



BOOK OF REPORTS OF THE 2024 SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

prepared for the

**One Hundred Sixty-Sixth Session
One Hundred Seventy-Ninth Year**

meeting in

**Indianapolis, Indiana
June 11-12, 2024**

2024 CONVENTION OFFICERS

President

C. Bart Barber

First Vice President

Jay Adkins

Second Vice President

Kason Branch

Recording Secretary

Nathan A. Finn

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Don Currence

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Jeff Iorg

FUTURE SBC ANNUAL MEETING SITES

Dallas, Texas – June 10–11, 2025

Orlando, Florida – June 9–10, 2026

Salt Lake City, Utah – June 8–9, 2027

Indianapolis, Indiana – June 13–14, 2028

FOREWORD

Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice. (Romans 15:5–6, CSB)

Thousands of Southern Baptists will come together this summer for our Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana. Echoing the above verses, our theme will be “One Mind, One Voice.”

The Annual Meeting is many good things at the same time. It is a time of fellowship with brothers and sisters from around our nation. It is a worship gathering as we sing praises to the Lord, pray together, and respond to the preached Word of God. It is a missions-sending conference as we commission missionaries to proclaim Christ to the ends of the earth. It is a celebration as we hear ministry reports from our various entities.

The Annual Meeting is all these good things, but it remains first and foremost a business meeting. Baptists have always affirmed the autonomy of the local church. Every congregation is free to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit—ideally with open Bibles, soft hearts, and calloused knees. But as Southern Baptists, we are deeply committed to cooperative autonomy. Like-minded churches choose to partner together for kingdom advance, knowing that we can accomplish more together than we can apart. So, we convene every summer, for a two-day meeting, wherein we conduct our shared business as we seek to obey the Great Commission together. This is the Southern Baptist way.

The Book of Reports is a valuable resource for helping messengers prepare for our kingdom business meeting in Indianapolis. It offers a snapshot of how the Holy Spirit has been at work in and through our various denominational ministries over the past year. You will find relevant data and helpful written narratives to help you interpret those numbers. This information enables Southern Baptists to better pray for these ministries, to encourage denominational servants in their labors, and to hold our entities accountable to their ministry assignments. As in recent years, the information contained in the Book of Reports is also available in the SBC app, which can be downloaded to your electronic device.

Join me in perusing the Book of Reports, praising God for his faithfulness, and praying for this summer’s Annual Meeting.

Nathan A. Finn
Recording Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention

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

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**ONE MIND
ONE VOICE**
 **ROMANS 15:5-6**

SBC ANNUAL MEETING

INDIANAPOLIS | JUNE 11-12, 2024

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ninety-Seventh Annual Report



SBC | EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

901 Commerce Street, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

PHILLIP J. ROBERTSON, Chairman

JEFF IORG, President and Chief Executive Officer

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention presents this ninety-seventh annual report. There are 86 persons from 38 states and regions who are elected as members of the SBC Executive Committee. The SBC Executive Committee met as follows during 2023-24:

August 21, 2023	Video Conference Call
August 29, 2023	Video Conference Call
September 18-19, 2023	Nashville, TN
November 3, 2023	Video Conference Call
November 16, 2023	Video Conference Call
February 19-20, 2024	Nashville, TN
March 21, 2024	Dallas, TX

- Officers of the SBC Executive Committee** – The Officers of the Board 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: Philip J. Robertson, Louisiana

Vice Chair: Anthony L. (Tony) Dockery, California

Secretary: Pamula H. (Pam) Reed, North Carolina

Committee on Convention Missions and Ministry

Chair: Mollie Duddleston, Arkansas

Vice Chair: Ted Murphy, Tennessee

Secretary: Tampa J. (Tam) Nannen, Texas

Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development

Chair: Adam Wyatt, Mississippi

Vice Chair: David A. Twiddy, Florida

Secretary: Nick W. Sandefur, Kentucky

Committee on Convention Events and Strategic Planning

Chair: Carolyn J. Fountain, Louisiana

Vice Chair: John C. (Jay) Ridenour, III, New England

Secretary: Kathryn C. (Katie) Creery, Georgia

Committee on Southern Baptist Relations

Chair: Adron Robinson, Illinois

Vice Chair: Roger T. (Todd) Stiles, Iowa

Secretary: Brian A. Cloys, Mississippi

2. **Cooperative Program Giving** - The giving record of Southern Baptists during the fiscal year October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023, is as follows:

