in the current academic job market and even more valuable as leaders in the local church and SBC as a whole.

Enrollment by Degree Program Converted to Full-Time Equivalent As per SBC Seminary Formula

Prebaccalaureate Programs:	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025
Diploma Theology	31	30	29	18
Diploma Missions	68	53	51	19
Diploma			8	64
Boyce: Associate of Arts	22	28	29	36
Special (including Prebacc. and SWI)	140	130	120	117
Baccalaureate Programs:				
Boyce: Bachelor of Arts	290	294	256	283
Boyce: Bachelor of Science	685	672	681	682
Basic Degree Programs:				
M.Div	1,475	1,346	1,335	1,351
M.A.	258	287	285	335
M.A.T.S.	187	181	195	141
M.C.M.	4	2	0	0
Special (Postbacc.)	28	60	68	32
Advanced Degree Programs:				
T.h.M.	106	72	57	60
D.Min.	241	235	241	232
D.Miss.	9	7	7	7
D.Ed.Min.	187	153	130	127
Ed.D.	24	14	19	22
Ph.D.	325	303	303	325
Special	0	2	0	0
Total FTE Enrollment	4,080	3,869	3,814	3,851
Official FTE	2,102	1,979	1,837	1,866
(Nondup. HC)	5,697	5,651	5,727	5,808

Degree Program Graduates

Prebaccalaureate Programs:	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Diploma Theology	0	0	0	0
Diploma Missions	0	0	0	0
Worldview Studies Certificate	1	4	1	3
Seminary Wives Institute	10	13	6	4
IMB Certificate	0	0	0	2
ESL Certificate	6	4	1	4
Boyce: Associate of Arts	5	4	9	11
Graduate Certificate	0	0	0	3
Baccalaureate Programs:				
Boyce: Bachelor of Arts	28	23	35	29
Boyce: Bachelor of Science	94	89	101	104
Basic Degree Programs:				
M.Div	276	274	364	345
M.A.	59	74	83	84
M.A.T.S.	65	82	78	79
M.C.M.	2	1	0	0
Cert. Great Comm. Studies	2	10	6	2
Advanced Degree Programs:				
Th.M.	83	67	66	68
D.Min.	34	44	42	42
D.Ed.Min.	34	37	24	18
D.Miss.	1	0	3	1
Ed.D.	4	5	3	5
Ph.D.	40	25	31	40
Total Graduates	744	756	853	844

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary makes all hiring and personnel decisions based upon our established policies, in accordance with the Baptist Faith and Message and the totality of our convictional commitments. We serve the Southern Baptist Convention and make all actions in light of instructions from the Southern Baptist Convention.

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer, and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is absolutely committed to the preparation of God-called ministers of the gospel, and that requires careful attention to prayer as both a spiritual discipline and an expression of ministry. Given the entirety of our responsibility in the construction of the Master of Divinity program, we join prayer with Bible reading, evangelism, and other spiritual disciplines in a required course for all Master of Divinity students.



2001 West Seminary Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76115-1153

ROBERT BROWN, Chair

DAVID S. DOCKERY, President | O.S. HAWKINS, Chancellor

Our Southwestern Seminary community is truly grateful that since the fall of 2022, when we began praying that the Lord would show us favor and bless the work of our hands (Psalm 90:17), we have seen the faithfulness of our Triune God to answer those prayers. We are thankful for Southern Baptists who have joined us in faithfully praying and who have given through the Cooperative Program and to Southwestern Seminary. We are grateful to God for His many blessings and collectively give thanks for His good work at Southwestern.

During the 2025 ministry year, our current faculty authored *Shapers of the Southwestern Theological Tradition*, a 400-page volume that is a gift of thanks and gratitude to the faculty who have gone before us on Seminary Hill. As a campus community we are thankful to carry on the traditions of what it means to be a “Southwesterner,” a term characterized by a commitment to the Great Commandment and Great Commission, the authority of the Scriptures, the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a commitment to the church and pastoral ministry, Spirit-enabled piety, a focus on evangelism and missions, and quality academics. We are thankful for Southwesterners past, present, and future.

In May 2025, we graduated more than 400 students, the largest graduating class since 2002, who join tens of thousands of Southwesterners in pushing back lostness in every inhabited time zone. In the fall of 2025, we welcomed more than 700 new students who came to study and be trained by our world class faculty who engage in faithful orthodoxy and orthopraxy. The expertise and knowledge of our faculty are not just influencing the men and women who study on Seminary Hill, but are also equipping others within Southern Baptist and evangelical life through the number of books and journal articles that have been published by our faculty in recent years with more planned in coming years. We are grateful not only to have faculty who teach faithfully, but are prolific authors as well.

Over the last year we have seen a steady increase in student enrollment and credit hours taught. Men and women are enrolled in every degree program at Southwestern, both in our English language programs, as well as those offered in Mandarin, Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese. In the fall of 2025, we launched our revised Master of Divinity program. The revised program continues to provide students with the same foundational core, but also includes a course focused on Christian worldview and apologetics. We desire for our graduates to engage an everchanging culture well and rightly with the unchangeable truth from God’s Word.

To honor one of our most-recognized Southwesterners, the Morris H. and Jodi Francis Chapman Denominational Scholars Fund was established to help equip the next generation of Southern Baptist leaders. The fund allows current Southwestern students to learn about the Southern Baptist Convention through an annual course offered during the SBC annual meeting. Our hope is to see the continued advancement of theological scholarship and denominational engagement among students who follow in the legacy and service of Dr. Chapman.

By God’s grace and provision, during the 2025 fiscal year we saw a balanced operational budget and were able to fully fund depreciation, which resulted in a \$10 million operational increase since 2022. Additionally, during this three-year period, net assets have increased \$31.1 million, while operational expenses have decreased \$6.5 million during the same timeframe.

Across the Southwestern campus there is a renewed hopefulness and genuine sense of joy as we continue to move from a position of crisis in 2022 to stability and increasing institutional health in personnel, financial patterns, and institutional processes. We acknowledge this is clear and tangible evidence of God's work. We are grateful for His continued kindness and favor and for answering the steadfast prayers from those across our campus.

As a campus community we have ought to live out Matthew 6:33, our theme verse for the year. Collectively, we have pursued first His kingdom and His righteousness all the while knowing that as we equip men and women to carry forth the message of the Gospel – both in our classroom curriculum with our faculty and our hidden curriculum through our staff – it is Christ Jesus we are serving. Our campus community continues to embrace and affirm our six core values as we seek to be grace filled, Christ centered, Scripturally grounded, confessionally guided, student focused, and globally engaged.

We continue to be thankful for the work God has done and is continuing to do at Southwestern Seminary. Along with the psalmist, we can declare the Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy (Psalm 126:3).

Indeed, we are filled with joy.

Faithfully,

David S. Dockery

President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary offers certificates at the pre-baccalaureate level that equip men and women for ministry to support local church ministry in the disciplines of church planting, student ministry, children's ministry, faith and culture, women's ministry, and biblical counseling. Southwestern also offers a seminary studies program for student wives certificate in English and Spanish which provides affordable classes to wives of seminary students to grow in their understanding of theology, Scripture, and ministry skill. In the 2024-2025 academic year 545 students were enrolled in certificate programs.

Texas Baptist College, the undergraduate school of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, works to provide the highest quality undergraduate education to educate and equip students to serve in the church, mission field, and marketplace. The academic programs offered at TBC are Christ-centered, Scripturally grounded, and simultaneously academically rigorous.

TBC offers a wide range of degree programs that educate students who are called to vocational ministry as well as providing a biblically grounded education for those students who will work in vocations that are not ministry based. In the 2024-2025 academic year, there were 340 students enrolled in TBC's associate and bachelor level academic programs. Associate and bachelor's degrees are offered in humanities and Christian studies and prepare students for a life of Christian service. The college also offers a bachelor's degree in intercultural studies to prepare students for cross-cultural service in a variety of fields. Additionally, the three bachelor's degrees in the areas of music and worship prepare students for technical excellence and ministry faithfulness in worship for service in the local church and beyond.

In addition to the traditional four-year bachelor's degrees, Texas Baptist College offers a five-year-program that allows students to earn a bachelor's and master's degree at an accelerated pace (BAMDiv). The five-year-program pairs the bachelor's degree with the Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE), or the Master of Music in Worship Leadership (MMWL).

Texas Baptist College provides a significant emphasis on spiritual development and student life. Students are provided with opportunities to engage in faculty mentoring groups where a member of the faculty walks with them throughout the semester and attend chapel services twice a week where the Word of God is faithfully ministered by Southwestern faculty and guests from the Southern Baptist Convention. Additionally, once a month a TBC Chapel is held solely for the undergraduate students. Female TBC students have opportunities to connect with TBC faculty wives through monthly Coffee and Chat opportunities. Additionally, Southwestern's International Mission Board missionaries assigned globally have been diligent in connecting with and discipling TBC men and women.

Students in TBC's worship degree programs are also active in student ensembles and bands and assist in leading chapel services for the Southwestern community during the academic semesters. Through Southwestern's Student Life division, times for TBC students to engage in international and collegiate outreach opportunities are provided weekly. This allows TBC students to learn to share the gospel among peers at local colleges and also share the gospel among the nations in the greater Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. TBC students also participate in summerlong missions experiences within and outside the United States. Rigorous academic study prepares TBC students to think critically with a biblical worldview, while opportunities beyond the classroom prepare them to be ambassadors for the gospel in the local church and the marketplace.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

The primary purpose of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is to provide theological education for men and women who are preparing for Christian ministry. In the 2024-2025 academic year, 2,265 students were enrolled in Southwestern's master's level programs. At the heart of the seminary's master level offerings is the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree which is specifically designed to train pastors and missionaries of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. Numerous concentrations are offered that allow students to specialize in a specific ministry area or a traditional area of study.

In the fall 2025, Southwestern launched a revised MDiv degree. The revised 82-degree maintains the theological core at the heart of the degree, but also includes cohering course on Christian Worldview and Cultural Engagement. The revised degree was a faculty-led effort as each of the seminary's four graduate schools, including the School of Theology, the School of Educational Ministries, the School of Church Music and Worship, and the School of Evangelism and Missions, were represented on the curriculum planning team. Pastors, associational missionaries, and denominational leaders were enthusiastic about the updates when the degree's revised curriculum was shared with them. The degree still maintains foundational biblical and theological courses including courses in Greek and Hebrew, as well as courses in evangelism and missions, philosophy, apologetics, church history, hermeneutics, and Baptist heritage.

Southwestern Seminary offers a variety of master's degrees in addition to the MDiv. These include a Master of Arts (MA) in theology, biblical counseling, Christian education, church music, and worship leadership. The Master of Arts degree programs seek to prepare students for specialized vocations to support a variety of Christian ministries. The Master of Music (MM) degree equips students to sharpen their musical skills and talents in an academic context that values church music and worship. The Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree comprises

the core of the MDiv at Southwestern and prepares students for further study. Southwestern's master's programs are designed to equip students for their desired ministry areas.

Southwestern's master's programs are offered in residential and online formats, with some programs available only on campus. Students can attend classes in person, through live video conference, or by watching recorded lectures. In addition to traditional semester long courses, Southwestern offers an accelerated online program that offers students six eight-week terms during the academic year. The impact and ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention is global and Southwestern assists this global ministry by offering online master's degrees in Spanish and Chinese, including the MTS and MDiv; and the MTS in Portuguese.

Augmenting course instruction are numerous opportunities for master's level students to apply classroom instruction in real time. Through Everyday Evangelism, a weekly outreach ministry to local colleges and universities and other parts of the community, students share the gospel alongside Southwestern professors from various academic disciplines. Southwestern music students are engaged in numerous ensembles, choirs, and bands that help lead worship for bi-weekly chapel services as well as experiencing opportunities to lead worship at the Southern Baptist Convention. Graduate level students also participate in mission trips domestically and internationally and are active participants in OneLink which allows them to spend a summer as a missionary working alongside International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries. Master's level students have the opportunity to be discipled by seminary faculty and staff through mentoring groups and can take part in campus Serve Teams.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral program at Southwestern serves Southern Baptist churches by developing reflective and expert practitioners in their ministry fields. Both the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) and Doctor of Educational Ministry (DEdMin) degree programs challenge students to think deeply about theology and ministry praxis. The course of study requires students to complete required coursework while also designing and implementing ministry projects that can be potentially modeled by other churches. Both degree programs share concentrations in biblical counseling, apologetics, Christian leadership, church planting leadership, church revitalization, discipleship and Christian growth, evangelism and missions, executive leadership, family ministry, and worship leadership. An MDiv, or its equivalent, is required as a pre-requisite for the DMin degree and so also offers concentrations specific to pastoral ministry, text-driven preaching, and pastoral theology. Students have the opportunity to complete their respective program in three years as they spend the first two years focused on course work and the third, and final year, working on their project. Projects are based in the context of the local church and seek to assist in practical ways within the students focus of concentration. In the 2024-2025 academic year, 339 students were enrolled in professional doctoral degree programs.

The DMin and DEdMin programs are offered in intensive formats that require students to complete both their coursework and courses remotely during the duration of the semester. Additionally, students gather on the Fort Worth campus in person for one week to meet together for two seminars, to present their academic work, and to interact with the seminary's faculty. The format allows students to continue to have maximum impact in their respective ministry areas while joining their studies with ministry practice.

The professional doctoral studies program also offers a DMin in Korean, building on Southwestern's history and ministry impact in South Korea. The program also offers a DMin in Spanish to serve Spanish-speaking churches in Southwestern's local context and beyond. Both of these programs are vital to Southwestern's global impact as the institution seeks to serve the Southern Baptist Convention.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Within Southwestern's research doctoral program, the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), and Doctor of Education (EdD) degrees are offered. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 237 exceptional students were enrolled in the program and were taught to teach, research, and write, for the institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention. Research doctoral study necessitates a high degree of academic acumen as students must research with originality, independence, analytical research, good judgment, and skill in order to articulate their findings.

The PhD program focuses on helping students become experts in a field of study based on competence in biblical and modern languages as is demonstrated through quality research and critical evaluative skills so their research findings add to the body of knowledge in their chosen field of study. Students can complete their coursework residually or through video conferencing, which allows students the opportunity to study and research at a doctoral level while not leaving their ministry location.

The EdD program, an accelerated cohort-based program, equips students with scholarship, education, and leadership competencies. The degree prepares students to serve in contexts that range from higher education to the local church.

The DMA program combines intensive study in a student's major music performance area with an integrative study of church music with theoretical and historical subjects. The degree emphasizes advanced development of musical artistry and scholarly achievement. Students may pursue a DMA in guitar, piano, or voice.

Many Southwestern Seminary research doctoral students are active participants and presenters at academic guilds within their discipline. Additionally, Southwestern doctoral students have not only had their research published in the form of journal articles, but several are authors who are leading the way in publishing both academic textbooks and trade books to impact and enhance local church ministry as well as the academy.

Based on each of Southwestern's Convention-assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2026 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how Southwestern is accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Southwestern continues to look for ways to expand the offerings for certificates for pre-baccalaureate training as well as delivery access for training for our primary region of service in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. Growth in enrollment at Texas Baptist College, Southwestern's undergraduate school, continues to remain steady and several initiatives at TBC look promising in the years to come that will assist in both the institution's health and the benefit of incoming students.

Southwestern has several agreements with area high schools to offer affordable dual-enrollment courses so students can earn credit toward their TBC undergraduate degree. We hope to expand these opportunities in the future, especially for SBC-affiliated students and families. Southwestern has partnered with several organizations to host events for high school students within our constituencies, including hosting Lifeway's Fuge camps. Additionally, each summer the seminary's School of Church Music and Worship hosts a week-long worship camp that is

specifically designed to help high school students in the area of church worship. While the camp helps equip the high school worship leader, it has also proved to provide opportunities to introduce high schoolers to TBC and Southwestern.

The undergraduate student experience continues to improve with several campus events, opportunities for discipleship with faculty, better accountability for student behavior, and a caring atmosphere for all students. Town hall meetings are held in the spring and fall to gather input from students regarding their student life experience. Several prayer gatherings are held weekly on campus that allow students to pray with faculty and staff for each other, the campus, and the lost.

II. Assist churches by programs of masters' level theological education for ministers.

Southwestern Seminary places a strong emphasis and priority on both the Great Commandment and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The seminary's six core values of grace filled, Christ centered, Scripturally grounded, confessionally guided, student focused, and globally engaged shape and inform interactions inside and outside the classroom. The seminary holds true to its mission statement that we are educating men and women for ministry in the local church and graduate-level study, in particular the Master of Divinity (MDiv), is the core of the mission of Southwestern Seminary. Southwestern maintains high academic standards and expectations in courses taught by scholar-practitioners.

To rightly prepare Southwestern Seminary Master of Divinity students for ministry in the 21st century, a revised Master of Divinity curriculum was launched in the Fall 2025. Assessed and developed through a curriculum committee representing faculty from each of the seminary's four graduate schools, the revised MDiv is now an 82-hour degree program that maintains the theological core while narrowing courses to best meet student needs. The revised MDiv has a strong emphasis on Christian worldview and cultural engagement, via a required course of all MDiv students. Additionally, the revised program allows for 12-hours for a concentration via four courses. The program also includes a selective, which allows students to choose between biblical counseling, theology of worship, and disciple making. Courses in the degree program, including evangelism and missions, philosophy, apologetics, church history, hermeneutics, and Baptist heritage, have not changed.

The Southwestern student body extends beyond the Fort Worth campus as students are enrolled in online classes across the globe. This further emphasizes the seminary's core value of being globally engaged as students are enrolled in Southwestern's master's level programs in Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese. Southwestern is equipping men and women around the world in theological education to advance the Kingdom of God.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Southwestern's professional doctoral studies (PDS) program offers advanced post-graduate education for students who have earned a master's degree and have practical ministry experience. The PDS program includes the Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Educational Ministries degrees with numerous concentrations for each degree. Southwestern's PDS program allows students to pursue doctoral research in 12 concentrations with anticipated completion in three years. The program enables to students to complete a ministry-based project within the local church while walking alongside their doctoral supervisor who not only provides guidance, but also mentorship.

Over the last year Southwestern's Campus Technology team introduced a Student Hub that serves as the "home page" for all students when they login to their seminary accounts. Within the Student Hub is a portal specifically for PDS students to access writing resources,

items related to project submission, the PDS student handbook, and a welcome video from the program's director. Southwestern is committed to equipping men and women within the program in a manner that is consistent with our legacy of a strong biblical foundation coupled with practical application.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Southwestern's research doctoral program (RDS) provides a rigorous, focused course of study that prepares individuals to contribute to the body of knowledge within their research fields and trains them to think critically and rightly to teach, research, and write in support of Christian ministry. The program is designed to allow students to complete their coursework remotely, so the RDS office has provided the necessary resources to help faculty supervisors guide and direct their students well. Supervisors and their students maintain constant communication so that students can not only study at a high academic level, but they are also mentored by faculty who are experts in their fields.

Over the last year Southwestern's Campus Technology team introduced a Student Hub that serves as the "home page" for all students when they login to their seminary accounts. Within the Student Hub is a portal specifically for RDS students to access writing resources and workshops, PhD bibliographies, and academic and career information. Additionally, the RDS hub allows research doctoral students to have access to academic societies and scholar workshops.

PROGRAM REPORT

I. Enrollment by Degree Program in SBC funded Full-Time Equivalents

	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022	2022– 2023	2023– 2024	2024– 2025
Undergraduate and Certificate Programs								
A.A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	34
B.A.	179	163	152	110	106	93	112	229
B.S.	35	13	4	1	0	0	0	0
B.M.	33	32	27	19	13	27	34	45
Certificate	11	14	25	11	18	40	60	199
Special	20	13	11	5	6	16	5	167
Basic Degree Programs								
M.A.A.B.S.	9	5	4	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.B.C.	53	39	39	30	17	15	16	98
M.A.C.A.	7	5	5	3	2	1	0	0
M.A.C.E.	66	49	53	41	28	25	30	82
M.A.C.M.	8	10	8	5	2	5	5	8
M.A.C.S.E.	6	4	1	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.I.S.	8	6	4	2	2	2	3	2
M.A.M.	16	9	5	4	7	3	3	5
M.A.P.	N/A	2	3	5	5	2	1	0
M.A.Th.	14	11	11	9	3	2	2	4
M.A.W.	6	4	2	1	2	1	0	20
M.Div.	353	260	281	203	152	153	156	647
M.M.	29	31	20	24	25	23	26	32
M.T.S.	39	30	74	42	27	19	21	770

	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022	2022– 2023	2023– 2024	2024– 2025
Advanced Degree Programs								
D.Ed.Min.	12	22	32	60	59	73	63	53
D.Min.	73	79	89	106	104	92	104	241
Ed.D	N/A	N/A	N/A	21	23	23	26	25
Ph.D./D.M.A.	156	193	223	176	143	125	91	190
Th.M.	31	35	53	67	49	59	44	61
Total SBC FTE Enrollment	1,164	1,029	1,126	1,126¹	793	801	804	712
Headcount Enrollment	4,007	3,848	3,907	3,703	3,455	3,646	3,622	3,726

¹ Actual FTE for 20-21 was 945. By action of the CSP, prior year count is reflected here.

GRADUATES

	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022	2022– 2023	2023– 2024	2024– 2025
Undergraduate and Certificate Programs								
A.A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	1
B.A.	21	21	35	34	31	29	28	32
B.S.	58	52	35	40	0	2	0	0
B.M.	1	3	7	7	3	5	1	4
Certificate	20	13	30	14	79	96	160	210
Basic Degree Programs								
M.A.A.B.S.	2	10	1	1	0	0	0	0
M.A.B.C.	25	24	18	25	12	15	9	11
M.A.C.A.	4	3	3	3	1	1	1	
M.A.C.E.	49	42	38	40	24	25	22	19
M.A.C.M.	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	2
M.A.C.S.E.	2	3	5	3	0	0	0	0
M.A.I.S.	4	2	4	1	0	0	2	3
M.A.M.	6	5	7	3	1	0	0	4
M.A.Ph	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	1
M.A.Th.	11	10	11	7	5	5	4	6
M.A.W.	2	4	6	4	2	7	3	3
M.Div.	137	123	117	111	94	74	75	97
M.M.	12	10	10	11	9	7	9	11
M.T.S.	191	208	203	231	194	170	199	196
Advanced Degree Programs								
D.Ed.Min.	7	3	1	9	9	11	21	12
D.Min.	17	17	24	28	16	33	49	36
Ed.D	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	4	5
Ph.D./D.M.A.	33	22	44	34	33	27	25	26
Th.M.	22	17	20	35	24	25	22	18
Total Graduates	626	594	620	645	541	543	637	698

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: In an effort to be faithful to the *panta ta ethne* aspect of our Lord’s Great Commission and in accord with aspirational aspects of the eschatological picture in Revelation 7:9 of the great multitude representing every nation, tribe, people, and language, Southwestern seeks to emphasize the importance of identifying and equipping qualified leaders from diverse ethnic backgrounds, which can be seen in the wide-ranging program offerings at Southwestern, some of which take place in Spanish, Mandarin, Korean, and Portuguese. With this understanding, Southwestern Seminary will continue to make all hiring and personnel decisions in a biblically faithful manner, enabling the seminary to advance the seminary’s mission and purpose in a God-honoring way. Central to these things are convictional commitments to the Baptist Faith and Message as Southwestern continues to serve the churches and entities of the Southern Baptist Convention.

2. SBC Referral: To request the trustees of seminaries to consider a dedicated course on prayer.

Motion: Andy Harrison, Oklahoma

“That in light of Jesus’ pronouncement that His house was to be a house of prayer; and the disciples earnest request of the Lord to be taught to pray, and because of our own held belief that prayer does not support the work of the church, but that rather prayer is the work of the church, that the Southern Baptist Convention request the boards of each Southern Baptist Seminary to consider a dedicated course on prayer to their standard curriculum in all degree programs, as such a course does not currently exist.”

Response: Southwestern Seminary over the past three years has prioritized the importance of prayer across the campus. Administrators, faculty, and staff from across the Southwestern community gather to pray in the Rotunda each Monday morning. Additional prayer gatherings take place prior to chapel services on Tuesday and Thursday. A number of student prayer initiatives take place on a weekly basis. A Day of Prayer is held each semester, often when the Board of Trustees are present on campus. Faculty begin classes with prayer, recognizing our dependence on the Lord to carry out the Southwestern mission in a faithful manner. Professor Dan Crawford, Emeritus Chair of Prayer and Spiritual Formation at Southwestern, serves as the professor for the course on prayer in the 2025-26 academic year. The course will continue to be offered in the years ahead.

SEMINARY COMPARATIVE DATA

1. Enrollment:

a. Total SBC Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) both funded and unfunded.