	<u>2022 - 2023</u>	<u>2021 - 2022</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Total CP as a % of			
Undesignated Gifts ²	4.48%	4.59%	(2.39%)
Total Undesignated Gifts	\$ 10,027,338,119	\$ 9,962,910,482	1.92%
Total Cooperative Program ²	\$ 449,039,992	\$ 457,417,314	(1.83%)
State Convention Share			
of Total CP ²	\$ 260,534,184	\$ 261,516,321	(0.38%)
SBC Share of Total CP ²	\$ 188,505,808	\$ 195,900,993	(3.77%)

3. **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>
2018-19	\$ 9,600,108,179	(0.01%)	\$ 462,299,010	(0.17%)
2019-20	\$ 9,531,225,749	(0.72%)	\$ 455,553,027	(1.46%)
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%)
Average Change 1980s		7.58%		5.10%
Average Change 1990s		5.42%		4.91%
Average Change 2000s		4.12%		4.82%
Average Change 2010s		(0.21%)		0.71%
Average Change Last 5 Years		0.88%		(0.61%)

<u>Year</u>	<u>SBC \$ Share of Total CP²</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>SBC % Share of Total CP²</u>	<u>Total CP² as a % of Undesignated Gifts</u>
2018-19	\$190,967,403	(0.15%)	41.31%	4.82%
2019-20	\$187,806,636	(1.66%)	41.23%	4.78%
2020-21	\$187,775,922	(0.02%)	41.01%	4.68%
2021-22	\$195,900,993	4.33%	42.83%	4.59%
2022-23	\$188,505,808	(3.77%)	41.98%	4.48%
Average Change 1980s		7.98%	37.47%	10.50%
Average Change 1990s		2.06%	37.04%	8.73%
Average Change 2000s		2.22%	37.16%	6.80%
Average Change 2010s		(0.15%)	39.34%	5.22%
Average Change Last 5 Years		(0.25%)	41.67%	4.67%

Notes:

- 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 2021-22 for comparative purposes. Over the last 20 years Total Receipts averaged 7.25% more than Total Gifts.
- For 2012-13 through 2022-23, 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.

[^] Sections 2 and 3 were prepared by the SBC Executive Committee based on information from the 2022 ACP Statistical Summary which was prepared by Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources (April 25, 2023).

4. **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 2022-2023 Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program Allocation Budget was approved. The 2022-2023 SBC Cooperative Program funds distributed include funds received from state conventions and identified by them as Cooperative Program Allocation Budget funds.

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>
International Mission Board	\$ 96,611,746.52	\$ 100,420,424.00
North American Mission Board	\$ 43,677,478.74	\$ 45,399,354.00
Gateway Seminary	\$ 3,492,710.29	\$ 3,740,975.00
Midwestern Seminary	\$ 7,903,685.56	\$ 8,005,347.00
New Orleans Seminary	\$ 6,672,134.95	\$ 6,928,740.00
Southeastern Seminary	\$ 7,011,879.89	\$ 7,366,320.00
Southern Seminary	\$ 10,383,510.31	\$ 10,655,318.00
Southwestern Seminary	\$ 6,546,185.73	\$ 6,969,550.00
Historical Library and Archives	\$ 459,964.66	\$ 478,098.00
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	\$ 3,162,257.13	\$ 3,286,922.00
<u>SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating</u>	<u>\$ 5,930,393.24</u>	<u>\$ 7,201,561.00</u>
Grand Totals	<u>\$ 191,851,947.02</u>	<u>\$ 200,452,609.00</u>

5. **2023 Southern Baptist Convention Statistical Summary** ⁽¹⁾ – A summary of the statistical record for the Southern Baptist Convention for 2022–23 is as follows:

(See the page 9 for chart of Southern Baptist Statistics by State Convention.)