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>3 Yr. Rolling Average</u>
Gateway	496	530	626	551
MBTS	1,953	1,862	1,733	1,849
NOBTS	1,630	1,537	1,374	1,514
SEBTS	1,964	1,832	1,778	1,858
SBTS	1,866	1,837	1,979	1,896
SWBTS	712	804	801	772
Total	8,621	8,362	8,281	8,440

b. Actual FTEs approved by the Council of Seminary Presidents for Cooperative Program (CP) Seminary Funding Formula:

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>3 Yr. Rolling Average</u>
Gateway	236	195	242	224
MBTS	1,953	1,862	1,733	1,849
NOBTS	1,000	976	894	957
SEBTS	870	754	707	777
SBTS	1,866	1,837	1,979	1,896
SWBTS	712	804	801	772
Total	6,637	6,428	6,356	6,475

c. CP Allocation per SBC student.

	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>CP Allocation</u>
	<u>Total SBC Students</u>	<u>CP Allocation</u>	<u>Per Student</u>
Gateway	496	\$3,768,909	\$7,599
MBTS	1,953	\$8,496,463	\$4,350
NOBTS	2,648	\$6,343,849	\$2,396
SEBTS	1,964	\$6,267,437	\$3,191
SBTS	4,252	\$9,962,545	\$2,343
SWBTS	712	\$6,148,443	\$8,635
Total	12,025	\$40,987,646	\$ 3,919

d. Nonduplicating head count (number of students registered and taking one credit hour or more).

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Non-SBC Students</u>	<u>SBC Students</u>	<u>Students</u>
Gateway	753	1,563	2,316
MBTS	1,743	3,797	5,540
NOBTS	261	2,648	2,909
SEBTS	2,117	3,336	5,453
SBTS	1,557	4,252	5,809
SWBTS	623	3,103	3,726
Total	7,020	18,601	25,621

e. Basic Degrees awarded for the 2024-2025 academic year

	MDiv (3 year)	ThM	MA & other 2-year
Gateway	38	0	150
MBTS	132	82	230
NOBTS	89	29	124
SEBTS	143	7	206
SBTS	343	68	163
SWBTS	97	18	246
Total	842	204	1,119

f. Total Tuition Revenue

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Gateway	\$ 4,613,213	\$ 4,497,839	\$ 4,652,342
MBTS	\$ 19,656,405	\$ 18,569,841	\$ 17,759,240
NOBTS	\$ 12,366,124	\$ 11,722,612	\$ 10,271,914
SEBTS	\$ 20,282,503	\$ 18,265,563	\$ 15,937,349
SBTS	\$ 24,291,116	\$ 22,966,077	\$ 22,655,417
SWBTS	\$11,618,541	\$ 11,675,598	\$ 11,869,367
Total	\$ 92,827,902	\$87,697,530	\$ 83,145,629

g. Credit Hour Costs: 2024-2025

	Non SBC Students	SBC Student
Gateway	\$500	\$305
MBTS	\$585	\$330
NOBTS	\$580	\$330
SEBTS	\$430	\$322
SBTS	\$465	\$322
SWBTS	\$684	\$342

h. Annual Cost per Student (For a married student on campus, tuition, fees, book, & housing)

	2024-2025 Non SBC	2024-2025 SBC
Gateway	\$ 39,695	\$ 33,979
MBTS	\$ 24,112	\$ 20,602
NOBTS	\$ 21,728	\$ 17,228
SEBTS	\$ 23,195	\$ 20,843
SBTS	\$ 20,194	\$ 16,144
SWBTS	\$ 27,384	\$ 21,462

i. Percent of total budget that relates to personnel expenses based on each seminary's E&G budget:

	2024-2025 Low	2024-2025 Median	2024-2025 High
Gateway		65.73%	
MBTS	70.7%	70.7%	70.7%
NOBTS	57%	57%	57%
SEBTS			71%
SBTS			46%
SWBTS	53.38%	61.45%	67.67%

j. Statement of Income for 2024-2025:

	Gateway*	MBTS	NOBTS	SEBTS	SBTS	SWBTS
Operating Income						
Tuition and Fees	\$ 3,645,213	19,656,405 NET of student aid 1,744,837	12,366,124	20,282,503	51,663,426	13,773,058
Auxilliary Enterprises	\$ 610,956	3,803,395	3,026,777	6,145,285	\$8,364,618	6,720,393
Cooperative Program	\$ 3,786,909	8,496,463	6,343,849	6,336,420	9,962,545	6,148,443
Private Gifts	\$ 9,605,037^	440,040	10,906,029	1,263,431	8,890,671	4,285,557
Endowment Income	\$ 1,650,025	2,932,126	2,795,104	342,649	3,820,077	9,115,949
Investments	\$ 1,108,767	660,715	2,068,232		5,564,284	
Return on Beneficial Interest Trusts	\$ 597,411				16,685	
Other Income	\$ 150,175	2,433,866#	4,737,869	1,359,354	649,863	678,255
Total Income	\$ 20,539,082	38,423,010##	42,243,984	35,729,642	61,560,359	40,721,655
% of CP to Total Income	18.35%	22.11%	15%	17.73%	16.18%	15.10%

*For Operating Fund Without Donor Restrictions

#Includes Funds Released From Restrictions

##Without Donor Restrictions Per Audit Report

^ Includes in-kind property gift of \$5,562,419



SEMINARY EXTENSION

**A ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention:
Incorporated under the Council of Seminary Presidents
901 Commerce Street, Suite 500, Nashville, TN 37203**

**RANDAL A. WILLIAMS, Executive Director of Seminary Extension
R. ALBERT MOHLER, JR., President of the Council of Seminary Presidents**

INTRODUCTION

Seminary Extension is a ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention. Our mission is to provide an opportunity for theological education and ministry training to individuals who cannot or will not attend a traditional institution of learning. We are a distance education program so our students can learn from anywhere. They are not required to enter a program to take classes. In fact, most students simply take individual courses for personal spiritual development. When a student chooses to enroll into a program, they are required to take courses from a prescribed group of biblical, theological, and ministry training courses that are biblical, affordable, and immediately applicable.

Seminary Extension began its work on June 15, 1951. The Southern Baptist Convention realized that many of its pastors, leaders, and teachers did not have any formal biblical, theological, or ministry training. For many of them seminary was not an option. So Seminary Extension was created in order to give them an opportunity to study biblically sound courses in three areas: Bible, Theology, and Practical Ministry. Lee Gallman was the first director. Through each successive director, Seminary Extension has remained true to its call. We still provide theological education and ministry training that is biblical, theological, and affordable. In 2007, Randal A. Williams became Seminary Extension's seventh director. Under its seven leaders, Seminary Extension has served and continues to serve Southern Baptists by educating fellow Southern Baptists where they live and serve.

Seminary Extension is not an accredited institution. We are, however, licensed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Many colleges and seminaries that have undergraduate programs recognize the value of our courses for incoming students and some of them accept our courses for credit into their programs. Acceptance is generally because our courses are of excellent academic quality. They are written by Southern Baptists, most of which teach in our SBC seminaries. We use proven evaluation methods to ensure the integrity of the work done by students and we keep accurate student records that are permanent and accessible.

Seminary Extension cannot guarantee that other institutions will receive transfer credit for its courses. Students should always check with the institution to which they expect to transfer course credits before they enroll in courses with Seminary Extension for that purpose.

PROGRAM REPORT

The statistical data below shows the number of course enrollments and the total number of students enrolled during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Course Enrollments	315
Total Number of Students	214



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

901 Commerce Street, Suite 400, Nashville, Tennessee 37203
TAFFEY HALL, Director

Governed by the Council of Seminary Presidents
August 2024 – July 2025

Yearly Highlights

- Acquired 12 records center boxes of the SBC Executive Committee Office of Convention Relations Files, 1993-2016
- Acquired 14 records center boxes of the SBC Maryland-Delaware Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union Records, 1887-1990
- Acquired 1 document box of the W. J. and Dorothy Hughes Collection, 1962-1994
- Added 1 records center box to the Baptist Convention of Israel Minutes Collection, years 1957-1992
- Added 1 records center box of World War II correspondence and photographs to the Louie Newton Collection, 1942-1948
- Acquired 5 document boxes and 2 records center boxes as the Paoli Baptist Church (Paoli, Pennsylvania) Collection, 1962-1990s (recently disbanded church)
- Acquired 9 document boxes of the Gerry Hutchinson Home Mission Board / North American Mission Board Social Ministries Department Collection, 1985-2001
- Accessioned the 2023 SBC Minister's Wives Luncheon Notebook
- Added 1 records center box and 1 document box of state Baptist convention WMU reports to the SBC Woman's Missionary Union Records Series
- Added 1 document box each of additions to the SBC Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission Records Series (publications and promotional materials and policy guides in English and Spanish), SBC Press Kit Collection (news clippings, 1990s-2000s), Historical Commission Records (publications and promotional materials), Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Collection (bulletins and directories, 1950s-1970s), and BSSB Church Training Department Collection (Group Learning Improvement Clinics, 1962-1964)
- Added 1 records center box of material from the SBC Great Commission Resurgence Evaluation Task Force, 2023-2024
- Acquired 124 issues of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference Newsletters, 1974-2010
- Added 1 document box and 1 oversize item of CP100 Celebration Items, 2025
- Added 1 document box of photocopies and correspondence to the A. H. Newman Collection, 1881-1933
- Accessioned 7 document boxes of the Barry Holcomb Collection, 2002-2006
- Added 7 document boxes of sermons and subject files to the Lloyd Elder Collection
- Accessioned 1 document box of writings and articles as the Bill Sumners Collection
- Completed processing 3 archive collections: the M. E. Dodd Collection, Owen Cooper Collection, and Great Commission Resurgence Task Force Collection; and 2 large series of the SBC Radio and Television Commission Records Series (Paper Files and Motion Picture Film Collections); and updates to the Woman's Missionary Union Collection

- Prepared an extensive 5-display case exhibit on the history of the SBC Cooperative Program for the SBC annual meeting in Dallas, Texas, in June
- Completed digitization and online accessibility of 20 new digital resource projects and additions to 9 existing digital projects including a new category of Tracts and Pamphlets
- Added a new “For Churches” tab to the SBHLA website, including links to 13 articles of “Archives Helps” resources, information to assist local Baptist churches in celebrating church anniversaries, and information for Southern Baptist churches on the history of the SBC Cooperative Program
- Added 130 annuals, 22 archive collections, 3 church and associational history files, 64 audio-visuals/kits, 533 books, 57 electronic resources, 5 informational files, 20 pamphlets, 642 periodicals, and 410 photograph files

Research Use

The collection continues to attract scholars and students from a wide range of colleges and universities. Researchers from 29 different institutions conducted research in the collection during the past year. The collection was visited by 134 registered researchers and staff provided 1,001 patron contacts.

Acquisitions

Six new archive collections and additions to 16 existing archive collections were accessioned into the SBHLA holdings. The WMU of the Maryland-Delaware Baptist Convention Collection, 1887-1990, contains many unique items related to the organizational founding and early work of the SBC Woman’s Missionary Union. The W. J. and Dorothy Hughes Collection documents the work of longtime SBC missionaries in Wyoming, North Dakota, and Montana, and includes newspaper clippings, programs, and church planting activities in the Northwest from 1962-1994.

The SBC Executive Committee Office of Convention Relations Collection includes material from 1993-2016 and contains correspondence, reports, office memorandums, publications, and audio-visual materials. Additions were made to the Baptist Convention of Israel Collection to include minutes of the BCI for years 1957-1992. Additions to the Louie Newton Collection include 5 large notebooks of correspondence and photographs from members of Newton’s church, Druid Hill Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, who served in World War II. Additions of various state Baptist convention WMU annual meeting minutes from the 1920s-1960s were added to the WMU archive collection. The 2023 SBC Ministers’ Wives Luncheon Notebook was acquired, as well as small additions of publications and promotional materials to several archive record groups. The Great Commission Resurgence Evaluation Task Force donated one large notebook of meeting materials, correspondence, and background information on the work of the Evaluation Task Force, 2023-2024.

Records of the recently disbanded Paoli Baptist Church in Paoli, Pennsylvania, were acquired. The collection, 1962-1990s, includes church records (business meeting minutes, financial reports, and membership lists), photographs, church history materials, and subject files. Paoli Baptist Church was organized as part of the Home Mission Board’s Pioneer Missions program in 1962. It was a founding member of the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention in 1970. While most of its membership was white, African Americans were freely accepted into the membership from the early 1970s and were elected to leadership positions. The membership also included Native American and Asian members from China and India.

Two Home Mission Board / North American Mission Board Collections were acquired: the Gerry Hutchinson Christian Social Ministries Department Collection, 1985-2001; and the Barry Holcomb Collection, 2002-2006. The Hutchinson material includes correspondence, publications, subject files, and reports related to the CSM area emphasis. The Holcomb Collection contains reports and correspondence.

Additions of sermons and writings were added to the SBHLA holdings. Sermons and subject files were added to the Lloyd Elder Collection. Elder led the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1984-1991. Prior to coming to the SSB, he served as a Southern Baptist pastor and as Executive Vice President of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Writings and addresses of former SBHLA director Bill Sumners were also added to the collection. Sumners served as director of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives from 1990-2016. Additions were also made to the A. H. Newman Collection. The Newman material includes correspondence mostly between AHN and Harold Bender from 1925-1933 but also contains some of Newton's personal correspondence from 1881. Book acquisitions this year included 11 titles of ethnic/foreign language resources including materials in Chinese, Korean, and Spanish.

Preservation Program

Preserving material in a sustainable format is an ongoing task for the staff of the SBHLA. The staff works to provide archival quality containers (folders and boxes) and a suitable environment for the valuable collection in the library and archives. Ninety-two photograph files of SBC Home Mission Board migrant mission work, pioneer missions, churches, baptisms, and church activities from the 1940s-1960s in the Midwest and Northeast were transferred to acid-free folders and enclosures. The files include photographs of Southern Baptist missions activities and church plants with African Americans, Cubans, Italians, Mexicans, Native Americans, and Polish migrants.

Access to the Collection

Processing was completed on 3 archive collections (M. E. Dodd Collection, Owen Cooper Collection, and the Great Commission Task Force Collection), 2 series of the SBC Radio and Television Commission Records group (Paper Files and Motion Picture Film series), and updates to the Woman's Missionary Union Collection.

M. E. Dodd served as a Southern Baptist pastor, denominational leader, and author. He served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Shreveport, Louisiana from 1912-1950. He was president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention (1926-1927) and President of the Southern Baptist Convention (1934-1935), and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance. He was a member of the 75 Million Campaign Commission and instrumental in the launching of the SBC Cooperative Program. The Dodd Collection includes addresses, clippings, correspondence, histories of FBC Shreveport, Louisiana, and 2 of Dodd's sermons. Cooper, a businessman and Southern Baptist layman from Mississippi, served as SBC President (1972-1974); President of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (1955-1969); Chairman of the Laymen's Committee of the Crusade of the Americas (1966-1969); President of the Pan American Baptist Layman's Congress (1968); Vice President of the Baptist World Alliance (1970); and as a member of the SBC Executive Committee for 21 years. His interests included agricultural improvements in the South, improving agricultural conditions in India, rural hospitals, and as an advocate for improved race relations within the SBC. The Cooper Collection includes addresses, biographical information, clippings, one correspondence file, subject files, and an oral history interview Cooper gave with Jim Young of Baptist Press in 1974. The Great Commission Resurgence Task Force Collection, 2009-2010, includes 57 compact disc audio recordings of the GCRTF from 2009-2010, one dvd recording of the Task Force's report to the SBC annual meeting in 2010, one file of printed blog posts from the former pray4gcr.com website, and the printed GCRTF progress report. The Task Force asked the SBC to adopt 7 recommendations. All of the recommendations were adopted at the 2010 SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Florida.

The SBC Radio and Television Commission Paper Files record series includes materials from the late 1930s through 1997. The collection includes minutes; reports; subject files related to radio, television, and film production; files of project ideas; scripts; and correspondence. The RTVC Motion Picture Film series is a collection of motion picture films (16mm) transferred from the RTVC. Most of the films were produced by the RTVC, but some were produced by other SBC agencies. The collection includes 271 film titles, arranged in alphabetical order and stored in open-shelf format.

Processing work was completed on updates to the Woman's Missionary Union Collection. This addendum includes state convention WMU annuals, Baptist Press stories, booklets, manuals, brochures, and posters, as well as annual reports and yearbooks from 1911-2005.

The SBHLA awarded 14 individuals with Lynn E. May Study Gants for the year 2024-2025, ranging from \$500-\$750 per person.

Twenty new projects, and additions to 9 existing projects, of any word searchable pdf files and audio visual content, including a new category of Tracts and Pamphlets, were added to the Digital Resources page of the SBHLA website. These projects include:

- Arnold T. Ohrn Correspondence, 1948-1955
- John and Thomas Westrup Missionary Correspondence, 1881-1897
- Erik Alfred Nelson Papers, 1891-1932
- Calowa William Stumph Autobiography, 1964
- George Washington Bouldin Autobiography, 1962
- William Wesley Lawton, Sr. Diaries, 1891-1899
- Tennessee Baptist Convention Executive Board Minutes, 1897-1915
- Parlor Visitor, 1854-1857
- Kononia Farm Newsletter, 1956-1983
- Calling America Back to God Audio Recordings, 1939
- Adrian Rogers SBC Pastor's Conference Sermons Video Recordings, 1982-2003; and Adrian Rogers SBC Presidential Addresses Video Recordings, 1980, 1987-1988
- Two new collections to the Oral History Interviews category: Baptist Sunday School Board Oral History Interviews, 1971-1988; and SBC Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Leaders Oral History Collection, 1986-1987
- Two new projects added to the Sermons and Addresses category: L. Carlisle Marney Sermons, 1950-1952; and W. A. Criswell SBC Sermons and Addresses, 1965-1988
- Significant additions were made to the Western Recorder digital project, a collaboration between the SBHLA, SBTS Library, and Kentucky Baptist Convention Archives, to include years 1879-1904 and 1957-2011
- 2,670 images added to the Photo Gallery including images in 5 new photo albums: Baptisms, Baptist Institutions – Activities, Baptist Institutions – Buildings, Cooperative Program, and Social Ministries

The SBHLA is tasked with collecting, preserving, and making available materials that document Southern Baptist history. This work allows members of our staff to discover aspects of our Baptist heritage that inspire and enrich us each day. Our task is big but we welcome the work with grateful hearts.

COMMISSION



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

901 Commerce Street, Suite 550, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

SCOTT FOSHIE, Chair

GARY HOLLINGSWORTH, Interim President

It is my privilege to present this report on behalf of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. In this letter you will find a summary of the prior year's ministry, as well as some highlights regarding how we have fulfilled our mission to assist the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Our mission charges us with the responsibility to assist churches in applying the moral demands of the gospel, to apply Christian principles to moral and social problems and matters of public policy, and to cooperatively promote religious liberty. We consider this mission a high honor, given to us by the churches, and we count it a privilege to come alongside them in this important work.

To carry this out, we arrange our work in four broad categories of concern for Southern Baptists: life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity.

Life

Our work regarding the sanctity of life over the past year has involved historic advocacy in the budget reconciliation process, sustained engagement with the Trump administration, continued response to the ethical concerns of in vitro fertilization, and defending life at the federal level.

The shift to a Republican trifecta in Washington opened new opportunities for pro-life advocacy. The ERLC achieved a landmark victory when Congress voted to defund Planned Parenthood for one year through the reconciliation bill passed on July 4th, stripping the abortion giant of more than \$700 million in taxpayer funding—the first time abortion providers have been barred from receiving federal payments in permanent law. We engaged with over 50 congressional offices since the start of the 119th Congress and brought cohorts of Southern Baptist pastors to Washington to advocate alongside us for this priority. We mobilized to collect over 30,000 signatures from Southern Baptists and other pro-life Christians through our Defund Planned Parenthood campaign, amplifying the voice of our churches in the public square.

After President Trump's inauguration, the ERLC was pleased to see decisive action on our pro-life priorities. The administration enforced the Hyde Amendment, rescinded Biden-era executive actions expanding abortion access, and reinstated the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Policy (a.k.a. the Mexico City Policy.) In April, President Trump froze funding for Title X family planning grantees, signaling serious evaluation of compliance with federal law.

In June, The Supreme Court of the United States handed down an important decision in *Medina v. Planned Parenthood South Atlantic*, upholding South Carolina's right to exclude Planned Parenthood from its state Medicaid program—a significant 6-3 victory in which the ERLC filed an amicus brief representing Southern Baptist convictions that taxpayer funds should not subsidize abortion providers.

Through our Resourcing the Church Initiative, we released "Created in the Image of God: A Practical Guide to Building a Culture of Life" in early 2025, providing theological foundations and practical guidance to help churches equip their members to value and advocate for human

life at all stages. These church guides have now been translated into Spanish and are available in both print and digital formats.

Through the Psalm 139 Project, we have placed additional ultrasound machines this year in Anchorage, Alaska; Williston, Vermont; and Burlington, NC. These placements were made possible through partnerships with the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, North Carolina Baptists, Send Relief, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, Baptist Convention of New England, and individual donors.

The placements in Alaska and Vermont were also part of our special Psalm 139 Project emphasis, Across State Lines. Knowing that pregnancy resource centers stand on the front line of the pro-life movement, especially in states where abortion access remains widespread and legislative movement seems almost impossible, the Across State Lines initiative funds ultrasound placements in states with few, if any, protections for these children and where mothers will often travel to receive abortions. The initiative gives Southern Baptists in more conservative, pro-life states the opportunity to reach across state lines with a missional mindset, saving preborn lives and supporting mothers facing unplanned pregnancies.

Religious Liberty

A major emphasis of our work has been defending religious liberty protections domestically and advocating for the persecuted abroad, particularly with the new administration.

After President Trump's victory in November, the ERLC sent his transition team a letter outlining five priorities for his first 100 days in office. Four of these priorities have been completed thus far, including the reversal of Biden-era anti-religious liberty regulations promoting gender ideology.

The ERLC successfully advocated for the inclusion of a universal charitable deduction in the reconciliation package passed this summer—a Southern Baptist priority for many years, reflecting resolutions passed in 2013 and 1985. For the first time, all taxpayers can now deduct charitable contributions: up to \$1,000 for individuals and \$2,000 for married couples, encouraging greater generosity toward churches and faith-based ministries.

The Supreme Court delivered two significant religious liberty victories this term. In *Catholic Charities Bureau v. Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission*, the justices ruled unanimously that Wisconsin had discriminated against Catholic Charities for not being "religious enough" to receive a tax exemption. In *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, decided on the last day of the term, the Court ruled 6-3 that Montgomery County, Maryland, must provide opt-outs for controversial gender ideology instruction in elementary schools, protecting parental free exercise rights. The ERLC filed briefs supporting both cases.

We have continued to oppose legislative efforts to weaken the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (1993), one of the most important legislative safeguards for believers living out their faith in the public spaces.

Internationally, the ERLC sent a letter to Secretary of State Rubio in April urging the designation of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern due to ongoing persecution of Christians. In June, we engaged in targeted advocacy supporting the confirmation of Ambassador-designate Mark Walker, a fellow Southern Baptist and former pastor, as ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom. This advocacy reflects the resolution "On Advocating for International Religious Freedom" adopted by messengers at the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting.

Marriage and Family

The ERLC continued to champion God's good design for marriage and family, which includes sexuality and gender, through both legal advocacy and resource development in response to our culture's rejection of biblical truth.

The Trump administration issued executive orders ending radical gender ideology policies in February, with "Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism And Restoring Biological Truth To The Federal Government" recognizing two sexes and "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports" opposing male participation in women's sports—positions consistent with the ERLC's priorities. Congress voted on the *Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act*, which the ERLC widely endorsed as it engaged both House and Senate offices.

The Supreme Court delivered a crucial 6-3 victory in *U.S. v. Skrmetti*, upholding Tennessee's prohibition of "gender transition" drugs and procedures for minors. Chief Justice Roberts authored the opinion holding that Tennessee's law did not violate the Equal Protection Clause. The ERLC partnered with the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board in filing an amicus brief supporting the state's law. In another important case, *Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton*, the Court ruled 6-3 that Texas's age-verification law for pornographic websites is constitutional, permitting 24 states with similar laws to continue protecting children. The ERLC filed an amicus brief alongside both the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas to help achieve this judicial victory.

During the reconciliation process, the ERLC successfully advocated for the Child Tax Credit to be increased to \$2,200 and permanently indexed to inflation, benefiting approximately 40 million families. We also secured a \$5,000 refundable adoption tax credit to help families provide permanent, loving homes to children in need. Throughout the spring, we brought cohorts of Southern Baptist pastors to Washington to advocate for these two pro-family provisions.