<u>Item/Statistic</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Numeric Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
State Conventions	41	41	0	0.00%
Associations	1,076	1,093	(17)	(1.56%)
Churches	46,906	47,198	(292)	(0.62%)
Church-type Missions Operating ⁽²⁾	2,474	2,644	(170)	(6.43%)
Total Members	12,982,090	13,223,122	(241,032)	(1.82%)
Total Baptisms	226,919	180,177	46,742	25.94%
Ratio of Baptisms: Total Members	1:57	1:73		—
In-Person Weekly Worship				
Average Attendance	4,050,668	3,804,490	246,178	6.47%
In-Person Sunday School/Bible Study/				
Small Group Average Attendance	2,429,175	2,334,665	94,510	4.05%

Other 2023 Items – Not Asked by All State Conventions ³

<u>Item/Statistic</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Other Additions ⁽⁴⁾	175,026	152,752
Online Weekly Worship		
Average Participation ⁽⁵⁾	1,832,765	1,062,870
Undesignated Receipts ⁽⁶⁾	\$ 10,027,338,119	\$ 9,962,910,482
Total SBC Mission Expenditures ⁽⁷⁾	\$ 798,423,737	\$ 730,245,493

Notes for this table can be found on the following page

Notes:

1. Data reported for the 2023 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 2022.
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 2023 due to the fact that not all state conventions asked the item or did so in a way not comparable with the standard definition. Thus, comparisons between the two years may not be appropriate. See the Notes in the 2022 SBC Statistical Summary for specific details to determine if a comparison is desirable.
4. Florida Baptist Convention did not ask this item or the information necessary to obtain the item.
5. Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, Florida Baptist Convention, Georgia Baptist Mission Board, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Northwest Baptist Convention and South Carolina Baptist Convention did not ask this item or the information necessary to obtain the item.
6. Florida Baptist Convention did not ask this item or the information necessary to obtain the item.
7. Arizona Southern Baptist Convention and Florida Baptist Convention did not ask this item or the information necessary to obtain the item.

Prepared by: Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources, 200 Powell Pl Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027, April 24, 2024

Church Plants, Replants, New Affiliates, and Campuses for 2023, SBC: 840**

Source: Reports from State Directors of Missions compiled by the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, GA (see page 95); 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 2022, partners reported 639 new church plants, 106 replants, 126 new affiliations, and 46 new campuses.

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
International Missionaries	3,521	3,592	-71	-2%
North American Missionaries	2,961 ⁽¹⁾	2,469 ⁽¹⁾	492	19.9%*
— Chaplains ⁽²⁾	3,350	3,721	-371	-10.0%

⁽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.

- 6. Special Missions Offerings** – Southern Baptists contributed a special missions offering total of \$191,085,199 through the SBC Executive Committee for North American and International Missions in 2022-2023. The record is as follows:

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>Amount Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions	\$ 131,329,425	\$ 137,346,386	\$(6,016,961)	-4.58%
Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions	<u>\$ 59,755,774</u>	<u>\$ 59,907,119</u>	\$ (151,345)	-0.25%
Total	<u>\$ 191,085,199</u>	<u>\$ 197,253,505</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 - \$196.1 million; Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions - \$70.2 million.

- 7. Global Hunger Relief Funds** – Southern Baptists contributed a total of \$3,018,000 for global hunger relief through the SBC Executive Committee in 2022-2023. The record is as follows:

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Received by SBC Executive Committee	3,018,000	2,046,475	32.19%
Forwarded to International Mission Board	2,414,400	1,685,337	30.20%
Forwarded to North American Mission Board	603,600	361,138	40.17%