Through our Resourcing the Church Initiative, we also released two new church guides this year in this area: "Pay to Play: A Practical Guide to Addressing Gambling in the Church" and "Dual Citizens: A Practical Guide to Christian Citizenship and Civic Engagement." Our Research Institute also published white papers titled "Don't Bet On It: A Biblical and Theological Foundation Opposing Sports Gambling" and "Infertility & the Longing for Children: Considering the Ethical Implications of Assisted Reproductive Technologies."

At the state level, when Colorado considered the controversial Kelly Loving Act that would strip away free speech protections and drive wedges between parents and children, the ERLC partnered with Colorado Baptists to oppose the legislation through letters and church resources, demonstrating our commitment to serve state conventions at their invitation.

Human Dignity

The ERLC has worked toward policy solutions that recognize and uphold the dignity of every person, addressing emerging challenges from artificial intelligence to immigration.

In a show of bipartisanship, Congress passed, and President Trump signed, the *Take It Down Act (2025)*, criminalizing deepfake pornography and requiring websites to remove AI-generated exploitative images within 48 hours—a strong step toward preventing online sexual exploitation through artificial intelligence.

The ERLC endorsed the Religious Workforce Protection Act to remedy a 21-year backlog affecting religious workers on R-1 visas, preventing congregations from losing pastors and ministry workers. In May, we brought Southern Baptist ethnic fellowship leaders to Washington to engage federal lawmakers on this issue, giving voice to churches directly impacted by this problem.

Along with other Southern Baptists, the ERLC was greatly encouraged by the administration's concern for upwards of 30,000 kidnapped Ukrainian children, which was bolstered by First Lady Melania Trump's advocacy. Alongside others, we advocated for their return, urging the administration to condition any peace deal between Russia and Ukraine on their return, even meeting with Special Envoy Keith Kellogg to discuss their plight.

Conclusion

Through it all, Southern Baptists should know that their ERLC has been diligently monitoring and actively engaging the issues of most importance to them —issues of life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity. In every instance, we have been about the business of bringing the truth of God's Word and the hope of the gospel to the public square, contending for biblical truth, sharing the gospel, and conducting ourselves in a way that reflects Jesus and represents Southern Baptists well in both word and deed.

As I have stepped into this role as interim president, please know I am deeply honored to serve Southern Baptists during this season of transition. I believe our churches desperately need the voice and work of the ERLC, and I am excited to see what God will do through this faithful team as we work together. We are trusting him and seeking his direction for the Commission and as the presidential search team seeks out the next president. In this season, I promise to give my very best as we continue this vital work.

I also want to express my gratitude to Miles Mullin, who served with distinction as acting president and now serves as executive vice president and chief of staff. And, of course, much of the great work done this past year occurred under the leadership of former ERLC President Brent Leatherwood.

We are grateful for your partnership in this vital work and look forward to continuing to serve the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention in the year ahead.

Sincerely

Gary Hollingsworth
Interim President

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SBC entities present ministry reports to the Executive Committee each February relating to their ministry assignments [SBC Bylaw 18E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2026 Ministry Report of The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.)

I. Assist churches in applying the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life.

Assisting the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention is the heartbeat of the ERLC. Although our ministry assignment is quite large, we seek to listen carefully to our churches and then provide resources on moral and ethical topics that will be most helpful to them as they equip members to live out the Christian life in our chaotic contemporary culture. Many of these resources are written, but our podcast and weekly newsletter also provide good insight regarding the topics of most concern to Southern Baptists.

Over the past year, the ERLC has made significant strides in providing comprehensive resources organized according to the four major categories of our work: life, religious liberty, marriage & family, and human dignity. These resources are grounded in Scripture, faithful to the *Baptist Faith & Message 2000*, and responsive to the expressed priorities of Southern Baptist messengers.

Life

Our podcast series provided timely content to help Southern Baptists understand the intersection of faith and public policy on life issues. The “ERLC in Washington, D.C.” series featured in-depth discussions with our policy team about life advocacy efforts. The “Washington, D.C. Updates” series included critical episodes on voting for a culture of life during election season with Hannah Daniel and Brent Leatherwood, as well as conversations about how Baptist state

conventions engaged abortion ballot initiatives. One of our most important episodes in the Serving Churches in the Public Square series covered Defunding Planned Parenthood with Christopher Mills and Brent Leatherwood, providing Southern Baptists with insight into this historic legislative victory. Congressman Nathaniel Moran also joined us to discuss defunding Planned Parenthood, demonstrating how Christian conviction translates into legislative action.

The research team developed substantial written resources to equip churches on life issues. Our comprehensive coverage of the historic defunding of Planned Parenthood through reconciliation provided Southern Baptists with a detailed analysis of this generational pro-life achievement. We also produced IVF policy recommendations and ethical considerations, responding to the growing need for biblical wisdom on assisted reproductive technologies.

To provide deeper theological foundations, our research team published a significant white paper this year. "Infertility & the Longing for Children: Considering the Ethical Implications of Assisted Reproductive Technologies" serves as a foundational resource for churches thinking through the biblical, theological, and bioethical implications of IVF and other assisted reproductive technologies.

Our church guide "Created in the Image of God: A Practical Guide to Building a Culture of Life" provides pastors and ministry leaders with a both theological framework and practical wisdom for addressing life issues in their local contexts. The guide was produced after months of in-depth research and convenings bringing together pastors, ethicists, and theologians, ensuring the content aligns with Scripture and the *Baptist Faith & Message 2000*.

Religious Liberty

Defending religious liberty is central to our mission at the ERLC, and helping every generation of Southern Baptists understand what religious liberty is and why it is a Baptist distinctive worth defending remains a critical component of our work. This year, we provided resources that both educated Southern Baptists on this fundamental freedom and equipped them to advocate for it in their communities.

Our podcast featured conversations with leaders serving in Washington who exemplify Christian witness in the public square. In one episode, for example, Sen. James Lankford discussed what it means to be a Christian in Washington, D.C., and how Southern Baptists can influence culture.

We provided comprehensive coverage of the five Supreme Court cases the ERLC engaged this term, with detailed analysis available at our dedicated SCOTUS page. Our coverage of *Catholic Charities Bureau v. Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission* highlighted the unanimous victory protecting religious organizations from discriminatory judicial tests. We also supported the Equal Campus Access Act of 2025, which affirms the freedom of students to meet on public college campuses based on their shared religious beliefs.

Our international religious liberty advocacy demonstrated the global nature of this Baptist distinctive. We advocated for Nigerian Christians facing severe persecution, and we supported Ambassador-designate Mark Walker's confirmation to serve as ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom. These efforts ensured that Southern Baptist voices were heard on matters of international religious liberty.

The church guide "Dual Citizens: A Practical Guide to Christian Citizenship and Civic Engagement" provided practical wisdom for Southern Baptists seeking to engage their communities while maintaining their primary citizenship in the Kingdom of God. This resource helps churches think biblically about political engagement without compromising their gospel witness.

Marriage and Family

In a culture that increasingly rejects God's good design for marriage, family, and sexuality, the ERLC has worked diligently to provide resources that uphold biblical truth while offering pastoral wisdom. Our "Marriage & Family" podcast series featured essential conversations on some of the most pressing issues facing churches today.

The series included discussions on parental rights and responsibilities in an age of gender confusion with Krissie Inserra and Benjamin Quinn, helping parents navigate complex cultural pressures. Episodes explored what the *Skrmetti* Supreme Court case means with Kayla Toney and Matt Sharp, and why this case is important for protecting children from harmful medical interventions. Dane Hays and Tim Lubinus discussed how Southern Baptists are working together on gender and sexuality issues, demonstrating the cooperative nature of our Convention. Gregg Allison provided theological guidance on how Christians can evaluate cultural views of marriage and sexuality.

Our most requested resource continues to be the church guide "God's Good Design: A Practical Guide for Answering Gender Confusion," which is now also available in Spanish as "El Buen Diseño de Dios." The overwhelming demand for this resource, particularly ahead of state convention meetings, demonstrates the urgent need churches have for biblical and practical guidance on gender confusion.

We provided timely analysis of significant cultural moments, including an article marking 10 years after *Obergefell* that examined four effects on religious liberty, marriage and family, and sexuality. When Colorado passed the harmful "Kelly Loving Act," we produced an explainer on the dangers of this legislation to help Christians understand and respond to radical gender ideology being promoted to minors.

Our comprehensive coverage of the *U.S. v. Skrmetti* Supreme Court case included multiple articles, podcast episodes, and resources explaining this pivotal 6-3 victory that upheld Tennessee's prohibition of "gender transition" drugs and procedures for minors. We also covered the *Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton* case, another 6-3 victory that upheld age-verification laws for pornographic websites, permitting 24 states with similar laws to continue protecting children from harmful online content.

Human Dignity

Recognizing that every person bears the image of God, the ERLC has developed resources addressing emerging challenges to human dignity in our rapidly changing culture. This year, we released two significant church guides and a white paper that address contemporary threats to human dignity while providing practical pastoral wisdom.

"Pay to Play: A Practical Guide to Addressing Gambling in the Church" equips pastors and church leaders to address the growing normalization of sports gambling and its devastating consequences on individuals and families.

"The Work of Our Hands: Christian Ministry in the Age of Artificial Intelligence" helps churches think through the complex opportunities and challenges AI poses for ministry and society. As AI technology advances rapidly, this resource provides biblical principles for engaging these technologies in ways that honor human dignity.

"Don't Bet On It: A Biblical and Theological Foundation Opposing Sports Gambling" is a white paper that offers a thorough biblical, theological, and policy analysis of sports gambling and its consequences.

We have also provided practical resources for churches through our SBC calendar emphasis day bulletin inserts on Racial Reconciliation, Orphans and Widows, and Caring Well, ensuring churches have accessible materials to help their congregations engage these important human dignity issues.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

Over the past year, our Leland House team in the nation's capital has tenaciously advocated on behalf of Southern Baptists for issues related to life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity before the U.S. government. This work has resulted in numerous historic public policy victories that directly serve the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention.

One of our most significant priorities of this year has been bringing cohorts of Southern Baptist pastors to Washington, D.C., to advocate alongside us. These pastor advocacy trips have strengthened our efforts on Capitol Hill and with the administration while giving pastors firsthand experience of how their public policy entity works in the nation's capital.

Life

Our work advocating for vulnerable preborn lives over the past year has been both comprehensive and historic, encompassing appropriations advocacy, the groundbreaking defunding of Planned Parenthood, ethical engagement on in vitro fertilization, strategic Supreme Court involvement, and engagement with the administration on multiple pro-life priorities.

The ERLC conducted exhaustive reviews of all 24 appropriations bills for both Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026. This arduous work involves analyzing thousands of pages of funding bills to ensure taxpayer money is not directed to services, organizations, or projects that Southern Baptists find morally objectionable. Since so few advocacy organizations engage in such comprehensive assessment, our work serves as a helpful and essential resource for congressional offices navigating complex appropriations decisions.

For FY2025, we retained and expanded existing pro-life provisions and conscience protections despite pre-election sentiments on Capitol Hill that caused delays. We provided a comprehensive section-by-section review for lawmakers, outlining areas of support and opposition found in all 24 bills. The fiscal year ended in March 2025 with passage of a continuing resolution, finally allowing consideration of FY2026 bills.

Our pro-life advocacy extended beyond appropriations to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), an annually passed bill authorizing federal defense spending. The ERLC engages with this legislation because the Department of Defense houses an entire ecosystem of sub-departments, including a separate health insurance program and education department, making DoD a "testing ground" and precedent-setting agency for social policy initiatives. Our advocacy on the FY2025 NDAA resulted in massive wins for Southern Baptists, including the removal of language that would have permitted taxpayer-funded expansion of IVF. As the FY2026 NDAA continues through Congress, we have been engaging with House and Senate Armed Services Committee staff and congressional leadership to address many of these same priorities.

The ERLC achieved the most significant pro-life legislative victory in a generation when Congress fully defunded Planned Parenthood for one year through the budget reconciliation process. This historic achievement stripped the abortion giant of more than \$700 million in annual taxpayer funding—marking the first time in permanent law that abortion providers have been barred from receiving federal payments.

In January 2025, the ERLC published a comprehensive list of pro-life and pro-family policies that lawmakers should prioritize in reconciliation. Four of those priorities were successfully included in the final July 4th bill, with the defunding of Planned Parenthood being the most significant. The ERLC worked with a small group of trusted pro-life coalition partners on a weekly basis to discuss strategy for advancing the defund provision through the complex budget reconciliation process. This coordinated strategy involved extensive engagement with the legislative branch.

Our direct advocacy efforts included writing a letter to the House Energy and Commerce Committee urging full defunding and leading a letter with the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention amplifying the voice of local churches on this issue to Sen. Crapo, who is the chair of the Senate panel with jurisdiction over the issue.

A pivotal component of these efforts was bringing cohorts of Southern Baptist pastors to Washington to advocate alongside us for the defunding of Planned Parenthood. These pastor advocacy trips demonstrated our commitment to work with the churches we serve and represent Southern Baptists with clarity and conviction.

We also mobilized Southern Baptists through a public campaign that garnered over 30,000 signatures online, including signatures from SBC entity heads, past Convention presidents, pastors, and laypeople. The success of this campaign revealed the real effect of amplifying Southern Baptist voices in the public square.

After President Trump's victory in November 2024, the ERLC sent his presidential transition team a letter outlining five priorities for his first 100 days in office. The ERLC has been pleased to see decisive action on four of these priorities. President Trump issued an executive order on "Enforcing the Hyde Amendment," making clear that American taxpayers should not be forced to pay for the practice or promotion of elective abortion. This executive order also rescinded Biden-era executive actions that would have further increased access to abortion.

Additionally, President Trump directed Secretary Rubio to reinstate the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance Policy, previously called the "Mexico City Policy," ensuring that international entities receiving U.S. government funding cannot perform or counsel for abortions abroad. Domestically, the Trump administration froze funding for Title X family planning grantees in April, signaling serious evaluation of each grantee to determine efficacy and compliance with federal law.

While encouraged by this progress, the ERLC continues advocating for completion of the fifth priority: restoring critical Food and Drug Administration safety and risk mitigation framework for chemical abortion pills. We ultimately seek to prohibit the use of this harmful and life-taking drug. As part of ongoing efforts, the ERLC joined coalition letters urging regulation of chemical abortion drugs and calling for restrictions on mailing mifepristone. We remain committed to engaging the administration on this final priority, which is essential to ensuring long-term protections for preborn lives and preserving the conscience rights of taxpayers. This advocacy directly reflects the convictions expressed in the resolution overwhelmingly adopted by messengers at the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting, "On Standing Against the Moral Evils and Medical Dangers of Chemical Abortion Pills."

In September 2025, the ERLC filed public comments to end a Biden-era rule requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs to include healthcare coverage for abortion. Thankfully, the Trump administration issued a proposed rule that would return to the correct legal interpretation of the VA's prohibition on abortion coverage. In its comments, the ERLC cited Southern Baptist moral stances, highlighted legal concerns with the Biden rule, and welcomed Trump's corrective proposal to restore VA health plans respecting the dignity of human life and the consciences of American taxpayers.

Southern Baptists continue to be the leading evangelical body calling for consideration of the ethical dimensions of IVF from a biblical worldview. In light of the Alabama Supreme Court ruling and lawmakers' growing interest in IVF policymaking, the ERLC has aimed to create beneficial resources for both Southern Baptists and members of Congress.

The ERLC has produced comprehensive IVF policy recommendations, actively engaged in coalition meetings, advocated directly with Capitol Hill staff, and met with the Trump

administration to oppose measures that would expand taxpayer funding for IVF, extend coverage to same-sex couples, or prevent future regulation of the IVF industry. Southern Baptists reaffirmed their commitment to life at the 2024 Annual Meeting through the resolution "On the Ethical Relations of Technologies and the Dignity of the Human Embryo," which calls on believers to advocate for government action that upholds the dignity and value of every human being—including frozen embryonic human beings.

In *Medina v. Planned Parenthood South Atlantic*, the ERLC continued its pro-life legal advocacy by filing an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to uphold South Carolina's decision to exclude Planned Parenthood from its state Medicaid program. Our brief reflected Southern Baptists' longstanding conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to subsidize abortion providers, even indirectly. The court's 6-3 decision was a significant victory, affirming the right of states to determine which providers qualify for Medicaid reimbursement.

In January, our team participated in the annual March for Life. In conjunction with the March, the House of Representatives passed the *Born Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act*, a bill requiring healthcare providers to provide care to babies that survive failed abortions. Unfortunately, pro-abortion lawmakers held up the bill in the Senate after it failed to receive the required 60 votes. Due to our active support for the legislation, our team participated in the press conference hosted by Sen. Lankford, the bill's leading Senate sponsor.

Religious Liberty

At the forefront of our religious liberty advocacy is supporting protections for free religious exercise, conscience rights, and persecuted people domestically and abroad as we promote the Christian ideal of a free church in a free state.

The ERLC has continued to advocate for religious liberty protections in the annual NDAA, ensuring that conscience protections and the freedom to live out one's faith are preserved for those serving in the military. We have successfully maintained these critical protections in both the FY2025 and FY2026 NDAA negotiations.

One encouraging development was the inclusion of a universal charitable deduction in this summer's reconciliation package—a Southern Baptist priority for many years. The policy team engaged with congressional offices and signed a joint letter urging lawmakers to include this provision in the bill. For the first time, all taxpayers, including non-itemizers, can now deduct charitable contributions up to a certain threshold. This historic change will encourage greater generosity toward faith-based ministries and local churches, strengthen civil society, and promote giving to communities in need.

The ERLC signed a letter in support of the Equal Campus Access Act of 2025, introduced by Sen. Lankford and Rep. Walberg. This bill would prevent funds given under the Higher Education Act from going to schools that discriminate against religious student groups by denying them access to resources available to non-religious groups. As people who believe in the Baptist distinctive of religious liberty, it is essential students are conferred this same protection at public institutions of higher learning.

The ERLC's international advocacy work demonstrates our commitment to the persecuted Church and religious freedom across the globe so that more people can hear the gospel and come to know Christ. Last year, the ERLC partnered with SBC President Clint Pressley to send several letters to Congress and the administration, urging continued support for Israel and advocating for the release of Israeli hostages. The ERLC sent an additional letter communicating this aim to the United Nations. Recently, we have seen several of these hostages returned to their families. Southern Baptists have strongly supported the people and nation of Israel throughout the decades and have continually condemned Hamas for its terrorist attacks bent on genocide.

In April 2025, the ERLC sent a letter to Secretary of State Rubio urging the administration to take immediate action to designate Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) due to its ongoing and severe persecution of Christians and other religious minorities. Through these efforts, the ERLC ensured that the voices of Southern Baptists were represented before the Trump administration and continued to condemn violence and heinous attacks against those expressing their faith. We were encouraged to see this CPC designation achieved under the Trump administration.

In June 2025, the ERLC's policy team began targeted advocacy to support the confirmation of Ambassador-designate Mark Walker, a fellow Southern Baptist, as ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom at the Department of State. This advocacy reflects the resolution "On Advocating for International Religious Freedom" adopted by messengers at the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting. Through these efforts, the ERLC ensured that Southern Baptists were represented in the ongoing work to defend religious liberty around the world.

The ERLC joined a letter in April urging the Trump administration to condition any peace deal between Russia and Ukraine on the return of the over 20,000 Ukrainian children that have been abducted and rehomed to Russia. The ERLC was encouraged by the First Lady's successful efforts this fall to help reunite a number of these children with their families, but continues to advocate until all are safely returned. Furthermore, the ERLC met with the Trump administration's Special Envoy for Ukraine, Keith Kellogg, to discuss the plight of these children.

Building upon strong religious liberty case law, the Supreme Court handed down two significant victories for our First Amendment rights this term. In *Catholic Charities Bureau v. Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission*, the justices ruled unanimously, providing strong court precedent against judicial discrimination based on religious identity. The ERLC advocated for this decision alongside other faith groups in a brief supporting Catholic Charities.

In *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, the Supreme Court handed down another 6-3 decision affirming the fundamental right of parents to direct the religious upbringing of their children without government interference. The ERLC filed an October 2024 brief before the court in this case, urging them to take the case and another in March 2025, alongside other faith groups, arguing for the parents.

Marriage and Family

Marriage, family, children, and gender are all good gifts from God. They form the necessary foundation for individuals to thrive and communities to flourish. As our culture continues to degrade marriage, family, and children and rejects God's good gift of gender, our policy team is working to promote strong families, assist adoptive and foster families, and restore biblical truth and biological reality to our cultural understanding of gender and sexuality.

As the second Trump administration began, the ERLC was pleased to see the White House issue a number of executive orders ending the radical gender ideology agenda of the previous administration. These executive orders are consistent with the ERLC's third and fourth priorities sent to the president's transition team on removing the problematic actions of the Biden administration and restoring policy definitions that better reflect biblical truth and biological reality.

Consistent with Trump's executive orders on gender ideology, Congress voted on the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act, a bill to clarify that it is a violation of Title IX to allow biological males to compete in women's sports. The ERLC widely circulated our endorsement of this bill to House and Senate offices prior to the vote. While the bill stalled in the Senate, there still remain opportunities for Congress to pass this legislation and restore common sense to our athletic competitions.

Alongside our other FY25 NDAA priorities, the ERLC urged Congress through Hill engagement to prevent healthcare coverage of "gender transition" drugs and procedures for service members and their families. Additionally, the Senate included a provision that would have required women to register for the selective service, which the ERLC adamantly opposed. Passed in December, the FY25 NDAA removed the provision on women in the selective service and included the first federal prohibition on taxpayer funding for "gender transition" in any capacity for children. In our advocacy for the FY26 NDAA, we are engaging with House and Senate Armed Services Committee staff and congressional leadership to address many of these same priorities again.

The budget reconciliation process provided the opportunity to pass significant tax reforms that promoted the well-being of families across the country. One such provision is the Child Tax Credit (CTC), which Trump increased to \$2,000 in 2017. The increase was set to expire in 2025 and was not adjusted to inflation, meaning it would significantly impact roughly 40 million families. The ERLC successfully advocated for the CTC to be increased to \$2,200 and permanently indexed to inflation so families continue to receive the benefits intended from this credit. This represents real financial support for millions of American families and demonstrates our commitment to pro-family policy that helps parents fulfill their God-given responsibility to raise their children.

In the same reconciliation bill, the ERLC, with Congressman Robert Aderholt (R-AL-04), advocated for the inclusion of a refundable adoption tax credit for families wanting to provide a permanent, loving home to a child needing a home. The final bill included a \$5,000 refundable credit for adopting families to help them in this expensive process. Throughout the spring, the ERLC brought cohorts of Southern Baptist pastors to Washington to advocate alongside us for these two pro-family provisions, demonstrating the power of Southern Baptist cooperation in advancing biblical values in public policy.

Another key legislative priority of the ERLC has been the SCREEN Act, sponsored by Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT). This bill would require pornographic websites to implement age-verification laws to prevent children from accessing this harmful content. The messengers to the 2025 Annual Meeting approved a resolution "On Banning Pornography," initially written by Brent Leatherwood, containing language in support of age-verification laws. Recognizing the physical, mental, and spiritual harms that come from pornography, the SCREEN Act offers a needed remedy to protect children and promote their flourishing.

As mentioned, one of the most high-profile cases before the Supreme Court this term was *U.S. v. Skrametti*, a lawsuit centered on Tennessee's prohibition of "gender transition" drugs and procedures for minors. In a 6-3 victory authored by Chief Justice Roberts, the court affirmed the state's role in safeguarding minors, a monumental victory for protecting vulnerable children from harmful medical experimentation. The ERLC partnered with the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board in filing an amicus brief laying out these arguments to the Supreme Court in October 2024.

Another important case the court considered was *Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton*. Here, in a 6-3 decision, the court ruled that Texas's age-verification law for pornographic websites is not subject to heightened scrutiny, affirming states with similar laws are able to continue protecting children from the dangers of online pornographic content. The ERLC filed an amicus brief to the Supreme Court joined by both the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), demonstrating the cooperative nature of Southern Baptist advocacy on issues of common concern.

Earlier this year, Colorado made headlines for considering a controversial and harmful bill, named the "Kelly Loving Act," centered on stripping away free speech protections for those who hold biblical views of gender and sexuality and using such convictions as justification to drive a wedge between parents and their children.

Quickly, at the invitation of Colorado Baptists, our team drafted a letter to the Colorado Senate and designed church bulletin inserts educating pastors and congregations about the bill and how they could oppose it. With significant amendments in the Senate, the bill passed, prompting the ERLC and Colorado Baptist Executive Director Mike Proud to send another letter to Colorado Gov. Jared Polis, urging him to veto the legislation. While the bill was signed into law, the ERLC is already monitoring litigation from a clothing apparel store arguing that the state requiring "preferred pronoun" usage violates their freedom of speech. This case demonstrates our ongoing commitment to protect religious liberty and free speech at all levels of government.

Human Dignity

The Bible teaches all people bear the image of God, and thus, as the *Baptist Faith & Message 2000* expresses, "every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love." In keeping with this biblical truth, the ERLC supports policy solutions that recognize and uphold the dignity of every person that align with the priorities of Southern Baptists.

As our society begins to grapple with the effects of artificial intelligence and other technological advancements, Southern Baptists find it necessary to ensure these technologies are not used in ways that undermine the dignity and worth of humans. The ERLC was pleased to see Congress bipartisally pass the *Take It Down Act*, which President Trump later signed into law. This statute criminalizes deepfake pornography, including AI-generated images, and requires websites to remove the images within 48 hours. This is a strong step toward preventing online sexual exploitation through AI.

Additionally, in response to President Trump's AI Action Plan, the ERLC issued a policy explainer as a resource for Southern Baptist pastors and churches. As conversations about ethical AI engagement increase, the ERLC continues to engage lawmakers about the complex opportunities and challenges AI poses for the church and for society as a whole.

In June, the ERLC endorsed the *Religious Workforce Protection Act* (RWPA) and joined a letter sent to every member of Congress urging support of the bill. This bill would remedy a 21-year backlog in the processing of employment-based green cards (EB-4), impacting religious workers here on an R-1 visa. This visa requires workers to return to their country for a minimum of one year before returning on a subsequent R-1 visa, separating them from the congregations they serve. The RWPA would allow R-1 religious workers with a pending EB-4 application to stay in the country until a determination on their green card is made. The ERLC has heard from several SBC churches and pastors that their congregations are at risk of losing pastors or other ministry workers here on an R-1 visa. In May, the ERLC brought Southern Baptist ethnic fellowship leaders to Washington to engage federal lawmakers on this issue.

In September, the ERLC disaffiliated with the Evangelical Immigration Table (EIT). In recent years, our coalition work with EIT resulted in controversy that did not serve EIT, the ERLC, or our Southern Baptist churches well. Thus, the ERLC executive leadership team made the decision to leave this coalition. To best serve our churches, the ERLC will take a more independent posture to our immigration-related work.

For over two decades, immigration policy has been a priority for the ERLC because immigration policy has been a priority for Southern Baptists who have passed numerous resolutions on the topic at our annual Convention meetings. We resolve to continue to engage immigration, and

all other issues, in the manner our trustees have directed, looking to Scripture, the *Baptist Faith & Message*, and the actions taken by messengers at annual Convention meetings, who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to honor the dignity of every person and share the gospel with people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

Deepening our engagement and collaboration with our Baptist partners remained a strategic priority for 2025, representing the sort of collaborative work that characterizes healthy Baptist cooperation and typifies our renewed approach. The ERLC has worked intentionally to build relationships with convention executives, engaged state ethics leaders, and maintained a meaningful presence at many state conventions. These efforts provide venues for the sort of two-way communication that allows us to best serve our churches in their local witness.

The communications team, under the leadership of Director Lindsay Nicolet, a 10-year veteran of the ERLC, has implemented one of the most significant strategic shifts in our organization's approach to connecting with Southern Baptists. Rather than simply talking about our work, we have focused on directly showing our work through enhanced media engagement, strategic content creation, and transparent reporting of our advocacy efforts.

This strategic shift centered on three key objectives: increasing awareness and trust of the ERLC's work among SBC local pastors and leaders, projecting stability and steadiness during a time of organizational transition, and building trust and credibility among policymakers in Washington, D.C. From adapting a new media strategy to creating multiple podcast series, strengthening our email marketing, and launching the Defund Planned Parenthood initiative, we have sought to build trust with good-faith Southern Baptists despite active disinformation campaigns from several bad-faith detractors.

In the first quarter of 2025, we sent a short survey to our audience of email subscribers, state convention partners, and social media followers. We received over 1,000 responses with 75% of those coming from our email subscribers and the remaining 25% coming from state convention partners and Baptist Press readers. The responses reveal both encouraging consensus and critical engagement challenges that inform our strategy moving forward.

Respondents demonstrated strong unity around core ERLC priorities with five emerging as clear top concerns across all demographics: pro-life advocacy, biblical marriage, opposing gender ideology, protecting religious liberty, and stopping human trafficking. This consensus affirms that the ERLC's four areas of emphasis—life, religious liberty, marriage & family, and human dignity—accurately reflect the priorities of Southern Baptists.

Results did show some variation in topics of interest due to geographic location. Respondents living in the southwestern states indicated a higher priority of addressing border security and immigration issues. Those living in the northeastern states indicated a higher priority for criminal justice reform. This regional variation informs our approach to state-level engagement and helps us work more effectively with state conventions.

The survey showed respondents chose email as the top communication medium in which they'd like to engage with the ERLC. It also showed that our audience finds ERLC articles, email newsletters, and church guides to be the most helpful assets we produce. This feedback has shaped our resource development and distribution strategy, affirming our investment in these communication channels.

The message from the survey is clear: We must maintain our strong theological positions on issues where there is great agreement while investing in the growth of state convention

relationships. These state convention partners allow more nuanced engagement strategies for diverse regional contexts and enable us to build support from local churches for the mission assigned to us by the SBC.

Leading up to the Annual Meeting in Dallas, we wanted to have a touchpoint with as many SBC churches as possible. Knowing that many church members across the country do not utilize digital communications and may not even be aware of our work, we mailed copies of our church guide, "God's Good Design: A Practical Guide for Answering Gender Confusion," with a specially designed wrap cover to every SBC church. This direct mail campaign ensured that even churches not actively engaged with ERLC digital resources received practical tools for addressing one of the most pressing cultural issues facing congregations today.

At the ERLC booth at the Annual Meeting in Dallas, we strategically tailored all of our materials to center around the four areas in which we work. These materials included printed church guides, buttons, and stickers. These are natural launching points for conversations into the work of the ERLC in each area, or in whichever most resonates with a person visiting the booth. These resources are designed to equip pastors and church leaders while also giving them creative ways to join in areas of advocacy they might be interested in.

We also hosted two significant events during the Annual Meeting. On Sunday night, we held "Southern Baptists Serving in the Public Square." Brent Leatherwood interviewed fellow Southern Baptists Sen. James Lankford, Congressman Nathaniel Moran, and Ambassador-designate Mark Walker for an eye-opening discussion about what it takes to be a Christian in Washington, D.C., and how Southern Baptists can influence culture.

We also hosted a packed lunch event called "Protecting our Kids at the Supreme Court." We were privileged to hold a pre-panel conversation featuring several Baptist state executives including Nathan Lorick, executive director of Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Julio Guarneri, executive director of Baptist General Convention of Texas, and Randy Davis, executive director of Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, who spoke with Brent Leatherwood about our partnership in filing amicus briefs in Supreme Court cases for 2025. Afterward, for the main panel, Brent talked to Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti and Alliance Defending Freedom's Vice President Ryan Bangert about why the *Skrmetti* case mattered for protecting minors from harmful gender transition interventions.

The Weekly, our email rundown highlighting political and cultural issues affecting our churches and how the ERLC is advocating on the issues that matter most to Southern Baptists, serves as an essential resource for pastors and churches. We use this email to curate ERLC assets for pastors and church leaders. The Weekly features four key sections: the lead, policy, research, and resources. In a rapidly changing cultural and political landscape, it is crucial that our leaders are informed and equipped to address the challenges they face. The Weekly not only keeps pastors updated on critical developments but also provides them with a thoughtful, biblical perspective on how these issues intersect with their ministries. This ensures that our pastors are not just reacting to the news, but are proactively guiding their congregations with wisdom and clarity grounded in the gospel.

Social media is a useful platform for showing our work, especially in real time. It provides us with an opportunity to provide small, digestible pieces of information regarding things like day-to-day policy advocacy meetings, new research assets, interpreting a recent Supreme Court decision, or even combating disinformation about the ERLC. For much of this past year, our engagement on social media through Facebook, X, and Instagram has been geared more intentionally than ever toward placing information and resources directly at our audience's fingertips. These posts are a consistent reminder to Southern Baptists that the ERLC is still here to serve them.

Working with our state-level partners has allowed us to assist churches in their moral witness in their states. We have been able to partner with state conventions on several efforts this year. Once again this year, we hosted a State Ethics Leaders (SEL) meeting in early December. This brought together policy and ethics leaders from across the country to hear updates about federal issues from our team and to discuss the priorities of their states' churches with each other. This meeting facilitates greater cooperation amongst these leaders as they share knowledge and ideas with one another. In this way, the ERLC is catalyzing the sort of collaboration and information exchange that allows these leaders to better serve the churches in their own states.

The research team is committed to church engagement through the Resourcing the Church Initiative (RCI), partnering with our Southern Baptist seminaries, and attending our state association meetings. The team operates at a deep level to provide solid biblical, theological, and ethical foundations that serve as the basis of our work in the public square. The RCI is designed to equip pastors and ministry leaders with practical resources to tackle pressing cultural and ethical issues. A top priority of the research team is to listen to the voices of our churches and provide resources that align with our institutional sphere of responsibility, helping them serve effectively in their ministry contexts. Some of our church guides were produced in response to ethical concerns explicitly expressed by local churches and state associations.

Since launching the RCI in September 2024, the research team has developed and released four church guides: "Created in the Image of God: A Practical Guide to Building a Culture of Life," "Pay to Play: A Practical Guide to Addressing Gambling in the Church," "Dual Citizens: A Practical Guide to Christian Citizenship and Civic Engagement," and "The Work of Our Hands: Christian Ministry in the Age of Artificial Intelligence." Each of these guides represents one of our emphasis areas. We were able to showcase and distribute them at the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting in Dallas, where many of our churches were represented.

Each church guide contains two sections. The first section presents a theological and ethical framework grounded in Scripture and faithful to our denomination's confession of faith, the *BF&M 2000*. The second section incorporates godly pastoral wisdom to address practical, real-world scenarios that churches encounter, building on and applying the theological affirmations. The guides are produced after months of in-depth research and convenings that bring together pastors, ethicists, theologians, and (when germane) policy experts.

The ERLC has also worked to create Spanish translations of our resources. The Spanish translation of "God's Good Design" was released in February 2025 in both digital and print versions. Since the release of that work, all of our guides have been translated into Spanish and are currently available for print and/or download. This expansion enables us to serve the growing number of Hispanic Southern Baptist churches with resources in their heart language.

The Research Institute provides a collaborative space for over 40 Southern Baptist researchers and academics from across our Convention of churches. Our research fellows serve as a resource on theological and policy matters in their areas of expertise. These respected scholars come from diverse fields, including theology, ethics, philosophy, law, and public policy. Since its relaunch in 2024, our Research Institute has hosted scholars to speak about their latest works in the form of fellows' lectures. We hosted our second annual Research Institute gathering in Nashville, with this year's gathering and papers focused on American constitutionalism and Baptist political philosophy in the lead-up to the 250th anniversary of the American experiment. Our fellows have been actively writing and publishing resources for the Church in major outlets and academic journals.

Ultimately, at the ERLC, all of our staff are committed to the church. We serve in our local churches, connect with church and ministry leaders on a regular basis, and do our work in order

to build up the Church. More formally, many of our staff members have traveled in order to speak, host events, and represent the ERLC. Staff members attended multiple Baptist state conventions where we connected with pastors gathered there to promote our work and receive feedback.

Although most of the items mentioned in previous sections also serve to assist churches with their moral witness in their local communities by keeping them apprised of moral and ethical developments in our society, we have also developed a landing page to make specific resources easily accessible.

Many churchgoers still prefer physical assets they can easily tuck into their Bibles, so we continue producing free, downloadable bulletin inserts. When the Colorado House of Representatives passed a bill that would promote radical gender ideology to minors, strip fundamental parental rights, and burden free speech, we joined Colorado Baptists to produce an educational resource for their churches. This past year we created free bulletin inserts for use by Southern Baptist churches on emphasis days associated with the SBC calendar, including Life, Religious Liberty, Racial Reconciliation, Orphan and Widows, and Caring Well.

Any discussion of how the ERLC assists churches in their moral witness in local communities would be incomplete without mentioning the Psalm 139 Project. Psalm 139:13 tells us that the Lord knits together children in the womb. The wonder of God's design, which Scripture reveals, was hidden from our view until the advent of the ultrasound machine. Ultrasound machines allow a window into the womb, moving more women to choose life after seeing their babies on screen.

The Psalm 139 Project, a pro-life ministry of the ERLC, exists to place ultrasound machines in pregnancy resource centers and pro-life clinics. Each placement allows abortion-vulnerable and abortion-determined women to get a glimpse of the life inside them. One hundred percent of all donations given to the Psalm 139 Project go toward the purchase of life-saving machines and the training of the clinic staff who will utilize them.

In 2025, we placed three machines: Anchorage, Alaska; Williston, Vermont; and Burlington, North Carolina. This brings the total number of machines placed since the Psalm 139 Project's conception to 97! These placements were made possible by partnerships with Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, Send Relief, NC Baptists, Provision Financial Resources (NC Baptist Foundation), Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, Baptist Convention of New England, churches, and individual donors.

The ERLC, through the Psalm 139 Project, has worked toward doing real, on-the-ground pro-life work by placing life-saving ultrasound machines in pro-choice states. The rise of abortion tourism—travel for the purpose of obtaining an abortion where it is legal—and the abortion pill means that pro-life advocates have much work that still needs to be done. To that end, we announced a new emphasis of the Psalm 139 Project called "Across State Lines," in which individuals, churches, state conventions, and other SBC entities, particularly in more strongly pro-life states, can partner with the ERLC to place ultrasound machines in pregnancy centers located in pro-choice states.

IV. Assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting religious liberty.

Religious liberty is a Baptist principle dating back to the 17th century. As the *Baptist Faith & Message* articulates, the Christian ideal is a "free church in a free state." A first freedom, religious liberty respects conscience, provides for the common good, and allows believers to share the gospel freely. The ERLC takes seriously the charge given to it by the Convention to promote and defend this foundational freedom. To that end, we aim to promote religious liberty by defending this foundational freedom in the public square and providing resources to our churches to explain this distinctly Baptist characteristic to their members.

As noted above, in our policy efforts, the ERLC has worked to promote religious liberty through deep engagement with the following:

1. NDAA
2. Equal Campus Access Act of 2025
3. Advocacy for Israel
4. Ukrainian children
5. Nigeria as a CPC
6. Confirmation of Ambassador-designate Mark Walker
7. SCOTUS case *Catholic Charities Bureau v. Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission*
8. SCOTUS case *Mahmoud v. Taylor*
9. And more

As we do every year, we produced a bulletin insert for churches to use to promote religious liberty on Religious Liberty Sunday. We also continue to provide articles on our website explaining the biblical and historical basis for religious liberty as a Baptist distinctive. These resources help ensure that every generation of Southern Baptists understands what religious liberty is and why it is worth defending.

Through our research team, we released *Dual Citizens*, a church guide that serves as a practical resource for Christian citizenship and civic engagement. The purpose of the guide is to address what it looks like to be a Christian who is a faithful citizen of the kingdom of God as well as one's earthly nation. This religious liberty guide combines our Baptist convictions with our Christian public witness and civic engagement. The ERLC aims to equip churches with resources to aid in discipleship within the local church through our *Researching the Church Initiative*.

Further, just as the ERLC advocates for religious liberty before lawmakers, we engage the courts to defend religious liberty and ensure that our first right protections remain strong. Last term, the ERLC engaged multiple Supreme Court cases in defense of key religious liberty tenets. In *Catholic Charities Bureau v. Wisconsin Labor and Industry Review Commission*, the ERLC filed an amicus brief arguing the Wisconsin Supreme Court violated the church autonomy doctrine and other First Amendment protections when it ruled Catholic Charities was not religious enough to receive an unemployment tax exemption. In a unanimous decision written by Justice Sotomayor, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Catholic Charities and upheld religious entities' rights to organize and conduct their work free from government infringement.

Additionally, the ERLC filed a brief in *Mahmoud v. Taylor* and successfully defended Montgomery County, MD parents who wanted to opt their elementary-aged children out of gender ideology indoctrination because it violates their deeply-held religious beliefs. The Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that the school's policy burdens parents' religious exercise and fails to satisfy strict scrutiny. This case was a substantial win for parental rights and ensuring religious exercise is respected in public education.

The ERLC is continuing preparations for another Supreme Court season defending religious liberty before the courts. Already, the ERLC has filed an amicus brief in *Landor v. Louisiana Department of Corrections and Public Safety* arguing that the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) permits victims to sue for individual damages when their rights are violated, as its sister statute, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), does. A decision in this case is expected in summer 2026. The Supreme Court is also considering a case – *Chiles v. Salazar* – centered on vital free speech and religious liberty protections for Christian counselors who are being censored from using their Christian perspectives in talk therapy. The ERLC is actively monitoring this case, and we expect a decision this summer.

Based on the listed Ministry Assignment, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2024 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how you are accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

I. Assist churches in applying the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life.

As we remain fully committed to our charge to assist the churches, the ERLC's success depends on understanding the cultural and consensus public policy concerns of our churches and effectively providing them with resources as we advocate for those concerns. We will also need to focus on communicating the unique institutional role the ERLC plays within the Convention and the distinct voice we have in the public square.

Over the past year, we have worked intentionally to increase communication and connection with our churches. Our board of trustees has affirmed this direction, and continuing to build relationships at all levels of the SBC remains a key focus for the ERLC moving forward. The Resourcing the Church Initiative has proven highly successful, with strong demand for our church guides demonstrating the need for practical, theologically sound resources.

Confusion over gender and sexuality continues to be one of the most pressing issues in our culture and presents both challenge and opportunity for our churches to minister to individuals with truth and grace. The ERLC will continue to provide resources that uphold God's good design for marriage and family. The overwhelming demand for "God's Good Design" and its Spanish translation demonstrates the urgent need churches have for these resources, and we anticipate this will remain a top priority area for resource development in the coming years.

Emerging bioethical issues, particularly related to artificial intelligence and assisted reproductive technologies, will require ongoing attention and resource development. As these technologies advance rapidly, churches need guidance grounded in Scripture and the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 to navigate complex ethical questions. The ERLC is positioned to provide this guidance through our Research Institute, white papers, church guides, and policy advocacy.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

Contemporary American culture is rife with disagreement and division on moral and ethical issues. As the singular SBC entity directly tasked with engaging these issues, the ERLC must often address topics that are controversial and divisive. While this shines a spotlight on our work, it also highlights its importance and necessity in this cultural moment.

Our board of trustees summed this up well in September 2024:

We affirm that in a time of deep division in our culture, from polarization in our political environment, to falling trust in institutions, to the fracturing of families, the ERLC is needed now as much as ever both to serve in the public square in a manner consistent with the earthly ministry of Jesus and to be a consistent voice that continually points people to the salvation that can only come through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Considering this polarized political environment, we encourage the ERLC to be cautious when addressing controversial political issues by allowing the Advocacy Assessment to serve as the guide in choosing the wording of the response.

This statement codified a process which was already in place. Its publication provided clarity and transparency regarding the questions the ERLC considers as we seek to faithfully advocate for various policy positions on issues of importance to Southern Baptists. The Advocacy Assessment process involves theological, ethical, historical, and legislative review, recognizing our primary obligations to biblical authority, confessional integrity, and the expressed will of the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention.

When deciding whether to engage a particular issue, the ERLC considers several critical factors:

1. Is this an issue for which we have a biblical basis to speak?
2. Is this an issue where the BFM2000 has a clear position?
3. Has the annual meeting of the SBC spoken to this topic, whether through actions on the floor or resolutions?
4. What has been the historic position of the ERLC/CLC since the Conservative Resurgence?
5. Will advocacy on this issue upset certain segments of the SBC? If yes, is it still necessary to take a position/say something?
6. Does our advocacy have a chance to meaningfully advance issues of importance to the Southern Baptist Convention?
7. How will this affect our relationship with non-SBC coalition partners?

All of this represents our ongoing efforts to continue building trust with our Southern Baptist churches, deepening the cooperative nature of our work. The successful pastor advocacy trips to Washington demonstrate the effectiveness of this collaborative approach, and we anticipate continuing and expanding these opportunities in future years. These trips not only strengthen our advocacy but also help pastors understand firsthand how the ERLC serves them in the nation's capital.

Successfully defunding Planned Parenthood for one year during the budget reconciliation process demonstrates what can be accomplished when we mobilize Southern Baptists around clear biblical priorities supported by decades of resolutions and stated convictions. However, the one-year nature of this defunding means ongoing vigilance and advocacy will be required to make this permanent. Looking ahead to future congressional sessions, the ERLC will continue comprehensive appropriations work for both FY2026 and FY2027, engage emerging bioethical issues like artificial intelligence and assisted reproductive technologies with both research and advocacy, and maintain vigilance in defending RFRA protections from legislative attempts to weaken this critical safeguard.

The changing political landscape will require adaptability while remaining anchored to our ministry assignment and the priorities expressed by Southern Baptist messengers. Whether working with a unified or divided government, the ERLC will continue representing Southern Baptist convictions with clarity and conviction, building relationships across the political spectrum where we can find common ground on our core priorities of life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

As mentioned above, we are best positioned to serve our churches when we are aware of the issues they face and responsive to their expressed needs. For that reason, emphasizing church engagement is a priority for the ERLC in the years ahead. Our audience survey in the first quarter of 2025 provided valuable data that will shape our strategy moving forward. In addition, we will continue to link arms with state conventions, associations, and churches, helping us to provide resources that meet real needs and better inform our advocacy work in Washington, D.C.

The survey results provide clear direction for our communications strategy. Email remains the preferred communication method among our audience, and articles, email newsletters, and church guides are consistently identified as the most helpful assets we produce. We will continue investing strategically in these channels while carefully stewarding our social media platforms to engage different audiences and combat disinformation with truth. The challenge of misinformation and disinformation about the ERLC will require ongoing attention, but our strategy of "showing our work" rather than just talking about it has proven effective in building trust with good-faith Southern Baptists.

The "Across State Lines" emphasis of the Psalm 139 Project represents an innovative approach to pro-life ministry in a post-*Dobbs* landscape, enabling churches and state conventions in pro-life states to partner with pregnancy centers in pro-choice states where the need is great. Tragically, after *Dobbs*, while some states have passed laws making abortion virtually illegal, others have taken the opportunity to roll back abortion restrictions and even enshrine abortion rights in state constitutions. In some states, it will be a challenge to see any legislative progress to protect preborn lives in the near term, making the work of the Psalm 139 Project and the pregnancy centers it supports even more crucial.

There is much work to be done to see our country's culture of death become a culture of life. As we press forward in the work to make abortion both illegal and unthinkable, the ERLC, Southern Baptist churches, and other like-minded groups will need to work together in every state through advocacy and through equipping pregnancy resource centers with the tools they need to serve abortion-vulnerable women.

The shift from talking about our work to showing our work will continue to guide our communications strategy. The success of bringing pastor cohorts to Washington demonstrates that Southern Baptists want to see and participate in the work of their public policy entity. We will continue creating opportunities for this kind of engagement and transparency.

IV. Assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting religious liberty.

Religious liberty and freedom of conscience are bedrock principles for Baptists, and the ERLC will continue to both promote and defend them vigorously both in the U.S. and abroad. Thankfully, at the federal level, religious liberty jurisprudence is at a high-water mark. Supreme Court rulings over the last several years have been overwhelmingly in favor of protecting religious liberty, and this past term's decisions in *Catholic Charities* and *Mahmoud* continues that trend and provides strong precedent for future cases.

However, at the circuit court and state levels, the situation has been more mixed and will merit continued vigilance. Many of the cases presenting challenges to religious liberty have emerged due to the efforts of those who advocate for radical gender ideology and various SOGI (sexual orientation and gender identity) causes. As a result, in order to best serve Southern Baptists, the ERLC has given greater attention to both monitoring and engaging cases at the lower court levels than in past decades. We expect that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future as the cultural battle over gender ideology and religious liberty continues to play out in courts across the country.

In addition to engagement with the courts through amicus briefs and monitoring litigation, the ERLC will continue working at the federal level—and alongside state conventions when invited at the state level—to push back on anti-religious liberty legislation and to safeguard religious liberty protections, such as the *Religious Freedom Restoration Act* (RFRA). RFRA remains under threat from those who seek to carve out exceptions or weaken its protections, and the ERLC will continue working to prevent any such erosion of this foundational safeguard.

We are hopeful that, through working with the current administration, we can see significant progress in the area of conscience rights and religious liberty—areas that were perpetually under threat during the Biden administration. The Trump administration's early actions reversing Biden-era policies hostile to religious liberty are encouraging, but sustained engagement will be necessary to ensure these gains are maintained and expanded. Additionally, administrative rulemaking will require ongoing monitoring to prevent future administrations from using the regulatory process to undermine religious liberty.