2023 SBC STATISTICS BY STATE CONVENTION

SBC and State Conventions	Associations	Churches	Baptisms	Other Admissions	Total Membership	Worship Attendance	Online Weekly Participation	Bible Study Attendance	Average Sunday School Attendance	Undesignated Receipts	Total SBC Mission Expenditures
Alabama	73	3,164	12,150	15,174	753,653	229,351	239,670	151,495	\$588,380,886	\$69,778,030	
Alaska	17	1,904	10,140	8,131	5,700	906	3,960	\$10,890,452	\$1,108,233		
Arizona	13	462	1,961	1,581	30,932	9,631	19,344	\$85,392,657	See Footnote (6)		
Arkansas	42	1,367	88	7,459	8,073	37,495	69,094	\$295,042,167	\$37,089,751		
California	28	1,976	599	3,797	328,428	60,501	\$280,487,862	\$3,377	\$13,858,590		
Colorado	11	303	53	1,096	16,843	3,464	9,337	\$37,248,361	\$2,426,440		
Dakota	6	80	4	237	3,243	796	2,589	\$1,138,287	\$691,908		
Florida	47	2,601	29,063	768,457	406,142	See Footnote (6)	232,314	See Footnote (6)	See Footnote (6)		
Georgia	84	3,294	21,177	23,387	1,142,325	See Footnote (6)	218,139	\$1,047,163,386	\$68,563,363		
Hawaii-Pacific	7	120	9	375	632	2,373	3,907	\$100,500,939	\$1,462,569		
Illinois	33	820	51	3,350	15,871	56,608	34,652	\$100,015,194	\$10,410,999		
Indiana	14	376	46	1,092	63,350	5,736	16,125	\$33,623,754	\$3,756,850		
Iowa	11	316	3	1,444	773	2,819	14,375	\$50,488,364	\$5,161,275		
Kansas-Nebraska	12	297	112	2,103	829	4,394	18,841	\$69,414,968	\$5,610,728		
Kentucky	66	2,303	10,968	8,338	540,894	169,753	96,993	\$333,911,763	\$32,425,528		
Louisiana	38	1,377	8,331	6,439	428,605	125,300	32,638	\$322,466,626	\$31,827,639		
Maryland-Delaware	13	272	13	1,439	682	24,394	10,816	\$79,967,498	\$5,783,185		
Michigan	13	492	1,907	1,099	71,484	30,149	10,335	15,238	\$24,148,658		
Minnesota-Wisconsin	7	179	11	879	214	17,325	113,523	\$430,140,676	\$1,528,705		
Mississippi	65	2,042	11	8,458	9,696	501,424	154,576	45,360	\$51,607,879		
Missouri	58	1,701	6,465	6,498	422,771	135,351	31,541	86,534	\$318,388,165		
Montana	5	119	636	191	7,362	9,004	2,111	4,364	\$13,354,515		
Nevada	3	152	9	1,033	746	22,055	13,526	4,099	\$31,185,667		
New England	7	369	2	2,082	1,571	32,246	8,120	14,544	\$12,142,949		
New Mexico	12	321	7	2,649	790	54,822	31,129	4,517	\$48,436,912		
New York	10	513	1	1,762	1,327	28,984	7,608	12,191	\$12,029,005		
North Carolina	77	4,291	15,088	16,376	989,872	333,572	88,975	176,099	\$827,642,876		
Northwest	13	434	36	1,121	979	44,757	27,556	18,353	\$53,667,064		
Ohio	15	644	44	3,381	67,806	51,495	9,443	31,448	\$73,662,283		
Oklahoma	40	1,679	25	10,142	7,083	498,794	147,991	20,315	\$379,989,439		
Oregon-South Jersey	2	268	21	1,602	1,203	20,315	10,139	9,817	\$32,999,429		
Puerto Rico	1	50	113	175	2,225	2,325	369	1,297	\$1,736,276		
South Carolina	42	1,986	10,430	8,461	611,027	220,596	130,089	\$58,162,053	\$39,586,675		
Tennessee	65	2,986	19,639	16,224	849,306	281,981	75,008	\$630,978,347	\$68,685,327		
Texas	98	6,367	712	22,294	20,456	469,552	920,085	\$1,613,069,139	\$111,960,235		
TGCT	90	4,367	712	14,942	13,338	1,898,162	214,870	\$1,190,669,985	\$72,817,686		
SBCT	96	2,728	3	14,152	12,185	1,175,818	887,969	175,119	\$882,634,038		
Utah-Idaho	9	128	32	593	668	12,946	2,915	5,200	\$16,106,253		
Virginia	36	1,856	27	6,468	5,342	162,476	88,069	\$178,622,079	\$30,556,231		
VBGV	36	1,150	23	2,219	317,862	16,325	37,739	\$178,665,296	\$13,250,232		
SBCV	7	188	4	4,754	3,350	159,722	56,678	\$221,640,254	\$19,119,590		
West Virginia	10	796	11	592	22,453	9,220	2,466	\$19,060,670	\$1,110,304		
Wyoming	93	4	223	235	4,428	675	1,607	\$5,555,106	\$726,499		
Sub-Total	1,077	46,233	2,317	234,700	180,720	12,690,650	4,076,732	2,692,307	\$9,384,575,616	\$769,464,958	
Adjustments ^(a)	-1	383	157	-7,781	-26,069	-859,542	10,692	564,762	602,503	\$29,258,779	
Grand Total	(1)	1,076	46,906	2,474	219,940	12,982,090	4,050,668	1,832,765	\$10,027,338,119	\$798,423,737	