Internationally, the ERLC will continue advocating for persecuted Christians and religious minorities around the world. The successful advocacy for Nigeria's Country of Particular Concern designation demonstrates what can be accomplished through sustained engagement with the State Department and administration officials. We will continue monitoring situations in countries where Christians face severe persecution and advocating for U.S. foreign policy that prioritizes international religious freedom.

Another challenge that continues to present itself is a growing dissatisfaction with religious liberty amongst a segment of Americans, including some within our own Southern Baptist Convention. This group is diverse but includes those who favor some sort of state-sponsored religion or Christian nationalism that would undermine the Baptist principle of a free church in a free state. Despite its messiness and the challenges it presents, a robust embrace of religious liberty and freedom of conscience has always resulted in the best overall outcomes for Baptist churches as they seek to expand the Kingdom through evangelism and public witness. Conversely, in societies where religious liberty and freedom of conscience have been curtailed, persecution has always followed—often beginning with persecution of minority religious groups but eventually extending to any dissent from state-approved orthodoxy.

Thus, in keeping with our historic Baptist convictions and commitments and in alignment with our confession of faith and numerous resolutions on the topic passed by Southern Baptist messengers, the ERLC will continue to vigorously advocate for and defend religious liberty in the public square. This is not merely a matter of political preference or pragmatic calculation, but a deeply held theological conviction about the nature of the gospel, the church, and the state. As we do so, the ERLC will continue to provide resources for churches, articles on our website explaining this foundational Baptist distinctive to each new generation, and church guides that help believers understand how to engage their communities while maintaining their witness.

The coming years will present both challenges and opportunities for religious liberty advocacy. The ERLC is committed to this work, confident that defending religious liberty for all people—not just for Christians, but for people of all faiths and no faith—is consistent with the gospel and will create the best environment for the Church to fulfill the Great Commission.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

The Convention referred the following item to The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission during the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas, Texas, June 10-11, 2025, for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To request all SBC entities and the EC to report on actions taken to elevate qualified biblical leaders from diverse backgrounds.

Motion: Larry Mayberry, New York

“That the Southern Baptist Convention request all SBC entities including seminaries, boards, and commissions, as well as the Executive Committee, to provide in next year’s Book of Reports ahead of the 2026 annual meeting scheduled for Orlando, Florida, a report of what specific actions each entity has taken to identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. This request should include efforts or actions rooted in a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7, rather than in secular frameworks such as CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI programs.”

Response: The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has a long track record of concern for “a biblical vision of diversity as seen in Revelation 7.” To that end, we have made every effort to “identify, equip, and elevate biblically qualified leaders from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in a manner consistent with the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*” and have encouraged other SBC entities and churches to do the same.

Like every entity, we report on this topic in our Annual Ministry Report submitted to the Executive Committee each year (See Question 3 of the Ministry Inquiries Section). The ERLC neither endorses nor employs CRT, Intersectionality, or DEI approaches in any of its work.

As the Bible teaches, the ERLC affirms that the gospel brings unity across any and all barriers, including racial and ethnic lines. This unity demonstrates the reconciling power of the gospel and anticipates the worship of heaven.

As a result of the fall, such unity in this life does not come without effort, and thus, we work diligently to accomplish it and call on Southern Baptists to join us in that pursuit until Christ returns and we are all perfectly reconciled in Him.

2. SBC Referral: To establish a task force to study a biblical stance on immigration.

Motion: Jose Arzate, Texas

“That the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention request the SBC President to appoint a special task force to study the immigration situation currently affecting our country and to provide a Biblical stand on immigration. The task force shall be composed of messengers from diverse ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the multicultural nature of the Convention, and shall report its findings and recommendations to the messengers at the next annual meeting in Orlando.”

Response: The trustees of Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission are deeply concerned regarding “the immigration situation currently affecting our country” and have a sincere desire “to provide a Biblical stand on immigration.” To that end, the ERLC board chair will commission a task force on this topic and bring a report and appropriate recommendations back to the ERLC trustees at the mid-year meeting in spring 2026.

AUXILIARY

WMU[®] God's mission.
Our passion.

WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION[®]
100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, Alabama 35242

CONNIE DIXON, President

SANDRA WISDOM-MARTIN, Executive Director–Treasurer

As WMU[®], we find ourselves in a sacred season of transition, trusting the One who authors every chapter of this ministry's story. After much prayer, reflection, and conversation with my family, I asked the WMU Executive Board to search for a new executive director–treasurer. Faithfulness in this season calls me to be present with my family in a way that cannot be sustained by the obligations of my current ministry role. I am more confident than ever in WMU's future because of our staff and valued stakeholders serving across the United States. They labor selflessly and with excellence, committed to making disciples of Jesus who live on mission. WMU's mandate remains unchanged because it is rooted in God's calling. I have every confidence the Lord will guide and undergird WMU. His faithfulness does not change.

I am deeply grateful for all I have been honored to serve with across 36 years of ministry. I am reminded that none of us serve alone. Even in the midst of heavy burdens and difficult seasons, I know that one of the most tangible expressions of God's kindness is the people He places on the journey with us. I thank God for the gift of serving alongside Southern Baptists in the work to make Christ known among the nations.

In June 2026, we will also elect a new president for national WMU. Connie Dixon of Elida, New Mexico, served for five years as national WMU president. She carried the weight of responsibility with grace, wisdom, and steady devotion to Christ. Connie has co-led the organization, helping to chart a course forward while honoring the faithful path behind us. Her leadership has been a gift to this ministry and to all who served alongside her. We look forward to the leaders God is preparing for the journey ahead.

Stewardship

At our 2026 January Board Meeting, Connie and I shared ten theme interpretations emphasizing WMU's mandate to make disciples of Jesus who live on mission but geared specifically for the handoff in leadership. In times of transition, we must understand **we are stewards of the ministry, not owners**. Leaders are caretakers of God's mission. The ministry belongs to the Lord, not a single individual.

In a Baptist Press email, there was a link to an article by Todd Gray, executive director–treasurer for Kentucky Baptist Convention. The article was “10 Tips for Leading a Non-Profit Ministry.” Todd's first point was to hire the best people you can find. The second was to build a great board. I eagerly read the list. His last suggestion stopped me cold. The tenth suggestion was to stay close to your family and realize we are all interims.

Todd wrote, “All of us in ministry leadership are filling a slot for a season. Our work is important as we strive to advance the gospel of Christ, but it can be easy to overestimate our own importance.” He concludes the point by encouraging, “Remember that you are an interim in your role and stay close to your family.”

(Source: Toolbox section of Baptist Press email sent on 10.7.2025. Article posted by Todd Gray on September 30, 2025)

Psalm 24:1 says,

“The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.”

At WMU, we consistently call Southern Baptists to generosity. We believe stewardship starts with surrender. Here are 12 statements shared with the WMU board about godly stewards:

They steward time wisely (knowing every moment is an opportunity to honor God).

They steward resources with wisdom (balancing generosity and responsibility).

They steward their talents without reservation (knowing gifts are bestowed by God to be used).

They steward truth carefully.

They steward their pain into something to help others.

They steward their failures as keen learning experiences.

They steward relationships with grace.

They steward vision with humility (holding plans loosely so God can redirect as He wills).

They steward their calling with courage (pressing into obedience even when it is costly).

They steward their influence with integrity (without shortcuts and manipulation).

They steward the next generation with intentionality.

And lastly, they steward their soul with care (because leadership flows from a heart anchored in Christ).

In times of transition, we must understand we are stewards of the ministry, not owners. We will continue to steward the responsibility God entrusted to us to make disciples of Jesus who live on mission. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

Laborers Together,

Sandy Wisdom-Martin

Executive Director–Treasurer

WMU, SBC

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of WMU is to make disciples of Jesus who live on mission.

WMU seeks to foster the characteristics of a missional person—one who learns about missions, prays for missions, supports missions, and does missions and tells about Jesus. God issued the mandate through the Great Commission for all Christ followers to go and make disciples of all nations. Our desire is to come alongside the church and help all ages be energized and equipped for the mission.

Through three focus areas—missions discipleship for all ages, leadership development, and compassion ministries—WMU engages believers in missions and shares stories of how lives are transformed to the glory of God across the street, in local communities, and around the world.

REPORT OF MINISTRIES

MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP**Missions in the Church**

The legacy of 137 years of kingdom impact through WMU continues in more than 8,000 Southern Baptist churches across the United States as preschoolers, children, students, and adults participate in WMU missions groups. WMU's ongoing missions discipleship resources are designed to develop believers who understand God's mission in the world, leading to engaged Christians who are passionate about sharing the love of Christ with others.

In 2025, we created and distributed eight subscription items, including periodicals and resource kits. Through our age-appropriate materials, WMU shares stories of how God is at work around the world through missionaries and others as they proclaim hope in Christ. Furthermore, we identify compelling stories of churches, WMU missions groups, and individuals who are living out their faith and proactively sharing the love of Christ.

These inspiring stories are shared through our print and digital publications and through a variety of digital media including web, video, social media, and more. Our content is intended to inform and inspire readers and viewers to deeper faith and stronger relationships as they share their own stories of vibrant hope.

WMU's age-level groups include

- Mission Friends® for preschool boys and girls from birth through kindergarten;
- Girls in Action® (GA®) for girls in grades 1–6;
- Royal Ambassadors® (RA®) for boys in grades 1–12;
- Children in ActionSM for boys and girls in grades 1–6;
- Acteens® for girls in grades 7–12;
- Youth on MissionSM for boys and girls in grades 7–12;
- myMISSIONSM for collegiate and young women;
- Women on Mission® for women; and
- Adults on MissionSM for men and women.

In 2025, we combined three websites into a new wmu.com, changed *Missions Mosaic* from a monthly to quarterly publication, and implemented an entirely new fulfillment system to better serve customers and increase engagement.

Mission Boards

In 2024*, WMU helped raise \$207.2 million—the highest total in the offering's 136-year history—for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions. Since initiating the first offering in 1888, WMU has helped raise more than \$5.8 billion through this effort. The offering represents more than half of the International Mission Board's total annual support. Every penny given to the offering goes directly to support missionaries, including providing housing, training, education, health care, and more.

In 2025, WMU helped raise \$71.2 million—the second-highest amount given—for missions work in North America through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®. Since 1907, when official reporting began for the home missions offering started by WMU, receipts total more than \$2.3 billion. All of the funds raised through this offering go directly to the North American Mission Board to support field personnel and supply nearly half of its total annual revenue.

WMU further supports missions personnel through the following avenues:

- **Annie and Lottie Resources to Churches**—State WMU offices across the country pray over and send out approximately 8.6 million posters, prayer guides, and offering envelopes annually to churches to encourage giving to Annie and Lottie to support our missionaries.
- **Weeks of Prayer**—WMU promotes the Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Week of Prayer for International Missions in conjunction with the Annie and Lottie offerings. An eight-page spread highlighting each week of prayer is featured annually in *Missions Mosaic*, WMU's flagship print and digital missions resource.
- **Ongoing Prayer Support**—In addition to the weeks of prayer, WMU curriculum focuses on sharing stories of how God is at work through missions personnel and prayer needs related to their ministries. WMU publishes and distributes a daily prayer calendar that encourages prayer for current and retired IMB and NAMB missionaries on their birthdays.
- **Scholarships**—National WMU awarded \$94,550 in grants and scholarships in 2025 to further the education and ministries of its grant recipients, most of whom are missionary kids.
- **Missionary Housing**—WMU administers housing for Southern Baptist missionaries while they are on stateside assignment by maintaining a database of nearly 700 houses made available by churches, associations, and individuals. This information is available to missionaries on a secure website.

**Final 2025 totals for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering were not available at time of printing.*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

WMU offers a variety of opportunities for discovering and expanding one's leadership skills and spiritual gifts through online courses, print and digital resources, and in-person trainings. WMU's Christian Women's Leadership Center (CWLC) is one approach to leadership development in which online courses are self-paced and on demand. Joining the lineup of CWLC courses related to missional foundations, this year WMU introduced two new courses: *The Story of Missions* and *Spiritual Disciplines*. We also revised a course related to CWLC leadership foundations entitled *Women Leaders of the Past*.

Two new courses were launched to further engage leaders in missions discipleship. They are *Royal Ambassadors: An Overview* and *Counter Culture for Students*. In addition, two online courses were created exclusively for our board members to help them understand their role and responsibilities.

WMU also offers courses to help champion a church's response to ministry needs such as mental health, refugees, human trafficking, and poverty. See ChristianLeaderLearning.com for the full catalog of courses.

COMPASSION MINISTRIES**Pure Water, Pure Love**

Through Pure Water, Pure LoveSM, WMU provides water filters to every IMB missionary and has granted more than \$2.5 million since 2005 when PWPL was expanded to include well and water purification projects to Southern Baptist partners. In 2025 alone, \$155,045 was granted to meet water needs in Southeast Asia, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Uganda. In addition, nearly \$3,000 was granted to help meet water needs in Texas due to severe drought.

WorldCrafts

WorldCraftsSM helps develop sustainable, fair-trade businesses by partnering with artisan groups worldwide and bringing their handcrafted products to market. These partnerships empower artisans to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of their communities,

often providing safe, dignified employment for women at risk of exploitation, including those who have escaped human trafficking. With renewed leadership in product development, WorldCrafts is entering a season of growth—expanding artisan partnerships, field testing new designs, and preparing to launch new products from new and existing groups. This strategy advances our mission to create sustainable income opportunities and connect more customers to products with purpose.

Christian Job Corps

Through this ministry, thousands of participants gained life and job skills in a Christian context through more than 90 registered Christian Job CorpsSM sites across the United States, as well as sites in South Africa, Uganda, and Mexico. Christian Job Corps offers classes, resources, mentoring, Bible study, and more as participants gain self-confidence, purpose, direction, and hope for the future.

Baptist Nursing Fellowship

Though a separate 501(c)(3) organization, Baptist Nursing FellowshipSM (BNF[®]) a compassion ministry of WMU that seeks to empower, educate, and equip nurses and health-care professionals. With a focus on medical missions, BNF also provides fellowship and continuing professional education and growth opportunities.

Project HELP: Mental Health

Project HELPSM is an initiative of WMU that identifies a critical issue, seeks to raise the level of awareness of that issue, and provides practical approaches anyone can implement to open the door for meeting needs and sharing the gospel. Since 2022, WMU has provided resources to address the issue of mental health, including an online course entitled *Mental Health: The Church's Response*, training in Mental Health First Aid, and a book entitled *Joyful Sorrow*, along with feature articles and blogs. In fall 2026, our focus will shift to Project HELP: Loneliness. More information is available at wmu.com/projecthelp.

SUPPORTIVE OPERATIONS

Executive Board Meetings

The WMU Executive Board, which is comprised of women who serve as WMU presidents in their state or multistate territories, gathered twice in 2025 to conduct the business of the organization. These meetings took place in Birmingham, Alabama, on January 10 and via video conference call on May 31.

WMU and SBC Annual Meetings

In Dallas, Texas, prior to the SBC Annual Meeting, WMU leaders participated in Crossover to serve the city and share the gospel on Saturday, June 7. On Sunday, hundreds gathered for the WMU Missions Celebration, where they heard from inspiring mission speakers. Between general sessions, participants discovered a wide variety of missions-focused ministries and initiatives in the “Idea Rodeo,” a self-paced, interactive area designed to provide tangible, takeaway ideas for greater missions involvement.

During the meeting, Connie Dixon of First Baptist Church, Elida, New Mexico, was reelected to serve a fifth and final year as national WMU president, and Lisa Thompson of Dahlongega Baptist Church in Dahlongega, Georgia, was elected as national WMU recording secretary.

WMU also had a presence at multiple venues of the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting.

In WMU's report to the SBC, Sandy Wisdom-Martin and Connie Dixon shared about WMU's historic and current role in supporting the Cooperative Program (CP) and WMU's focus on evangelism and discipleship.

They explained that before the Cooperative Program, WMU women agreed to raise \$15 million over the course of five years for the \$75 Million Campaign (1919 to 1924) with 22,000 women promising to fulfill their commitment. WMU contributed more than \$15 million—100 percent of WMU's quota—which would equal \$300 million in today's dollars.

In 1931, gifts from WMU members totaled nearly 50 percent of all CP receipts. In that same year, WMU gave approximately 76 percent of all mission board receipts. In the late 1940s, gifts to the CP from WMU averaged 83 percent of the total receipts. WMU has always been committed to fuel the Southern Baptist missions enterprise and continues to advocate for CP.

During the SBC Annual Meeting, WMU's booth in the exhibit hall featured representations of Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong made from building bricks and encouraged children to add bricks to the display to illustrate how we are on mission together as Southern Baptists. Countless spectators also gathered around the RA Racetrack as SBC entity presidents once again completed for first place with their pinewood derby cars.

Funding

National WMU is not a part of the Cooperative Program allocation budget and receives no funds from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. National WMU is supported through the sale of missional resources and from investments and charitable contributions. WMU continues to actively promote giving to the two missions offerings and through the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.



GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

CHARTER

An Act

To Incorporate ... the Southern Baptist Convention

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Georgia in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that from and after the passing of this act ... that William B. Johnson, Wilson Lumpkin, James B. Taylor, A. Docrey, R. B. C. Howell and others their associates and successors be and they are hereby Incorporated and made a body politic by the name and style of the Southern Baptist Convention with authority to receive hold possess retain and dispose of property either real or personal to sue and be sued and to make all bye-laws, rules and regulations necessary to the transaction of their business not inconsistent with the laws of this state or of the United States, said corporation being created for the purpose of eliciting combining and directing the energies of the Baptist denomination of Christians for the propagation of the gospel any law usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

[Signed:]

Charles J. Jenkins, Speaker of The House of Representatives

Absalom H. Chappell, President of the Senate

Approved December 27th 1845

Geo. W. Crawford, Governor

(Act 203, Georgia Archives RG 37-01-15 Enrolled Acts & Resolutions, Georgia Laws - 1845, Vol. 2-9838 Acts 98-228 pp. 428-431.)

CONSTITUTION

The messengers from missionary societies, churches, and other religious bodies of the Baptist denomination in various parts of the United States met in Augusta, Georgia, May 8, 1845, for the purpose of carrying into effect the benevolent intention of our constituents by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the denomination for the propagation of the gospel and adopted rules and fundamental principles which, as amended from time to time, are as follows:

Article I. The Name: The name of this body is the “Southern Baptist Convention.”

Article II. Purpose: It is the purpose of the Convention to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

Article III. Composition: The Convention shall consist of messengers who are members of Baptist churches in cooperation with the Convention. The following subparagraphs describe the Convention’s current standards and method of determining the maximum number of messengers the Convention will recognize from each cooperating church to attend the Convention’s annual meeting.

1. The Convention will only deem a church to be in friendly cooperation with the Convention, and sympathetic with its purposes and work (i.e., a “cooperating” church as that term is used in the Convention’s governing documents) which:

CONSTITUTION

The messengers from missionary societies, churches, and other religious bodies of the Baptist denomination in various parts of the United States met in Augusta, Georgia, May 8, 1845, for the purpose of carrying into effect the benevolent intention of our constituents by organizing a plan for eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the denomination for the propagation of the gospel and adopted rules and fundamental principles which, as amended from time to time, are as follows:

Article I. The Name: The name of this body is the “Southern Baptist Convention.”

Article II. Purpose: It is the purpose of the Convention to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories for the promotion of Christian missions at home and abroad and any other objects such as Christian education, benevolent enterprises, and social services which it may deem proper and advisable for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

Article III. Composition: The Convention shall consist of messengers who are members of Baptist churches in cooperation with the Convention. The following subparagraphs describe the Convention’s current standards and method of determining the maximum number of messengers the Convention will recognize from each cooperating church to attend the Convention’s annual meeting.

1. The Convention will only deem a church to be in friendly cooperation with the Convention, and sympathetic with its purposes and work (i.e., a “cooperating” church as that term is used in the Convention’s governing documents) which:
 - (1) Has a faith and practice which closely identifies with the Convention’s adopted statement of faith. (By way of example, churches which act to affirm, approve, or endorse homosexual behavior would be deemed not to be in cooperation with the Convention.)
 - (2) Has formally approved its intention to cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention. (By way of example, the regular filing of the annual report requested by the Convention would be one indication of such cooperation.)
 - (3) Has made undesignated, financial contribution(s) through the Cooperative Program, and/or through the Convention’s Executive Committee for Convention causes, and/or to any Convention entity during the fiscal year preceding.
 - (4) Does not act in a manner inconsistent with the Convention’s beliefs regarding sexual abuse.
 - (5) Does not act to affirm, approve, or endorse discriminatory behavior on the basis of ethnicity.
2. Under the terms above, the Convention will recognize to participate in its annual meeting two (2) messengers from each cooperating church, and such additional messengers as are permitted below.
3. The Convention will recognize additional messengers from a cooperating church under one of the options described below. Whichever method allows the church the greater number of messengers shall apply:
 - (1) One additional messenger for each full percent of the church’s undesignated receipts which the church contributed during the fiscal year preceding through the Cooperative Program, and/or through the Convention’s Executive Committee for Convention causes, and/or to any Convention entity; or
 - (2) One additional messenger for each \$6,000 which the church contributed during the fiscal year preceding through the Cooperative Program, and/or through the Convention’s Executive Committee for Convention causes, and/or to any Convention entity.

4. The messengers shall be appointed and certified by their church to the Convention, but the Convention will not recognize more than twelve (12) from any cooperating church.
5. Each messenger shall be a member of the church by which he or she is appointed.
6. If a church experiences a natural disaster or calamitous event and, as a result, the church is not qualified to appoint as many messengers as the church could appoint for the Convention's annual meeting immediately before the event, the church's pastor or an authorized church representative may, for no more than the three (3) annual meetings after the event, certify the facts to the registration secretary and obtain the same number of messengers it could have certified for the Convention's annual meeting immediately before the event.

Article IV. Authority: While independent and sovereign in its own sphere, the Convention does not claim and will never attempt to exercise any authority over any other Baptist body, whether church, auxiliary organizations, associations, or convention.

Article V. Officers:

1. The officers of the Convention shall be a president, a first and a second vice president, a recording secretary, a registration secretary, and a treasurer.
2. The officers shall be elected annually and shall hold office until their successors are elected and qualified. The term of office for the president is limited to two (2) years, and a president shall not be eligible for reelection until as much as one (1) year has elapsed from the time a successor is named. No person may simultaneously be a candidate for two offices.
3. The president shall be a member of the several boards and of the Executive Committee.
4. The treasurer of the Executive Committee shall be the treasurer of the Convention.
5. In case of death or disability of the president, the vice presidents shall automatically succeed to the office of president in the order of their election.

Article VI. The Boards, Institutions, and Commissions – Their Constitution and Powers:

1. The general boards of the Convention shall be composed as follows, unless otherwise provided in their charters.
 - (1) Twelve (12) members chosen from the city or vicinity of the state in which the board is located, but not more than three (3) local members elected from the same church.
 - (2) One (1) member chosen from each cooperating state; and one (1) additional member from each state having two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) members, and another additional member for each additional two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) members in such state.
 - (3) The members shall be divided into four (4) groups as nearly equal as possible, and one (1) group shall be elected each year to serve four (4) years. Board members having served two (2) full terms of four (4) years shall not be eligible for re-election until as much as two (2) years have elapsed. This shall also apply to the Executive Committee.
2. The trustees of institutions and directors shall be composed as follows:
 - (1) The trustees or directors shall be elected in keeping with the requirements of the charter of the entity as printed in the 1948 *Book of Reports* or subsequently amended with the prior approval of the Convention.
 - (2) If the composition of the trustees or directors is not determined by charter requirements, the body of trustees or directors shall be composed of one (1) member chosen from each cooperating state and eight (8) local members from the city or vicinity in which the entity is located, but not more than two (2) local members shall be chosen from the same church.

- (3) Unless it is contrary to the charter requirements of the entity, the trustees or directors shall be divided into four (4) groups as nearly equal as possible and one (1) group shall be elected each year to serve four (4) years. Members having served two (2) full terms of four (4) years shall not be eligible for re-election until as much as two (2) years have elapsed after one has served two (2) full terms.
- (4) Regardless of charter provisions, no trustee or director shall be eligible for re-election until as much as two (2) years have elapsed after the trustee or director has served two (2) full terms.
3. Terms of Service: No trustee of a board, institution, or commission, or a member of the Executive Committee shall be eligible to serve for more than two consecutive terms. A trustee or member of the Executive Committee who has served more than half a term shall be considered to have served a full term.
4. The governing groups of the entities may elect executive, administrative, finance, investment, and other committees if desired.
5. Each entity shall elect a president, a recording secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers as may be required. The president may be named as treasurer.
6. The compensation of its officers and employees shall be fixed by each entity, but no salaried employee or officer shall be a member of the directors of the entity.
7. Each entity is authorized to adopt its own bylaws.
8. Fifty percent of the members of the governing group shall constitute a quorum of the entity directors for transaction of any business.

Article VII. Duties of Officers of Boards, Institutions, and Commissions: All officers shall be subject to the control and direction of their directors in matters pertaining to the work and obligations of the board, institution, or commission. They shall perform such duties as commonly appertain to such officers.

1. The executive head of each board, institution, and commission shall be responsible to the directors for all the work of the entity and shall carry on the work as the directors may direct.
2. The recording secretary of each entity shall keep a record of all meetings of directors, if not otherwise provided for, and shall keep the records in fireproof safes, vaults, or files.
3. The treasurer of each entity shall follow approved methods of accounting, keep the books, receipt for all monies and securities, deposit all funds with a depository or depositories approved by the directors, and render full statements as required to the directors or to the Convention. The treasurer shall not pay out money except as the directors may order and direct.

Article VIII. Church Membership: Officers of the Convention, all officers and members of all boards, trustees of institutions, directors, all committee members, and all missionaries of the Convention appointed by its boards shall be members of Baptist churches cooperating with this Convention.

Article IX. Missionaries' Qualifications: All missionaries appointed by the Convention's boards must, previous to their appointment, furnish evidence of piety, zeal for the Master's kingdom, conviction of truth as held by Baptists, and talents for missionary service.

Article X. Distribution of Funds: The Convention shall have the right to designate only undesignated funds, the right of contributors to the work of the Convention to designate the objects to which their contributions shall be applied being fully recognized.

Article XI. Meetings:

1. The Convention shall hold its meetings annually at such time and place as it may choose.
2. The president may call special meetings with the concurrence of the other officers of the Convention and of the Executive Committee.

3. The Executive Committee may change the time and place of meeting if the entertaining city withdraws its invitation or is unable to fulfill its commitments.
4. The Convention officers, the Executive Committee, and the executive heads of the Convention's boards and institutions acting in a body may, in case of grave emergency, cancel a regular meeting or change the place of meeting.

Article XII. As to Conflict with State Laws: All incorporated entities of the Convention shall be required to comply with the letter and spirit of this Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Business and Financial Plan insofar as they are not in conflict with the statute law of the state in which an entity is incorporated, and nothing herein contained shall be construed to require any such incorporated entity to act and carry on its affairs in conflict with the law of the state of its incorporation. In case any action of any entity of the Convention is found to be a violation of the law of the state of its incorporation, said action shall be reported by that entity to the Convention for appropriate action.

Article XIII. Definition of a State: The District of Columbia shall be regarded as a state for the purpose of this Constitution, the Bylaws, and all actions of the Convention.

Article XIV. Amendments: Any alterations may be made in these Articles at any annual meeting of the Convention by a vote of two-thirds of the messengers present and voting at the time the vote is taken, provided that an amendment shall be so approved by two (2) consecutive annual meetings of the Convention.

BYLAWS

In order to carry out the provisions of the Constitution, the following Bylaws are adopted for the government of the Convention:

1. Convention Session:

- A. The Convention shall open with the Tuesday morning session and continue through Wednesday, holding such sessions as the Committee on Order of Business finds necessary for the conduct of business, except that sufficient time on Wednesday afternoon shall be reserved for seminary luncheons and other necessary meetings.
- B. The Convention sermon and president's message shall be considered as fixed orders at the time designated by the committee on Order of Business.
- C. A messenger may speak in debate for longer than three minutes only with the permission of the Convention granted by a two-thirds vote.
- D. A messenger may introduce a second motion during a business session only if no other messenger is seeking the floor who has not made a motion during that session.

2. Presentation of Outside Causes: Causes other than those provided for in the regular work of the Convention may be presented to the Convention upon authority of officers of the Convention in conference with the Committee on Order of Business in such ways and at such times as may be dictated by the courtesies of the case and the necessities of the program.

3. Convention Site:

- A. No city shall be considered as a meeting place for the Southern Baptist Convention in which there is a considerable distance between the available hotels and the Convention hall.
- B. No meetings other than the Convention services shall be held in the Convention hall during the sessions of the Convention. Every service held in the Convention auditorium shall be under the direction of the Committee on Order of Business.

4. **Exhibits:** All exhibits of every description shall be rigidly excluded from those parts of the place of meeting where the people visiting the exhibits will disturb the proceedings of the Convention, their locations to be determined by the Executive Committee or its agent. The Executive Committee of the Convention shall have exclusive control of all exhibit space.
5. **Book of Reports:**
 - A. Copy for reports and recommendations to the Convention shall be submitted to the recording secretary by March 1, unless circumstances beyond the control of the reporting entity or committee make it impossible.
 - B. Recommendations of entities and committees of the Convention may not be voted upon until the recommendations have been published in the *Book of Reports* or the Convention *Bulletin*. The recording secretary is authorized to provide the Baptist Press and other interested parties, upon their request, copies of recommendations requiring Convention action.
6. **Convention Annual:** The Convention *Annual* containing reports and actions of the Convention and other pertinent material shall be published as soon as possible after the meeting of the Convention and shall be made available without charge to all active pastors and denominational agents.
7. **Bulletin:**
 - A. The Executive Committee of the Convention shall have published each day a sufficient number of brief reports, or bulletins, of the Journal of Proceedings, reporting specifically matters of business proposed and acted upon, including the names of committees appointed, reports of the committees, and such business as may be transacted and carried over to the following day, also including a list of the titles or subjects of the resolutions presented and the names of the persons presenting them.
 - B. Such report, or bulletin, shall not include speeches or addresses or any comment thereon, a photograph, or any personal reference to any messenger of the Convention, but shall be only a resume of the business transacted during that day.
8. **Messenger Credentials, Registration Committee, and Credentials Committee:**
 - A. *Messenger Credentials:* Each person elected by a church cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention as messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention shall be registered as a messenger to the Convention upon presentation of proper credentials. Credentials shall be presented by each messenger, in person, at the Convention registration desk and shall be in the following form:
 - (1) A completed, properly authorized, official Southern Baptist Convention registration document, certifying the messenger's election in accordance with Article III. Composition, of the Constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention; but if the messenger does not have the messenger registration document,
 - (2) A letter from the messenger's church, signed by the pastor, clerk or moderator of the church, certifying the messenger's election in accordance with Article III. Composition, of the Constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention; or
 - (3) Some other document (which may include a fax, e-mail, or other physical or electronically transmitted document) from the messenger's church which is deemed reliable by the Registration Committee or qualifies under guidelines approved by the registration secretary and the Registration Committee.

Messengers registered in accordance with this section shall constitute the Convention.

- B. *Registration Committee:* The president of the Convention, in consultation with the vice presidents, shall appoint, at least thirty (30) days before the annual session, a Registration Committee to serve at the forthcoming sessions of the Convention. The registration secretary shall convene the Registration Committee at least one day prior to the annual meeting to supervise the registration of messengers, to oversee the operations of the registration desk, and to rule upon any questions which may arise in registration concerning the credentials of messengers.
- C. *Credentials Committee:* The Credentials Committee, a standing committee, shall be composed of the registration secretary, the chair of the Executive Committee, three members nominated by the Executive Committee, and four members nominated by the Committee on Nominations. Committee members may serve simultaneously on another board, institution, commission, or committee of the Convention or as a member of the Executive Committee. The names of the Executive Committee chair and the members nominated by the Executive Committee shall appear in the Committee on Nominations's report to the annual meeting, along with the names of members being nominated by the Committee on Nominations, for election by the Convention. Members other than the registration secretary and the Executive Committee chair shall serve a term of three (3) years. The committee shall elect its own chair. Members of the Credentials Committee shall be divided into three groups of three persons each with the registration secretary and the Executive Committee chair assigned to different groups. The term of office of one of the three groups shall expire each year. A member's term of office shall begin and expire at the conclusion of the Convention's annual meeting. Members having served one full term of three (3) years shall not be eligible for re-election until as much as one (1) year has elapsed after the last term of service has concluded. Vacancies occurring on the committee between annual meetings shall be filled by the Executive Committee, provided that any vacancy shall be filled only until the next annual meeting.
- (1) The Credentials Committee shall meet on the call of its chair or of any two of its members after reasonable notice of the time and place for the meeting. Meetings and reports of the committee may be private or public in order to maintain the degree of confidentiality which is appropriate under the circumstances to serve the best interests of the Convention and individual churches. When practical, meetings shall be held in conjunction with meetings of the Executive Committee or electronically. The committee may meet by teleconference, videoconference, or any other lawful means. Appropriate staff and legal assistance shall be provided for the Credentials Committee by the Executive Committee.
 - (2) When, during an annual meeting, an issue arises whether a church is in cooperation with the Convention, the Credentials Committee shall consider the matter and review any information available to it. The committee shall either:
 - (a) consider the question in the manner described in section (3)a below and, when prepared, recommend any action to the Executive Committee, in which case messengers from the church shall be seated pending any action by the Executive Committee; or
 - (b) at the earliest opportunity, recommend to the Convention whether the church should be considered a cooperating church. The Convention shall immediately consider the committee's recommendation. One representative of the church under consideration and one representative of the Credentials Committee shall be permitted to speak to the question, subject to the normal rules of debate. When debate is concluded, the Convention may decide whether the church is a cooperating church or refer the matter to the Executive

Committee for further review and a decision. Unless the Convention decides that the church is not a cooperating church, messengers from the church shall be registered and seated in accordance with the Convention's rules.

- (3) When an issue arises between annual meetings whether a church is in cooperation with the Convention, the Credentials Committee shall consider the matter and review any information available to it.
 - a. If the committee forms the opinion that a church is not in friendly cooperation with the Convention as described in Article III. Composition, of the Constitution, the committee shall submit to the Executive Committee a report stating that opinion and the committee's reasons for its opinion. The Executive Committee shall, at its next meeting, consider the report of the Credentials Committee and determine whether the church is in cooperation with the Convention. The Executive Committee's decision shall be final unless the church appeals the decision to the Convention during the next annual meeting.
 - b. A church which has been found not to be in cooperation may appeal the decision to the Convention by submitting a written appeal to the chair of the Credentials Committee at least 30 days prior to the Convention's annual meeting. The Credentials Committee chair shall immediately notify the Credentials Committee, the chair of the Committee on Order of Business, and the President that an appeal to the Convention has been lodged.
 - c. The registration secretary shall notify the Convention of the appeal in the initial registration report to the Convention.
 - d. The Convention shall consider the appeal during a time established for miscellaneous business on the afternoon of the first day of the Convention. The question before the messengers will be "Shall the decision of the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee that [*name of the church in question*] is not in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention be sustained?" One representative of the church under consideration and one representative of the Credentials Committee or Executive Committee shall be permitted to speak to the question, subject to the normal rules of debate. When debate is concluded, the Convention shall vote whether to sustain the Executive Committee's ruling. If the ruling of the Executive Committee is reversed, messengers from the church shall immediately be registered and seated in accordance with the Convention's rules.
 - (4) If a church which has been found not to be in cooperation with the Convention addresses the issues which led to that finding, it may apply to the Credentials Committee for a reconsideration of its status. If the circumstances warrant, the Credentials Committee may recommend to the Executive Committee that the church be once again considered a cooperating church.
 - (5) The committee may make inquiries of a church, but shall never attempt to exercise any authority over a church through an investigation or other process that would violate Article IV of the Constitution.
- 9. Address of Welcome:** There may be one (1) address of welcome limited to ten (10) minutes and one (1) response thereto limited to ten (10) minutes.
- 10. Election of Officers and Voting:**
- A. The president, the first and second vice presidents, and the secretaries shall be elected at the Convention, their terms of office to begin at the final adjournment.

- B. Election of officers shall be by ballot, provided however that if there is only one (1) nomination, and no other person desires to nominate, the registration secretary or anyone designated for the purpose may cast the ballot of the Convention. If an officer does not receive a majority of votes cast on the first ballot, subsequent ballots shall carry the names of those who are included in the top 50 percent of the total votes cast in the previous ballot.
 - C. Nominating speeches for officers of the Convention shall be limited to one (1) address of not more than three (3) minutes for each nominee.
 - D. The president, in consultation with the registration secretary, shall appoint tellers. The tabulation of any vote by the tellers or otherwise (such as by electronic means) shall be under the supervision of the registration secretary. The president or registration secretary shall announce election and voting results to the Convention as soon as practicable.
 - E. Any materials, instructions, and/or devices necessary to vote shall be made available to the messengers.
 - F. No proxy voting is permitted. All propositions, decisions, and choices shall be by a majority vote of the messengers present and voting in person, except where provisions have been made for a greater than majority vote. Except for officer elections, votes may be taken by ballot, by voice, by rising, by show of hands, by common consent, or by some other acceptable method. "Ballot" shall include electronic voting that protects the integrity of the voting process and provides for messengers' votes to remain confidential.
- 11. Parliamentary Authority and Parliamentarians:** The parliamentary authority of the Southern Baptist Convention shall be *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest revised edition). The Convention president, in conference with the vice presidents, shall select a chief parliamentarian and assistant parliamentarians, as necessary, to advise the presiding officers of the Convention on matters of parliamentary procedure. The chief parliamentarian shall be a person of experience and knowledge, sufficient to qualify him or her to serve as parliamentarian to the Southern Baptist Convention, and he or she shall be certified by the American Institute of Parliamentarians and/or the National Association of Parliamentarians. It shall be the responsibility of the president and treasurer of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to sign, on behalf of the Executive Committee, any contracts or letters of agreement related to the services of the chief parliamentarian.
- 12. Ministry Leaders:** Leaders of Southern Baptist Convention entities shall be admitted to the Convention sessions and shall be authorized to serve as resource persons for discussion of those matters which affect their areas of ministry responsibility.
- 13. Memorial Services:** The Committee on Order of Business is instructed to arrange for any memorial service to be held during the Convention.
- 14. Entities and Auxiliary of the Convention:**
- A. The entities of the Convention are as follows:
 - (1) General Boards: The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Richmond, Virginia; The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Inc., Alpharetta, Georgia; Lifeway Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee; GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, Dallas, Texas.
 - (2) Institutions: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky; The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana; Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention, Ontario, California; The Southeastern Baptist

Theological Seminary, Inc., Wake Forest, North Carolina; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.

- (3) Commission: The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee.
- B. Auxiliary: Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Alabama, is an auxiliary of the Convention.

15. Committee on Nominations:

- A. The Committee on Nominations shall be composed of two (2) members from each qualified state, who shall be elected by the Convention. Nominations for each position shall be made by the Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees shall make its recommendation of nominees to the Convention in the form of a single motion to elect all those persons it recommends for the Committee on Nominations. The motion may be amended but no messenger shall be allowed to propose more than one (1) person at a time for election. When adopted by the Convention, the motion of the Committee on Committees, as amended, shall constitute the election of the persons named in the motion to the Committee on Nominations. One (1) person nominated to the Committee on Nominations from each state shall be a person not employed full time by (or retired from) a church or denominational entity. Persons nominated to the Committee on Nominations shall have been resident members for at least three (3) years of Southern Baptist churches either geographically within the states or affiliated with the conventions of the states from which they are elected.
- B. The Committee on Nominations thus elected shall prepare its report through the year, carefully following the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Convention and the documents of the respective Convention entities, and shall recommend to the next Convention the following:
- (1) Members of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention
 - (2) Directors/trustees of the boards of the Convention
 - (3) Trustees of the institutions of the Convention
 - (4) Trustees of the commissions of the Convention
 - (5) Members of any standing committees, except certain members of the Credentials Committee as expressly provided by Bylaw 8.
- C. Excluding the president and recording secretary of the Convention, and the president of Woman's Missionary Union, and unless otherwise specifically permitted or required by these bylaws, no person shall be eligible to be elected or appointed to serve simultaneously on more than one of the boards, institutions, commissions, or committees of the Convention, or as a member of the Executive Committee, and no person shall be elected or appointed to serve on one of these bodies if that person's spouse has been elected or appointed to serve on one of these bodies for a time which would be simultaneous.
- D. The committee shall not recommend a fellow committee member or the member's spouse or a member of the previous year's Committee on Committees or the member's spouse for a first term on an entity.
- E. The committee shall recognize the principle that the persons it recommends shall represent the constituency of the Convention, rather than the staff of the entity. Any person elected to serve on any of the boards, institutions, commissions, the Executive Committee, or Convention standing committees shall affirm the Convention's adopted statement of faith.

-
- F. No person and no person's spouse shall be eligible to serve on the board of any one of the above entities (1) from which the person receives, directly or indirectly, any form of payment or financial benefit except for reimbursements for reasonable and authorized expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of a trustee, or, (2) which provides funds for which he/she has a duty of administration. When such conditions become applicable, that person or that person's spouse shall be considered as having resigned and such vacancy shall be filled in accordance with established Convention procedure.
- G. All of the above entities shall include both church or denominational employees and those who are not church or denominational employees. Not more than two-thirds of the members of any of these entities shall be drawn from either category. Where a person was serving as a church or denominational employee at the time of retirement, he/she should be counted as a church or denominational employee after retirement as far as the work of the Committee on Nominations is concerned.
- H. Any person elected to serve on any of the boards, institutions, commissions, or the Executive Committee, shall at the time of such election have been continuously a resident member for at least the preceding three (3) years of a church or churches which were in those years in friendly cooperation with the Convention and sympathetic with its purposes and work, and, where representation is by qualifying states, which were either geographically within the state or affiliated with the convention of the state from which the person is elected. Any person who is a member of one of these entities shall be considered as having resigned when the person ceases to be a resident member of a church either geographically within the state or affiliated with the convention of the state from which he/she has been elected as a representative.
- I. No person who has served on the board of an entity or on the Executive Committee shall be eligible to serve on the board of any entity or on the Executive Committee until two years after the conclusion of his or her term of office, except that a person may be re-elected to an authorized successive term or serve by virtue of a separate office.
- J. The report of the Committee on Nominations shall be released to Baptist Press no later than 45 days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention and shall be published in the first day's Bulletin. Persons desiring to amend the report of the Committee on Nominations are encouraged to publicize the nature of their amendment sufficiently in advance of the annual meeting of the Convention to allow information concerning the amendment to be made available to Convention messengers.
- K. The Committee on Nominations shall make its recommendation to the Convention in the form of a motion to elect those persons it recommends for specific terms of office. The motion may be amended but no messenger shall be allowed to propose more than one (1) person at a time for election. When adopted by the Convention, the motion of the Committee on Nominations, as amended, shall constitute the election of the persons named in the motion to their respective terms of office.
- 16. Vacancies on Boards:** All entities shall report all vacancies on the entities to the Committee on Nominations immediately on the occurrence of such vacancies. Any entity's board may make interim appointments only when authorized by its charter. Any such appointment shall only be of a person who is eligible and qualified both to be elected by the Convention and to serve according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern Baptist Convention.
- 17. Fraternal Messengers:**
- A. The Convention shall send a fraternal messenger to the annual sessions of the American Baptist Churches and the National Baptist conventions. The expenses of the fraternal messengers incurred while in attendance upon the conventions herein named shall be included in the items of Convention expenses.

- B. The fraternal messenger to the American Baptist Churches shall be the president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the time of the meeting of the American Baptist Churches, and he shall also be the fraternal messenger to the other National Baptist conventions named. If the president is unable to attend, he shall be authorized to name another officer as a substitute.
- C. The fraternal messengers to other Baptist bodies or other religious bodies may be elected by the Convention as occasion may require. The expenses of such messengers shall be borne by the messengers themselves unless specifically provided for by the Convention.

18. The Executive Committee:

- A. The Executive Committee shall consist of the president and the recording secretary of the Convention, the president of the Woman's Missionary Union, and one (1) or more members from each qualified and cooperating state or defined territory of the Convention, subject to the provisions of Section 30 of the Bylaws.
 - (1) Once the number of members of cooperating Southern Baptist churches in such an area reaches the levels shown in the following table, the number of Executive Committee members from that area shall thereafter be as indicated:
 - Any such qualified area: One (1) Executive Committee member
 - 250,000 church members: Two (2) Executive Committee members
 - 500,000 church members: Three (3) Executive Committee members
 - 750,000 church members: Four (4) Executive Committee members
 - 1,000,000 or more church members: Five (5) Executive Committee members.
 - (2) In addition, and solely for the purpose of providing representation on the Convention's fiduciary for cooperating areas which are not yet qualified as provided above, there shall be one Executive Committee member from each of the four following geographical areas: the Dakotas, Iowa, Minnesota-Wisconsin, and Montana.
 - (3) Except for areas represented by only one member, at least one-third of the members from any area shall be persons employed by a church or denominational entity, and at least one-third of the members from that area shall be persons not employed by a church or denominational entity.
 - (4) At least one-third of the entire membership of the Executive Committee shall be persons employed by a church or denominational entity, and at least one-third of its members shall be persons not employed by a church or denominational entity.
 - (5) Except for the president and the recording secretary of the Convention and the president of Woman's Missionary Union, the following persons are disqualified from serving as members of the Executive Committee:
 - a. Employees of the Convention or its Executive Committee
 - b. Trustees, directors, or employees of a Convention entity or its auxiliary
 - c. Employees of a convention for a state or defined territory, or of an entity or body that is empowered to act on behalf of such a convention
 - d. Employees of an entity of a convention for a state or defined territory
- B. Members shall be divided into four (4) groups as nearly equal as possible and shall hold office for four (4) years, one-fourth going out of office each year.
- C. A majority of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

-
- D. The Executive Committee shall elect a president, who shall also be treasurer, and other officers and staff who may be needed. All the main executive officers and all the office employees who handle funds shall be bonded, and no salaried officer or employee shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
 - E. The Executive Committee shall be the fiduciary, the fiscal, and the executive entity of the Convention in all its affairs not specifically committed to some other board or entity.

The Executive Committee is specifically authorized, instructed, and commissioned to perform the following functions:

- (1) To act for the Convention ad interim in all matters not otherwise provided for.
- (2) To be named in transfers of real and personal property for the use and benefit of the Convention either by deed, conveyance, will, or otherwise and to affix the seal of the Convention to all approved transactions; and to take title to and hold or to convey title to all properties, real or personal, and all funds, monies, and securities that are donated or transferred or left by will to or for the use of the Convention. As to such properties, funds, monies, and securities as the Executive Committee shall hold and not convey title to, the Executive Committee shall be custodian of such, holding them in trust for the Convention to be managed, controlled, and administered by the Executive Committee in accordance with the direction, general or specific, of the Convention. Rules governing the handling of securities set out in Article VII, Section 3, of the Constitution shall be observed by the Executive Committee.
- (3) To receive and receipt for all current funds of the Convention including all undesignated cooperative missionary, educational, and benevolent funds and all current special or designated funds for missionary, educational, and benevolent purposes which may be contributed by individuals, churches, societies, corporations, associations, or state conventions; and to disburse all undesignated funds, according to the percentages fixed by the Convention and all the designated funds according to the stipulations of the donors. The Executive Committee shall keep the accounts of all inter-entity groups and shall disburse their funds on requisition of the properly constituted officers of the inter-entity organization.
- (4) To recommend to the Convention a time and place and to have oversight of the arrangements for the meetings of the Convention, with authority to change both the time and place of the meetings in accordance with the provisions of Article XI, Section 3, of the Constitution.
- (5) To act in an advisory capacity on all questions of cooperation among the different entities of the Convention, and among the entities of the Convention and those of other conventions, whether state or national.
- (6) To present to the Convention each year a consolidated and comprehensive financial statement of the Convention and all its entities, which statement shall show the assets and liabilities of the Convention and all its entities, and all the cash and other receipts of the year.
- (7) To present to the Convention a comprehensive budget for the Convention and for all its entities, which budget shall include the budgets of all the entities of the Convention whether or not they receive Cooperative Program funds, as reviewed by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall

- recommend the amount of Convention funds which may be allocated to each cause. It shall not recommend any direct allocation of funds for any entity or institution for which the Convention does not elect trustees or directors.
- (8) To conduct the general work of promotion and the general work of publicity for the Convention in cooperation with the entities of the Convention. The Executive Committee shall provide a Convention relations service and a Convention news service to interpret and publicize the overall Southern Baptist ministry. These services shall be available to support the work of all Convention entities and ministries.
 - (9) To maintain open channels of communication between the Executive Committee and the trustees of the entities of the Convention, to study and make recommendations to entities concerning adjustments required by ministry statements or by established Convention policies and practices, and, whenever deemed advisable, to make recommendations to the Convention. The Executive Committee shall not have authority to control or direct the several boards, entities, and institutions of the Convention. This is the responsibility of trustees elected by the Convention and accountable directly to the Convention.
 - (10) To make its own bylaws in keeping with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Convention in carrying out these instructions to the Executive Committee; to hold meetings whenever deemed necessary; to make reports of all meetings to the Convention; to notify all the boards, entities, and institutions of the actions of the Convention and to advise with them as to the best way of promoting all the interests of the Convention.
 - (11) To derive, in accordance with the action of the Convention in Atlanta in 1944, the expenses of the Executive Committee from the Operating Budget of the Convention specifically established for this purpose and formally approved by the Convention.
 - (12) To utilize an appropriate report format which will enable the Executive Committee to obtain from the entities adequate and comparable information about ministry plans, accomplishments, and financial data.
 - (13) To maintain an official organization manual defining the responsibilities of each entity of the Convention for conducting specific ministries and for performing other functions. The manual shall cite the actions of the Convention that assigned the ministries and other functions to the entity. The Executive Committee shall present to the Convention recommendations required to clarify the responsibilities of the entities for ministries and other functions, to eliminate overlapping assignments of responsibility, and to authorize the assignment of new responsibilities for ministries or functions to entities.
 - (14) To send copies of the minutes of the Executive Committee to the heads of all Southern Baptist Convention entities, and copies of the minutes of all entities shall be sent to the office of the Executive Committee.
- 19. Committee on Committees:** A Committee on Committees, composed of two (2) members from each qualified state or defined territory, shall be appointed by the president, in conference with the vice presidents, of whom one (1) shall be designated as chairperson. Persons named to the Committee on Committees shall have been resident members for at least three (3) years of Southern Baptist churches either geographically within the states or affiliated with the conventions of the states from which they are appointed. Members so named shall be notified by the president in writing, at least 45 days before the meeting of

the Convention. Their names shall be released by the president to Baptist Press no later than 45 days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention, and their names shall be published in the first issue of the Convention Bulletin. The president may fill any vacancies on the committee when those originally named do not attend the Convention. This committee shall nominate all special committees authorized during the sessions of the Convention not otherwise provided for. All special Convention committees shall transfer, upon their discharge, all official files to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention.