NOTES:

- All information as of April 24, 2024.
- 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 was an attempt to increase the number of churches and church-type missions.
- Total impacted by 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.
- Arizona Southern Baptist Convention did not ask the following questions: a. Total baptisms necessary to obtain the item. Total SBC Mission Expenditures.
- Florida Baptist Convention did not ask the following items: a. or the information necessary to obtain the item; Other or Additions-Online Weekly Worship Average Participation; b. Undesignated Receipts; and Total SBC Mission Expenditures.
- Missouri Baptist Convention, Ohio Baptist Convention, Missouri Board, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Northwest Baptist Convention and South Carolina Baptist Convention did not ask the following item or the information necessary to obtain the item: Online Weekly Worship Average Participation.
- Adjustments were made to state convention totals as detailed in previous years.
- Two state conventions exist within the state of Texas. The Texas summary line does not show the arithmetic sum of the two state convention figures, because some congregations are related to both state conventions, and 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 related to both state conventions, and their numbers are reflected in the totals for both state conventions.
- This line includes four types of adjustments to the data: a. The removal of duplicate data caused by 882 congregations that are related to more than one state convention. b. The removal of data from 253 congregations affiliated with a state convention but not related to the SBC. c. Congregations affiliated with the SBC but not related to a state convention. d. The addition of data carried forward from previous ACP reporting cycles for 16,446 congregations that did not report an item in 2023.
- Adjustments to the national totals (and some state convention totals) were made to account for non-reported items from data reported in prior years. a. Totals include carried forward Total Membership from the last year the congregation reported in Person Weekly Worship Average Attendance and In Person Sunday School/Bible Study Attendance and In Person Sunday School/Bible Study Attendance from the prior 2 years. b. Totals include carried forward Total Membership from the most recently reported data from the prior 2 years. c. Totals include carried forward Undesignated Receipts and Total SBC Mission Expenditures from the most recently reported data from the prior 4 years.

Prepared by Lifeway Research, Lifeway Christian Resources, 200 Powell Pl., Ste 100, Brentwood, TN 37027, April 24, 2024.

8. Southern Baptist Congregations by Ethnicity and Race

Ethnicity/Race	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2022
Asian	649	881	1,271	1,551	1,747	1,936	2,108	2,184
Black	1,007	1,489	2,322	3,038	3,534	3,747	3,895	3,899
Hispanic	1,189	1,587	2,195	2,827	3,361	3,429	3,361	3,317
Other	668	914	1,109	1,300	1,562	1,735	1,923	1,912
Anglo	35,937	37,203	39,268	40,168	40,738	40,597	39,408	38,530
Unknown	2,349	1,353						
Total	41,799	43,427	46,165	48,884	50,942	51,444	50,695	49,842