- 20. Committee on Resolutions:** At least seventy-five (75) days in advance of the Convention, the president, in conference with the vice presidents, shall appoint a Committee on Resolutions to consist of ten (10) members, any two (2) of whom shall have served as Committee on Resolutions members during the prior year, and any three (3) of whom shall be members of the Executive Committee. One of the Committee members shall be designated as chairperson. Members so named shall be notified by the president in writing at least 75 days before the annual meeting of the Convention. The names of the members of the Committee on Resolutions shall be released by the president to Baptist Press no later than 75 days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention, and their names shall be published in the first issue of the Convention Bulletin.

In order to facilitate thorough consideration and to expedite the Committee's work, all proposed resolutions shall:

- 1) Be submitted to the Committee for review and consideration as early as March 15, but no later than May 15; the initial report of the Committee on Resolutions shall be released no later than seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting of the Convention, and the final report shall be published in the first day's *Bulletin*,
- 2) Be addressed to the Committee on Resolutions in care of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention at its registered or e-mail address (electronic copies are preferred),
- 3) Be typewritten, titled, and dated,
- 4) Be accompanied by a letter from a church qualified to send a messenger to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention certifying that the person submitting the resolution is a member in good standing, and
- 5) Include complete contact information for both the person submitting it, and his or her church.

No person may submit more than three resolutions per year. The Committee on Resolutions shall prepare and submit to each annual meeting of the Convention only such resolutions the Committee recommends for adoption. Such resolutions may be based upon proposals received by the Committee or may originate with the Committee. Only resolutions recommended by the Committee may be considered by the Convention, except the Convention may, by a 2/3 vote, consider any other resolution properly submitted to the Committee.

A list of the titles of all properly submitted proposed resolutions shall be printed in the Convention *Bulletin*. The list shall include the name and city of each person properly submitting a resolution, and the disposition of each proper submission.

- 21. Committee on Order of Business:** The Committee on Order of Business, a standing committee, shall consist of seven (7) members – the president of the Convention and six (6) other members, two (2) of whom shall be elected each year for a term of three (3) years and two (2) of whom shall be persons not employed full time by a church or denominational entity. No member of the committee can succeed himself or herself. The committee shall

suggest an order of business for the next meeting of the Convention. It shall provide periods of time during the Convention for the introduction of all matters requiring a vote not scheduled on the agenda, and, when introduced (unless the Convention then gives its unanimous consent for its immediate consideration) shall fix times for the consideration of the same. All such matters of business shall be introduced to the Convention by the end of the afternoon session of the first day of the annual meeting of the Convention. When practicable it shall give notice in the Convention Bulletin of the substance of the motion or resolution and the time for its consideration. If unable to give notice in the Bulletin, it shall cause announcement to be made from the floor of the Convention of the same, action thereon to be taken at the subsequent session of that Convention. The committee shall recommend to the Convention a preacher for the succeeding Convention sermon and the director of music. The director of music shall be elected annually and the term of office is limited to two (2) years. The director of music shall not be eligible for re-election until as much as one (1) year has elapsed from the time a successor is named.

- 22. Notification of Committees:** Within thirty (30) days after the Convention adjourns, the recording secretary shall notify the members of all committees of their appointment and all chairpersons of their position and furnish each one a list of that committee. The recording secretary shall also notify all board members, trustees of institutions, and commission members of their appointment.
- 23. The Great Commission Council:** The Great Commission Council shall serve as the organization through which the various entities and the auxiliary of the Convention will correlate their work. The membership of the Great Commission Council shall be composed of the chief executives of The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, the auxiliary of the Convention, and the entities named in Bylaw 14.
- A. The work of the Council shall be in keeping with its prescribed functions. It will neither launch nor execute ministries; it will formulate no policies, except those which govern its own activities. Its chief purpose is that of consultation, communication, and cooperation. The scope of its work will be that of:
- (1) finding ways of mutual re-enforcement in assigned responsibilities and distinctive ministries;
 - (2) considering and seeking to avoid overlapping endeavors and competitive ministries;
 - (3) considering the means for helping the churches fulfill their divine mission in Bible teaching, evangelism, world missions, stewardship, Christian training, education, and Christian social service;
 - (4) finding ways for effective cooperation in promoting the total work of the Southern Baptist Convention;
 - (5) considering the significant factors affecting the work and witness of the denomination; and
 - (6) seeking to find the means through which the power of the Christian gospel may be comprehensively and effectively applied to the ends of the earth.
- B. In the matter of relationships:
- (1) the Council is not, itself, an entity of the Convention;
 - (2) it has no authority over the several entities;

- (3) its decisions are not binding on the entities, since the boards and commissions must retain the authority to reach the decisions required to carry out their own responsibilities;
 - (4) its relationship to the entities is purely advisory;
 - (5) the Council does not report formally either to the Convention or the Executive Committee, nor does the Convention refer matters directly to the Great Commission Council;
 - (6) it may receive from and refer to the Executive Committee problems for consideration;
 - (7) it is not required to take formal action with regard to matters referred to it by the Executive Committee in serving as a channel of cooperation and correlation relative to the work of the Convention; and
 - (8) the Council sustains no direct relationship with state conventions or local churches, but it will strive to be mindful of the needs of the churches as well as the functions and ministries of the several conventions.
- 24. Ministry Statements:** The ministry statements of the entities as approved by the Southern Baptist Convention and published in the 1967 Annual and subsequently amended, renamed, or rewritten, and approved by the Convention, express the policy of the Convention with respect to the ministries of the entities of the Convention.
- 25. New Enterprises and Abolishing of Entities:** No new enterprise, involving expenditure of money, shall be authorized by the Convention except upon favorable action by the Convention in two (2) succeeding annual meetings; provided, however, that this restriction shall not apply to a recommendation of an entity of the Convention concerning its own work. No entity shall be discontinued without a majority vote at two (2) successive annual sessions of the Convention.
- 26. Procedures:**
- A. *Method of Procedure for Entities:* To facilitate consideration and discussion of the interests of the Convention, the following method of procedure is hereby adopted:
 - (1) Published reports of the boards, institutions, commissions, and standing committees shall be consolidated into the *Book of Reports* for distribution to messengers on their enrollment;
 - (2) Reports of all special commissions and standing committees, containing recommendations for the Convention's action, shall be included in the *Book of Reports*; and
 - (3) All recommendations of each board, institution, commission, special committee, and standing committee shall be published together at the end of its report before they may be considered by the Convention. In case any entity or committee shall be unable to comply with this requirement, its recommendation shall be printed in the Convention *Bulletin* before consideration and action by the Convention. Recommendations by an entity which are not published in the *Book of Reports* or the Convention *Bulletin* shall, when presented to the Convention, be referred to the Executive Committee or to such other committee as the Convention may direct.
 - B. *Procedure for Motions of Messengers Concerning Entities:* Motions made by messengers dealing with internal operations or ministries of an entity shall be referred to the elected board of the entity for consideration and report to the constituency and

to the next annual meeting of the Convention for action with the exception that the Committee on Order of Business may be instructed by a two-thirds vote to arrange for consideration at a subsequent session of the same Convention, subject to provision of Bylaw 21.

On all matters referred by the Convention, entities shall respond in writing at the close of their report in the *Book of Reports* and *Annual*, giving specific information on:

- (1) how the matter referred was considered;
- (2) how it was reported to the constituency; and
- (3) any actions on the matter taken by the entity or action proposed to the Convention.

- C. *Limitations:* The last one-third of the time allotted for consideration of every entity report before the Convention shall be reserved for discussion from the floor.

27. Publicity and Press Representative:

- A. Boards, institutions, and special committees dealing with matters of general importance and interest shall have in the hands of the press representative of the Convention, at least one (1) week in advance, copies of digests of their report to be submitted to the approaching Convention.
- B. The press representative shall cooperate with the representatives of the secular press in furnishing intelligent, accurate, and creditable reports of this Convention while in session.

- 28. Closing of Books:** Entities of the Convention shall close their books and accounts and have them audited as of midnight September 30, or in the case of the seminaries, July 31, or in the case of GuideStone Financial Resources, December 31. Supplemental reports for the period between the closing of the books of the entities and the Convention session should be included in the reports to the Convention.

- 29. Participation in Convention Affairs:** To promote broad participation in the affairs of the Convention, a person need not be a registered messenger to serve as a Convention committee member or volunteer (such as an usher or teller), but must be a member of a church cooperating with the Convention.

30. Representation From Qualified States and Territories:

- A. When the cooperating Baptist churches in a state or defined territory have fifteen thousand (15,000) members, an initial application may be filed for representation on the Executive Committee, the Committee on Committees, and the Committee on Nominations.
- B. When the cooperating Baptist churches have twenty thousand (20,000) members, an updated application may be filed for representation on the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, and LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, unless otherwise provided in the Board's charter.
- C. When the cooperating Baptist churches have twenty-five thousand (25,000) members, an updated application may be filed for representation on GuideStone Financial Resources, the commissions, and institutions, unless otherwise provided in the commission's or institution's charter, and on the standing committees of the Convention, all as provided by the Bylaws of the Convention.
- D. The application in each instance shall be filed with the Executive Committee, through its president, prior to its February meeting. The application shall contain information as specified by the Executive Committee.

- E. Upon receiving the initial application, the Executive Committee shall investigate all matters pertaining to the request and make a recommendation to the Southern Baptist Convention at its next annual meeting. If the recommendation of the Executive Committee is favorable to the application, a copy of the recommendation shall be forwarded to the president of the Southern Baptist Convention and the chairman of the Committee on Committees prior to the next annual meeting of the Convention.
 - F. Upon receipt of the favorable recommendation of the Executive Committee on the initial application in (1) above, the president of the Convention, in conference with the vice presidents, shall appoint two (2) persons from the state or territory to serve as members of the Committee on Committees, and the Committee on Committees shall nominate two (2) persons from the state or territory to serve on the Committee on Nominations, all conditional upon the approval of the application by the Southern Baptist Convention.
 - G. Those elected by the Convention shall be immediately eligible to begin their appropriate terms of service.
- 31. Adoption of Reports:** The adoption of recommendations contained in reports to the Convention shall not bind the Convention on any other matters in the body of the reports; but the Convention reserves the right to consider and amend the body of all reports.
- 32. As to Violation of State Laws:** All incorporated entities of the Convention shall be required to comply with the letter and spirit of the Constitution insofar as it is not in conflict with the statute law of the state in which an entity is incorporated, and nothing herein contained shall be construed to require any such incorporated entity to act and carry on its affairs in conflict with the law of the state of its incorporation. In case any action of any entity of the Convention is found to be a violation of the law of the state of its incorporation, said action shall be reported by that entity to the Convention for appropriate action.
- 33. Charters of Entities, Subsidiaries, and Ancillary Organizations:** The charters of all entities of the Convention shall provide that the trustees or directors of such entities be elected by the Convention, and that the charters may not be further amended without the prior consent of the Convention. The charters of all subsidiaries of any entity of the Convention shall provide that they may not be further amended without the prior consent of the Convention or its Executive Committee. No entity of the Convention shall establish a subsidiary corporation or any other legal entity or form for conducting its affairs, nor acquire a controlling interest or greater than a 25% interest in any other corporation or business enterprise, until the Convention or its Executive Committee has approved the same and its governing instruments. An entity of the Convention shall not undertake through a subsidiary or by any other means any action which, if undertaken by the entity itself, would violate the Constitution, Bylaws, or Business and Financial Plan of the Convention.
- 34. Quorum:** The quorum for conducting business during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention shall be a minimum of 25 percent of those duly registered and seated messengers.
- 35. Trustee Absenteeism:**
- A. Upon the request of any entity, the Convention may remove from office any trustee/director of that entity who has excessive unexcused absences. Following such removal, the Convention shall elect a successor to complete the term of office of the person removed.
 - B. An entity shall give written notice of any request to remove a trustee/director for absenteeism at least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the meeting of the Convention which shall consider the removal. The notice shall be given to the president

of the Convention, the president/chief executive officer of the Executive Committee, the chairman of the Committee on Nominations, and the individual trustee/director whose removal shall be considered.

- C. If required by state law, an entity shall incorporate this procedure in its charter or bylaws prior to requesting the Convention to remove any trustee.

36. Amendments: The Bylaws may be amended pursuant to Bylaw 21 by a two-thirds majority vote except that Bylaw 14, which lists the entities and auxiliary of the Convention, may be amended only by a majority vote of two (2) successive annual meetings.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL PLAN _____

The Business and Financial Plan highlights important corporate practices and clarifies expectations among the Southern Baptist Convention, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Convention entities. This plan describes selected policies but depends on Convention-elected boards of trustees to assure prudent and responsible operations, consistent with their governing documents, policies, and procedures. (SBC Constitution Article XII)

I. The Cooperative Program

- A. *Priority.* The financial health of the Convention is predicated on generous giving by churches through the Cooperative Program, and the Convention appeals to churches to prioritize giving through the Cooperative Program.
- B. *Promotion.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities will promote the Cooperative Program and appeal to churches to prioritize giving through the Cooperative Program. The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will report annually on its promotion of the Cooperative Program in the Book of Reports and the Convention Annual. (SBC Bylaws 5, 6, 26)
- C. *Receiving and Disbursing.* All funds collected by state conventions for Convention causes should be forwarded at least monthly by each state convention to the Executive Committee, which is the disbursing agent for the Convention. The Executive Committee will remit all funds distributable to the Executive Committee and each Convention entity twice per month. The Executive Committee will publish monthly reports on receipts from state conventions and disbursement to Convention entities. (SBC Bylaw 18)

II. Accountability and Responsibility

- A. *Convention Accountability.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity's respective board of trustees will approve and submit an annual Accountability Letter to the Convention's Recording Secretary by June 1 for inclusion in the Convention Annual, signed by the Chairperson of the Board and the entity President, certifying their entity's compliance with the Business and Financial Plan in the preceding fiscal year. (SBC Bylaw 5) As a courtesy, the Executive Committee will provide an annual, updated sample Accountability Letter for each Convention entity, which will include the pertinent aspects of the Business and Financial Plan which require a written response.
- B. *Trustee Responsibility.*
 - 1) The business and financial integrity of the Executive Committee and each Convention entity is the responsibility of their respective board of trustees, elected by the Convention and entrusted with oversight of the entity on behalf of the Convention. (SBC Constitution Article VI and VII, SBC Bylaw 15 and 18)

- 2) The Executive Committee and each Convention entity's board of trustees will provide the necessary oversight to ensure their respective organization complies with applicable state and federal laws, their charter and bylaws, the Convention's constitution and bylaws, and implements operational policies and practices consistent with biblical stewardship and Christian ethics. (SBC Constitution Article XII and SBC Bylaw 32)

III. Audits and Related Issues

A. *Independent Audits.* (SBC Constitution, Article VII)

- 1) The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will maintain their respective financial records in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and have their financial records audited annually by an independent Certified Public Accountant in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards. (SBC Bylaw 28)
 - 2) The Executive Committee for itself, and the board of trustees of each Convention entity will appoint an audit committee which will operate independently of the organization's management and should include at least one member who is competent by training and experience in financial matters.
 - 3) The audit committee for each respective organization will ensure the annual audit, auditor's opinion, and all communications from the auditors are communicated with their board of trustees.
 - 4) Convention entities will forward the following to the Executive Committee after the completion of their audit:
 - a. Audited Financial Statements. If the auditor's opinion includes anything other than an unmodified opinion, the entity's president will submit a written response to the modification of the auditor's opinion to its board of trustees and to the Executive Committee to be published as part of the entity's audit report in the Convention Annual.
 - b. Significant Deficiency or Material Weakness. If a Significant Deficiency or Material Weakness in internal controls is reported by the auditor, those matters along with the entity's response will be reported to the Executive Committee and published as part of the entity's audit report in the Convention Annual.
 - c. The Executive Committee and Convention entities will make their annual audited financial statements, including the audit opinion, publicly available. The report(s) will be published with the Convention entities' ministry reports and in the Convention Annual. (SBC Bylaws 6, 26)
- B. *Consolidated Financial Statement.* Based on each Convention entity's audited financial statements, the Executive Committee will publish in the Book of Reports and Convention Annual a consolidated financial statement of the Convention and its entities showing total assets, liabilities, net assets, revenue, and expenses. (SBC Bylaw 18)
- C. *Restricted Funds.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities will properly account for all of their respective restricted funds (trust funds, designated funds, restricted funds, etc.) separately from unrestricted funds. These funds may not be used for any purpose other than the one specified. (SBC Constitution, Article X)
- D. *Indebtedness and Liabilities.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity must obtain the approval of its respective board of trustees for all debt and liabilities

that have a maturity date more than 5 years from inception of the debt or liability. Each Convention entity will report annually to the Executive Committee on debt or liabilities meeting this criterion during the preceding fiscal year. (SBC Bylaws 18)

- E. *Inter-entity Cooperation.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities may utilize applicable services from each other or share resources with each other when consistent with sound business practices.
- F. *New Entities.* No new entity involving expenditure of money will be authorized by the Convention except upon favorable action by the Convention in two (2) succeeding annual meetings. (SBC Bylaw 25)
- G. *Conflicts of Interest.*
 - 1) The Executive Committee and Convention entities will not make any loan from funds of the entity to any employee without having first obtained the approval of its respective board of trustees.
 - 2) Employees and/or trustees of the Executive Committee or any Convention entity will not appropriate any entity's corporate property or business opportunities for personal use. Each entity will refrain from any business transaction with a trustee or employee or participate in a business enterprise in which a trustee or employee has an interest. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the respective entity's board of trustees.
 - 3) The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will obtain annual conflict-of-interest statements completed by its respective members, trustees, and applicable employees.

IV. Budgeting

- A. *Fiscal Year.* The fiscal year for the Convention, the Executive Committee, and Convention entities, except as noted below, will be October 1 through September 30. The fiscal year for the seminaries will be August 1 through July 31. The fiscal year for GuideStone Financial Resources will be January 1 through December 31. (SBC Bylaw 28)
- B. *SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget.* The Executive Committee will recommend to the Convention a Cooperative Program allocation budget which distributes Cooperative Program funds for use by the Convention, the Executive Committee, and Convention entities. (SBC Bylaw 18)
- C. *SBC Comprehensive Budget.* The Executive Committee will publish in the Convention Annual a comprehensive budget summary for the Convention and its entities. (SBC Bylaw 18)
- D. *SBC Executive Committee and SBC Convention Operating Budget.* The Executive Committee will recommend to the Convention an SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget including all Convention operating expenses and Executive Committee operating expenses (SBC Bylaw 18)
- E. *Budget Approval.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will have their annual operating budget approved by their respective board of trustees.
- F. *Budgeting Principles.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities will develop their respective budgets in accordance with sound financial planning principles based on projected Cooperative Program allocations, estimates of forecasted receipts, and anticipated expenses which can be substantiated by previous experience and reasonable projections about future opportunities.

V. Compensation and Expenses

A. *Compensation.*

- 1) Presidential compensation will be set by the respective board of trustees for the Executive Committee and each Convention entity in accordance with entity bylaws and personnel policies and based on industry-comparable compensation information, industry-appropriate salary scales, and consideration of the president's performance, tenure, and experience. (SBC Constitution Article VI)
- 2) Other employee compensation will be determined by the Executive Committee and each Convention entity based on their respective internal compensation processes and personnel practices which should include industry-comparable compensation information and industry-appropriate salary scales, along with consideration of the assignment, performance, tenure, and experience of each employee in relation to the Convention entity's mission.
- 3) The Executive Committee and each Convention entity's board of trustees will affirm in the annual Accountability Letter the appropriateness of its compensation policies and procedures in accordance with the respective entity's bylaws and personnel policies.

B. *Expenses.*

- 1) Presidential expenses will not be excessive and will be reasonable and prudent, in keeping with biblical stewardship, including every personal benefit of any kind (and specifically including housing, travel, automobile, and staffing). Presidential expenses will clearly accomplish each entity's respective mission, ministry assignments, and responsibilities assigned by the entity's board of trustees.
- 2) Presidential expense reporting will be reviewed annually by each entity's respective board of trustees, using their respective procedures, who will affirm the appropriateness of those expenses in the annual Accountability Letter.

- C. *Disclosure.* Compensation processes, personnel practices, and salary structures vary among Convention entities and will be described, upon written request to the respective entity's chief financial officer, to any member in good standing of a church in friendly cooperation with the Convention, in keeping with reasonable processes and procedures designed to ensure confidentiality, and consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

VI. Fund-Raising

- A. *Financial Appeals to Churches.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities will not solicit direct financial support from a church in friendly cooperation with the Convention. The only exceptions are the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will affirm meeting this requirement in the annual Accountability Letter.
- B. *Other Financial Contributions.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities may receive contributions from individuals, foundations, and other organizations. Contributions will not be solicited or received that compromise the mission or reputation of the Convention or any Convention entity.
- C. *Reporting.* The Executive Committee and Convention entities will report annually on the total amount of contribution revenue received in the preceding fiscal year, along with combined categorized information about the sources of that revenue.

VII. Safeguarding Assets

- A. *Internal Controls.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will adopt internal controls for safeguarding assets which provide reasonable assurance regarding prevention or timely detection of unauthorized use, acquisition, or disposition of those assets.
- B. *Control of Funds.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will hold funds in a prudent manner, including appropriate internal controls and maintained with a reputable and qualified custodian.
- C. *Insurance and Bonding.* All persons who transfer or safeguard funds or securities of the Executive Committee or any Convention entity will be adequately insured and bonded.
- D. *Financial Liquidity.* The Executive Committee and each Convention entity will maintain a sufficient level of financial assets available to fund general expenses throughout the fiscal year. Financial liquidity is disclosed as a part of the annual audit. If any concerns about financial liquidity are cited in the annual audit, the entity should address those concerns as part of their response to the audit.

VII. Publication: The Business and Financial Plan will be published annually in the Convention Annual, following the Bylaws of the Convention.

IX. Amendments: The Business and Financial Plan may be amended by two-thirds of the messengers present and voting at any time except during the last session of the Annual Meeting of the Convention.

ORGANIZATION MANUAL

PREFACE

In 1960 the Southern Baptist Convention adopted the following bylaw. It shall be the function of the Executive Committee:

~ To maintain an official organization manual defining the responsibilities of each agency of the Convention for conducting specific programs and for performing other functions. The manual shall cite the actions of the Convention that assigned the programs and other functions to the agency. The Executive Committee shall present to the Convention recommendations required to clarify the responsibilities of the agencies for programs and other functions, to eliminate overlapping assignments of responsibility, and to authorize the assignment of new responsibilities for programs or functions to agencies.

— *SBC Annual 1960*, p. 51

Beginning that same year the Convention approved program statements for all the entities. These were brought into uniform styling and form by another bylaw approved by the Convention in 1967:

14. Program Statements. The program statements of the agencies as approved by the Southern Baptist Convention and published in the 1967 Annual and subsequently amended express the policy of the Convention with respect to the programs of the agencies of the Convention.