Source: Southern Baptist Ethnic Research Network, BaptistResearch.com

9. Ethnic Participation on SBC Committees and Trustee Boards

SBC Committees	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Other	Anglo
Committee on Committees	4	7	9	2	46
Committee on Resolutions	0	1	1	0	8
Registration Committee	1	2	0	1	18
Committee on Nominations	3	3	3	3	56
Committee on Order of Business	0	1	0	0	5
Credentials Committee	1	2	0	0	6
Total	9	16	13	6	139

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	6
ERLC	1	4	1	0	28
GuideStone	0	7	1	0	30
IMB	1	4	3	2	70
Lifeway	2	8	2	0	34
NAMB	1	4	3	1	41
Gateway Seminary	4	3	3	0	29
Midwestern Seminary	1	5	1	0	28
New Orleans Seminary	2	7	1	1	29
Southeastern Seminary	1	4	1	1	23
Southern Seminary	0	3	0	0	39
Southwestern Seminary	2	5	2	2	25
Total	18	64	18	9	444

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.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS OF THE SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The following actions of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee are reported for information.

1. **Election of Jeff Iorg as SBC Executive Committee President and CEO** – On March 21, 2024, the SBC Executive Committee, during a special-called meeting in Dallas, TX, unanimously voted to elect Jeff Iorg as the eighth president of the SBC Executive Committee. Iorg served as president-elect from March 22, 2024, until first official day as SBC Executive Committee president and CEO, on Monday May 13, 2024.
2. **U.S. Department of Justice Investigation** – On March 6, 2024, Jonathan Howe, SBC Executive Committee interim president and CEO, announced that on February 29, 2024, SBC leaders learned the U.S. Department of Justice had concluded its investigation of the SBC Executive Committee with no further action to be taken. Legal counsel for the SBC confirmed the investigation into the SBC as a whole remains open and ongoing.
3. **2024-2025 Proposed SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget** – (See **Recommendation 1**, page 37.) During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee adopted the 2024-2025 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget in the amount of \$190,250,000 and will recommend the budget to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024, for adoption.
4. **2024-2025 Proposed SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget** – (See **Recommendation 2**, page 38.) During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee adopted the 2024-2025 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget in the amount of \$10,235,000 and will recommend the budget to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024, for adoption.
5. **Loan Status Reports** – During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee received as information loan status reports from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
6. **Report of Audits of SBC Entities** – During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee received as information that the Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development received and reviewed the 2023 required communications submitted to the SBC Executive Committee as outlined by Article XIII of the SBC Business and Financial Plan. It also received the 2022-23 audited financial statements of the SBC Executive Committee as prepared by the firm of Batts Morrison Wales & Lee, P.A., and acknowledged that these audited financial statements were made a part of the official records of the SBC Executive Committee. The SBC Executive Committee also received as information that the Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development acknowledged that the final audited financial statements would be made a part of the official records of the SBC Executive Committee upon receipt of the final report from Batts Morrison Wales & Lee, P.A.
7. **Committee on Order of Business: Vacancy** – During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, acting for the Convention ad interim, elected Myles Adamson, member of Favor City Church, Las Vegas, Nevada, to fill the vacancy on the Committee on Order of Business, for a partial term ending in 2025.

8. **Election of Southern Baptist Foundation Trustees** – During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee directed its president, as the agent designated to represent it as the Member of the Southern Baptist Foundation, to elect Bob Dawkins, Memphis, Tennessee, and Key Holleman, Nashville, Tennessee, as directors of the Southern Baptist Foundation, for terms of office expiring 2027 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 2024.
9. **SBC Parliamentarian Contract** – During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee received as information that the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee would secure the full execution of a contract with Al Gage to serve as the chief parliamentarian during the next annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024.
10. **Meeting Hall Expenses of the SBC Pastors’ Conference** - During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee requested the SBC Pastors’ Conference reimburse the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee \$100,000 for the year 2024 for its use of meeting space and the meeting hall and facilities at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. The staff was requested to continue documenting the variable cost attributed to the SBC Pastors’ Conference. The SBC Executive Committee requested the SBC Pastors’ Conference leadership to recognize the significant indirect support provided through the Cooperative Program Allocation Budget to help offset the costs of the SBC Pastors’ Conference annually.
11. **SBC Calendar of Activities** - During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee approved the 2029 SBC Calendar of Activities.