— *SBC Annual 1967*, p. 61

On November 1, 1967 the Executive Committee published its first complete organization manual. Since then the Convention has made numerous changes in the ministries (formerly programs) of the entities which render this first manual out of date.

In the following pages are presented all of the ministries, as approved by the Convention. At the bottom of the last page for each one of them, you will find the dates when these ministries were approved, or when changes were made.

Please note also on page 42 the procedures adopted by the Executive Committee for changing ministry statements.

On June 20, 1995, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted **Covenant for a New Century** with an introduction to ministry statements as follows:

Ministry statements assigned to each Southern Baptist Convention entity are rooted in and measured by our shared mission. The charge assigned to each entity is founded upon the conviction that the entities of the Convention exist to serve the churches, their ministries, and mission. The statements have been developed in order that each entity will serve the Convention's mission to the greatest standard of faithfulness and the maximum standard of stewardship.

These ministry statements will replace the present program statements as assigned to the entities of the Convention. The ministry statements, a statement of cooperation, a listing of relationships for cooperation, and details of the process of cooperation will be published in the *Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention* as required by SBC Bylaw 20,(5),(m). [Note: This is now Bylaw 18E (13).]

Beginning in the fall of 2006, *The Organization Manual* began being printed in each year's SBC Annual and SBC *Book of Reports* among the other governing documents of the Convention to keep Southern Baptists apprised of each entity's charge. (See Item 160, 2006 SBC Annual, p. 94, and pp. 204-5.)

THE INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

MISSION

The International Mission Board exists to assist the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention to be on mission with God in penetrating the unevangelized world outside the United States and Canada with the gospel and making Christ known among all people.

MINISTRIES

- 1. Assist churches by evangelizing persons, planting Baptist churches, and nurturing church planting movements among all people groups outside the United States and Canada; and, provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.**

Develop and maintain a systematic strategy for gospel proclamation and planting churches that will result in the rapid reproduction and multiplication of local indigenous congregations that will make the gospel accessible to all persons among every ethno-linguistic people group; assist national conventions and unions in providing programs of discipleship and leadership training; develop and distribute relevant electronic and print media that support evangelism and church planting, and facilitate the translation and distribution of the Bible, Scripture portions, and other materials in indigenous languages.

- 2. Assist churches in sending and supporting Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers by enlisting, equipping, and enabling them to fulfill their calling.**

Enlist, appoint, equip, and provide support for God-called Southern Baptist missionaries to serve in long-term and short-term channels of service who give evidence of piety, zeal for their Master's kingdom, conviction of truth as held by Southern Baptists, and giftedness for cross-cultural witness; inform, promote, and provide opportunities for Southern Baptist volunteers to assist in the ministries of the International Mission Board through projects of various duration, and provide resources and materials for training and equipping these volunteers.

- 3. Assist churches and partners to mobilize Southern Baptists to be involved in international missions through praying, giving, and going.**

Inform, challenge, and work in partnership with local churches, associations, state conventions, and other SBC entities to enable Southern Baptists to fulfill the Great Commission overseas by facilitating involvement in prayer strategies, encouraging generous and sacrificial giving to missions through the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and promoting channels for volunteer and missionary service.

- 4. Assist churches in fulfilling their international missions task by developing global strategies, including human needs based ministries, and providing leadership, administrative support, and financial accountability for implementation of these strategies.**

Provide and maintain an organizational structure and support staff with appropriate leadership and financial management that are designed to implement a comprehensive program to reach the whole world with the gospel through direct evangelism and creative access platform ministries; utilize hospitals, clinics, community health, agricultural, and other development programs, hunger relief and disaster response to meet human needs and share the gospel.

RELATIONSHIPS

The International Mission Board will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

Amended June 17, 2003. See *SBC Annual 2003*, pp.50-51.

Amended June 14, 2011. See *SBC Annual 2011*, pp. 62-64.

THE NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

MISSION

The North American Mission Board exists to work with churches, associations and state conventions in mobilizing Southern Baptists as a missional force to impact North America with the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism and church planting.

MINISTRIES

- 1. Assist churches in planting healthy, multiplying, evangelistic Southern Baptist churches in the United States and Canada; and provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the International Mission Board in assisting churches to plant churches for specific groups outside the United States and Canada.**

Work in partnership with churches, associations, and state conventions, and the International Mission Board to start new congregations with a priority to reach population centers and underserved people groups; lead a missional movement to encourage Southern Baptist churches to become church planting congregations.

- 2. Assist churches in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples.**

Equip Southern Baptists for faithful evangelism; encourage churches in evangelism and discipleship; implement direct evangelism projects; prioritize spiritual awakening; develop an evangelism strategy for reaching North America with the Gospel.

- 3. Assist churches by appointing, supporting and assuring accountability for missionaries serving in the United States and Canada.**

Appoint, approve, support and supervise missionaries assigned to accomplish the ministries of NAMB; endorse chaplains; enlist and assist bi-vocational ministers in mission service.

- 4. Assist churches by providing missions education and coordinating volunteer missions opportunities for church members.**

Develop organizations, services, and materials for establishing, enlarging, and improving missions and ministry learning and involvement experiences in churches; assist in volunteer mission involvement.

- 5. Assist churches by providing leadership development.**

Equip pastors for effective congregational leadership, contextual evangelism, and church planting; connect pastors to pastors through leadership development; encourage pastors as they serve in diverse congregational settings.

- 6. Assist churches in relief ministries to victims of disaster and other people in need.**

Provide appropriate assistance and coordination in service to state Baptist conventions, when multi-state and national disaster responses are needed; coordinate with federal government as well as national disaster relief entities to ensure good response coordination on behalf of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief; direct and assist Christian social ministries.

- 7. Assist churches in reaching and mobilizing college and university students in the United States and Canada.**

Promote the advancement of college and university ministry efforts in evangelism, discipleship, churchmanship, leadership development, and missions mobilization through collaborative partnerships.

RELATIONSHIPS

The North American Mission Board will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.
Amended June 14, 2011. See *SBC Annual 2011*, pp. 64-68.
Amended June 16, 2015. See *SBC Annual 2015*, pp. 93-95.
Amended June 15, 2022. See *SBC Annual 2022*, pp. 88-90.

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

MISSION

Lifeway Christian Resources exists to assist churches and believers to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best provider of relevant, high quality, high value Christian products and services.

MINISTRIES

1. Assist churches in the development of church ministries.

Provide programs, products, and services that help churches grow in the areas of Bible study, discipleship, music, worship, administration, media/library, recreation, fellowship, and family ministry; consult with church leaders regarding total church growth concepts, strategies, and resources.

2. Assist churches in ministries to college and university students.

Contribute to the effectiveness of churches and to individual spiritual growth by developing a program, products, and services that may be used in establishing, administering, enlarging, and improving ministry with college students, faculty, and administration.

3. Assist churches with Christian schools and home school ministries.

Provide consultation, products, and services needed by churches with Christian schools and members educating through home schools.

4. Assist churches in ministries to men and women.

Contribute to the effectiveness of churches and to individual spiritual growth by developing a program, products, and services that may be used in establishing, administering, and improving ministries to men and women.

5. Assist churches through the operation of conference centers and camps.

Develop, promote, and operate conference and resident camp facilities useful to Southern Baptist Convention entities, state conventions, associations, and churches in establishing, enlarging, and improving their ministries.

6. Assist churches through the publication of books and Bibles.

Produce, publish, and distribute products, including books, of Christian content and purpose and Bibles that contribute to the effectiveness of churches and individuals.

7. Assist churches through the operation of Lifeway Christian Stores.

Serve people and the churches, associations, state conventions, and agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention by distributing appropriate products through Lifeway Christian Stores.

8. Assist churches through church architecture consultation and services.

Develop products and services needed by Southern Baptist churches, associations, state conventions, and denominational entities to assist them in planning, financing, furnishing, equipping, and utilizing property.

9. Assist churches in capital fund raising.

Provide leadership to churches in securing funds for capital needs.

10. Assist churches by conducting research and compiling statistics.

Conduct research and compile statistics on matters relating to, and of interest to, Southern Baptists, noting future trends and possible effects on church practice, productivity, witness, and health, and tender reports to the Executive Committee for review and possible report or action in an SBC annual meeting.

RELATIONSHIPS

Lifeway Christian Resources will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the *Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention*.

Original program statement approved June 2, 1965. See *SBC Annual 1965*, pp. 61-67.

Finally approved May 31, 1967. See *SBC Annual 1967*, pp. 61, 103-117.

New statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 6, 1972. See *SBC Annual 1972*, pp. 60-67.

Amended June 12, 1973. See *SBC Annual 1973*, p. 55.

Amended June 11, 1974. See *SBC Annual 1974*, p. 60.

Amended June 10, 1975. See *SBC Annual 1975*, pp. 59-60.

Amended June 15, 1976. See *SBC Annual 1976*, pp. 36-37.

Amended June 13, 1984. See *SBC Annual 1984*, pp. 49-50.

Revised June 11, 1985. See *SBC Annual 1985*, pp. 38-58.

Amended June 13, 1989. See *SBC Annual 1989*, pp. 36-37.

Amended June 4, 1991. See *SBC Annual 1991*, pp. 46, 48.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

Amended June 13, 2006. See *SBC Annual 2006*, pp. 62-64.

Amended June 12, 2007. See *SBC Annual 2007*, pp. 68-69.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES

MISSION

Southern Baptist Theological Seminaries exist to prepare God-called men and women for vocational service in Baptist churches and in other Christian ministries throughout the world through programs of spiritual development, theological studies, and practical preparation in ministry.

MINISTRIES

1. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Provide for students who have at least the equivalent of high school education biblical, theological, historical, and practical studies designed to develop ministerial competencies; provide extension study opportunities for persons in church vocations who have not completed college or seminary training, persons not in church vocations who desire theological training which is academically oriented, and seminary-trained persons desiring opportunities for continuing education.

2. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Provide theological education leading to a Master's Degree for those whom the churches recommend as called by God for a lifetime of leadership in the various ministries of the churches and other areas of Christian service.

3. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Provide advanced theological education for persons who have earned a basic theological degree and have given evidence of capacity for effective performance in ministry to the churches.

4. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Provide graduate theological education for persons who have completed their basic theological studies and have given evidence of academic ability and capacity for research, writing, and teaching.

5. Assist churches through the administration of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

Operate the official Southern Baptist Convention library and archives as a national center for the study of Baptists.

RELATIONSHIPS

Southern Baptist seminaries will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention.

First program statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention May 20, 1964. See SBC Annual 1964, pp. 60-62.

Finally approved May 31, 1967. See SBC Annual 1967, pp. 61, 120-122.

Amended June 12, 1973. See SBC Annual 1973, pp. 69-70.

Amended June 11, 1974. See SBC Annual 1974, pp. 57-59.

Completely rewritten and approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 12, 1979. See SBC Annual 1979, pp. 37-39.

Amended June 15, 1993. See SBC Annual 1993, p. 74.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See SBC Annual 1995, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

THE ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION _____

MISSION

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission exists to assist the churches by helping them understand the moral demands of the gospel, apply Christian principles to moral and social problems and questions of public policy, and to promote religious liberty in cooperation with the churches and other Southern Baptist entities.

MINISTRIES

1. Assist churches in applying the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life.

Provide research, information resources, consultation, and counsel to denominational entities, churches, and individuals with regard to the application of Christian principles in everyday living and in the nation's public life.

2. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

Represent Southern Baptists in communicating the moral and ethical positions of the Southern Baptist Convention to the public and to public officials.

3. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

Provide information resources that inform and equip churches for active moral witness in their communities.

4. Assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting religious liberty.

Provide information and counsel to denominational entities, churches, and individuals regarding appropriate responses to religious liberty concerns; represent Southern Baptists in communicating the positions of the Southern Baptist Convention on religious liberty issues to the public and to public officials.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

GUIDESTONE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

MISSION

GuideStone Financial Resources exists to assist the churches, denominational entities, and other evangelical ministry organizations by making available retirement plan services, life and health coverage, risk management programs, and personal and institutional investment programs.

MINISTRIES

- 1. Assist churches, denominational entities, and other evangelical ministry organizations by making available retirement plan programs for their ministers and employees.**

Make available retirement plan programs and related services for ministers and denominational employees.

- 2. Assist churches, denominational entities, other evangelical ministry organizations, and like-minded individuals, by making available life and health coverage and risk management programs.**

Make available medical, life, and disability programs and other risk management programs to respond to the needs of churches, denominational entities, other evangelical ministry organizations, and like-minded individuals.

- 3. Assist churches and denominational entities through relief to Southern Baptist ministers and Southern Baptist denominational employees.**

Make available a channel through which Southern Baptists can extend systematic financial help to Southern Baptist ministers and denominational employees and their widows who are in need and to interpret the channel to Southern Baptists for the purpose of eliciting support.

- 4. Assist churches, denominational entities, other evangelical ministry organizations, and like-minded investors, by making available a personal investment program to their ministers and employees and their spouses, and to like-minded investors.**

Make available personal investment program and related services to further enhance the financial security of ministers and other employees and their spouses.

- 5. Assist churches and denominational entities by making available institutional investment services through cooperative agreements with state Baptist foundations (or state Baptist conventions where no foundation exists). Assist other evangelical ministry organizations by making available institutional investment services.**

Develop mutually beneficial relationships with the state Baptist conventions and foundations and the Southern Baptist Foundation to assist Southern Baptist institutions in the states and the Southern Baptist Convention entities with their institutional investment needs. Develop relationships with other organizations that will enhance investment opportunities.

RELATIONSHIPS

GuideStone Financial Resources will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention.

First program statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention May 8, 1963. See *SBC Annual 1963*, pp. 55-56.

Amended May 25, 1966. See *SBC Annual 1966*, pp. 56-57.

Finally approved May 31, 1967. See *SBC Annual 1967*, pp. 61, 118-119.

Amended June 14, 1988. See *SBC Annual 1988*, pp. 52-53.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

Amended June 13, 2000. See *SBC Annual 2000*, pp. 66-67.

Amended June 12, 2007. See *SBC Annual 2007*, pp. 74-75.

Amended June 11, 2013. See *SBC Annual 2013*, pp. 64-66.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MISSION

The SBC Executive Committee seeks to serve churches as they prioritize, elevate, and accelerate the vision of reaching every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state, and every nation through collaborative partnership, cooperation, and generosity.

MINISTRIES

1. Assist churches through conducting and administering the work of the Convention not otherwise assigned.

The SBC Executive Committee serves as the fiduciary, the fiscal, and the executive entity of the Convention in all its affairs not specifically committed to some other board or entity. Furthermore, the SBC Executive Committee is authorized, instructed, and commissioned to act for the Convention ad interim in all matters not otherwise provided for. It also serves as the managing agent of the Southern Baptist Convention Building.

2. Assist churches by providing a Convention news service.

Provide regular news releases about Southern Baptists; tell and celebrate stories of what God is doing through Southern Baptist churches and ministries; serve as the Convention's press representative; coordinate news operations for annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention.

3. Assist churches by developing and strengthening cooperative relationships.

Interpret the Southern Baptist Convention to internal and external publics; strengthen relationships with state convention, associational, and other Southern Baptist affinity groups; and pursue cooperative relationships with theologically likeminded churches to fulfill our missional vision of reaching all people for Jesus Christ and making disciples of all the nations.

4. Assist churches, organizations, and individuals with investment management and generosity.

Encourage and partner with Southern Baptist and other evangelical churches, entities, organizations, and individuals to invest in Kingdom causes by providing comprehensive investment, fiduciary, and planning services for maximum impact for Southern Baptist or other evangelical causes.

5. Assist churches by promoting the Cooperative Program and celebrating other cooperative giving.

In consultation with cooperating state conventions and Southern Baptist Convention entities, prioritize, elevate, and accelerate giving through the Cooperative Program as the most effective means of mobilizing Southern Baptist churches and extending our collective efforts to reach every person with the gospel and make disciples of all nations; celebrate all cooperative giving to achieve these ends.

6. Assist churches in stewardship education.

Produce, develop, publish, and distribute products that help Southern Baptists to grow in commitment to Jesus Christ by applying biblical principles of stewardship.

7. Assist churches through elevating the ministry of prayer.

Provide strategic leadership to lift up and promote coordinated prayer for spiritual awakening, ministry effectiveness, and the completion of the Great Commission.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Executive Committee will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the *Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention*.

First program statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention May 31, 1967. See *SBC Annual 1967*, pp. 61, 55-56.

Revised statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 9, 1992. See *SBC Annual 1992*, pp. 43-46.

First ministry statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention June 20, 1995. See *SBC Annual 1995*, p. 46 and pp. 165-173.

Amended June 13, 2006. See *SBC Annual 2006*, pp. 62-64.

Amended June 15, 2010. See *SBC Annual 2010*, p. 66.

Amended June 15, 2021. See *SBC Annual 2021*, pp. 62-64.

WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION

Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention

MISSION

Woman's Missionary Union assists churches in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy of missions in order that a church can fulfill its total mission in the world. Woman's Missionary Union challenges Christian believers to understand and be radically involved in the mission of God.

MINISTRIES

1. Assist churches in the development of Woman's Missionary Union organizations.

Provide programs, products and services that help churches and individuals grow in missions awareness and involvement.

2. Assist churches in Christian development for women in missions.

Assist churches by providing plans and materials that contribute to the individual woman's spiritual growth and missions consciousness.

3. Assist churches through the publication and distribution of magazines and products.

Produce, publish, and distribute magazines and products that help churches and individuals grow in commitment to Jesus Christ by applying biblical concepts of missions.

RELATIONSHIPS

Woman's Missionary Union will work within the Southern Baptist Convention entity relationship guidelines approved by the Great Commission Council and the Executive Committee and printed in the *Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention*.

As an auxiliary, Woman's Missionary Union's program statement is at the discretion of the WMU. The Southern Baptist Convention does not assign ministries to Woman's Missionary Union.

SBC ENTITY RELATIONSHIP GUIDELINES

1. Entities are to relate to each other cooperatively and voluntarily out of deep convictions of faith in Christ and the urgency to serve him effectively in assisting churches.
2. Entities are to respect Ministry Statements as both directives and restraints in the same manner as the SBC Bylaws and Business and Financial Plan and honor them in working together to assist churches in their ministries.
3. Entities are to work together through established processes of the Great Commission Council to determine needs of churches and ways to meet these needs, and wherever appropriate, to coordinate the activities and resources involved in meeting them.
4. Entities are to work together for mutual reinforcement and for promoting the work of the Convention.
5. Entity administrators should reinforce with their trustees the principle that entity trustees are to represent the interests of the entire Convention as well as those of the entity.
6. Entity administrators are to ensure that their employees understand the need and the processes for working cooperatively with the personnel of all entities in the spirit of Matthew 7:12 (CSB) *“Therefore, whatever you want other to do for you do also the same for them,”* and are committed to honor them in day-to-day operations.
7. Entities exploring the possibility of launching new programs, projects, or services are to provide information to the Great Commission Council and/or its committees and other entities whose assignment(s) may be closely related to the new venture in order to avoid conflict with another entity’s Ministry Statement and to allow for timely review, feedback, clarification of relationships, and discovery of supportive activities by other entities.
8. Entities are to communicate with state convention, association, and church leadership in keeping with their Ministry Statements and in order to provide churches maximum service with minimum confusion.
9. Entities are to initiate relationships with or respond to initiatives of organizations outside the Southern Baptist Convention according to their respective Ministry Statements and assist, as needed, by directing such organizations to appropriate entities.

PROCEDURE FOR CHANGING MINISTRY STATEMENTS

- A. Amendments to ministry statements may be initiated by any messenger or by the SBC Executive Committee. Amendments may also be initiated by any SBC entity at any time with the approval of the entity’s trustees. Conferences with Executive Committee staff on matters of form and relationship are desirable. Where relationships are involved, these are discussed with all parties concerned before submission to the Executive Committee.
- B. Proposed changes in Ministry Statements are circulated to SBC entity executives, state convention executives, and state Baptist paper editors before presentation to the Executive Committee for approval as recommendations to the SBC.
- C. Amendments are presented to the appropriate committee of the Executive Committee and all parties have opportunity to express their point of view before that committee makes its final recommendation to the Executive Committee. Ministry Statement changes approved by the Executive Committee are recommended to the Southern Baptist Convention at its next meeting.
- D. All ministry changes must be approved by a majority vote of the messengers present in the Southern Baptist Convention in session.

— Approved by the SBC Executive Committee, February 20, 2007

LEGAL NAMES AND ADDRESSES

of CORPORATIONS RELATED to the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention

901 Commerce Street, Nashville, TN 37203

The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention

P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230
3806 Monument Avenue, Richmond, VA 23230

The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Inc.

4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30022

Lifeway Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027

GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 2200, Dallas, TX 75244

Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention

3210 E Guasti Road, Ontario, CA 91761

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc.

5001 North Oak Trafficway, Kansas City, MO 64118

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126

The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc.

P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27587
120 South Wingate Street, Wake Forest, NC 27587

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280

The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

P.O. Box 22000, Fort Worth, TX 76122
2001 W Seminary Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76115

The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention

901 Commerce Street, Suite 550, Nashville, TN 37203

Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention

P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283
100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, AL 35242

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE

PREAMBLE

Baptists are a people of deep beliefs and cherished doctrines. Throughout our history we have been a confessional people, adopting statements of faith as a witness to our beliefs and a pledge of our faithfulness to the doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture.

Our confessions of faith are rooted in historical precedent, as the church in every age has been called upon to define and defend its beliefs. Each generation of Christians bears the responsibility of guarding the treasury of truth that has been entrusted to us [2 Timothy 1:14]. Facing a new century, Southern Baptists must meet the demands and duties of the present hour.

New challenges to faith appear in every age. A pervasive anti-supernaturalism in the culture was answered by Southern Baptists in 1925, when the *Baptist Faith and Message* was first adopted by this Convention. In 1963, Southern Baptists responded to assaults upon the authority and truthfulness of the Bible by adopting revisions to the *Baptist Faith and Message*. The Convention added an article on “The Family” in 1998, thus answering cultural confusion with the clear teachings of Scripture. Now, faced with a culture hostile to the very notion of truth, this generation of Baptists must claim anew the eternal truths of the Christian faith.

Your committee respects and celebrates the heritage of the *Baptist Faith and Message*, and affirms the decision of the Convention in 1925 to adopt the *New Hampshire Confession of Faith*, “revised at certain points and with some additional articles growing out of certain needs” We also respect the important contributions of the 1925 and 1963 editions of the *Baptist Faith and Message*.

With the 1963 committee, we have been guided in our work by the 1925 “statement of the historic Baptist conception of the nature and function of confessions of faith in our religious and denominational life” It is, therefore, quoted in full as a part of this report to the Convention:

- (1) That they constitute a consensus of opinion of some Baptist body, large or small, for the general instruction and guidance of our own people and others concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- (2) That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. As in the past so in the future, Baptists should hold themselves free to revise their statements of faith as may seem to them wise and expedient at any time.
- (3) That any group of Baptists, large or small, have the inherent right to draw up for themselves and publish to the world a confession of their faith whenever they may think it advisable to do so.
- (4) That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.
- (5) That they are statements of religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are not to be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other realms of life.

Baptists cherish and defend religious liberty, and deny the right of any secular or religious authority to impose a confession of faith upon a church or body of churches. We honor the principles of soul competency and the priesthood of believers, affirming together both our liberty in Christ and our accountability to each other under the Word of God.

Baptist churches, associations, and general bodies have adopted confessions of faith as a witness to the world, and as instruments of doctrinal accountability. We are not embarrassed to state before the world that these are doctrines we hold precious and as essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice.

As a committee, we have been charged to address the “certain needs” of our own generation. In an age increasingly hostile to Christian truth, our challenge is to express the truth as revealed in Scripture, and to bear witness to Jesus Christ, who is “*the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*”

The 1963 committee rightly sought to identify and affirm “certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.” Our living faith is established upon eternal truths. “Thus this generation of Southern Baptists is in historic succession of intent and purpose as it endeavors to state for its time and theological climate those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us.”

It is the purpose of this statement of faith and message to set forth certain teachings which we believe.

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God’s revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16, 27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6, 19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10, 12; Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11, 13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8, 14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18, 29-39; 10:9-10, 13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8, 14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10, 19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its two scriptural offices are that of pastor/elder/overseer and deacon. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder/overseer is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10, 16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6, 9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3, 8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1, 13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15, 17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Additional information relating to the *Baptist Faith and Message*, including an introduction, preamble, committee information, commentary, multilingual versions, and more, can be found online at bfm.sbc.net.



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM



Your giving through the
Cooperative Program is
making a difference.



Scan to learn more about the Cooperative Program
and for CP resources.

sbc.net/cp