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 Indianapolis
- **June 10-11:** WMU Missions Celebration
- **June 12-13:** SBC Annual Meeting (Indianapolis, IN)
- **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

12. **Executive Committee Legal Strategies Committee Appointed** - During its special-called, video conference call, November 16, 2023, the SBC Executive Committee approved an ad hoc study committee be formed to review the following: (1) Biblical justice and due process doctrine as it relates to our current legal system (including statutes of limitations); (2) broader, long-term defense strategy for the Executive Committee and Southern Baptist Convention moving forward, and (3) the process by which the Executive Committee and the Southern Baptist Convention approve significant legal decisions.

Josh Hetzler, chair of the Executive Committee Legal Strategies Committee, reported to the SBC Executive Committee during its February 19-20, 2024, meeting.

13. **Recognitions** – During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the following were recognized for their contributions as state convention leaders:

- Quin Williams served the Wyoming Southern Baptist Mission Network as executive director from November 2018 through August 2023.
- John Yeats served Missouri Baptist Convention as executive director-treasurer from October 2011 through October 2023.

14. **Public Statement Regarding Internal Investigation, and Approved Separation Agreement for Willie McLaurin** – During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee considered and approved a confidential post-employment agreement with McLaurin. McLaurin was named to the position of Interim President and CEO on February 1, 2022, following the resignation of Ronnie W. Floyd in October 2021.

During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee approved the following public statement regarding an internal investigation conducted after the resignation of Willie McLaurin.

“Based on the findings from the internal investigation, while it is clear that Willie McLaurin engaged in both academic and professional fraud during his tenure with the Executive Committee, no evidence was found of financial wrongdoing or direct financial harm to the Executive Committee. While the Executive Committee acknowledges the collateral, reputational harm and indirect financial impact resulting from McLaurin’s misrepresentations, the Executive Committee does not plan to proceed with taking any legal action against McLaurin at this time.”

15. **SBC Executive Committee President and CEO Job Description** – During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting the SBC Executive Committee received as information that the Officers of the Board, acting as the Personnel Committee, approved revisions to the job description for the SBC Executive Committee President and CEO. The suggested revisions were received from the SBC Executive Committee President Search Team and from the Officers of the Board and were considered and approved by the Officers of the Board in their September 17, 2023, meeting.
16. **Members Code of Conduct** - During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee adopted a Members Code of Conduct.
17. **SBC Executive Committee Bylaw Amendment Regarding Voting Requirements** – During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee bylaws were amended as follows:

(Addition of text is indicated by underline and deletion of text is indicated by ~~strikethrough~~.)

4.3 Election, Appointment, and Term. The Officers of the Board shall be elected by ~~the affirmative vote of~~ a majority vote of the trustees present ~~in office~~ and are eligible to serve no more than two full terms that are consecutive. The Officers of the Board shall assume office on the third day following their election and serve for one year and thereafter until their successors assume office.

The revised bylaw reads as follows:

4.3 Election, Appointment, and Term. The Officers of the Board shall be elected by a majority vote of the trustees present and are eligible to serve no more than two full terms that are consecutive. The Officers of the Board shall assume office on the third day following their election and serve for one year and thereafter until their successors assume office.

18. **Due Diligence Vetting for Prospective Hires** – During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee members received as information that the Officers of the Board had considered and approved a Due Diligence Vetting for Prospective Hires process for all SBC Executive Committee hires, director level and above.
19. **Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force Updates** – The SBC Executive Committee heard reports from Mike Keahbone, September 18-19, 2023, and Josh Wester, February 19-20, 2024, regarding the actions of the Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force.
20. **Review of SBC Entity Fund Raising Reports** - During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee received as information the Annual Fund Raising Activity Reports of the entities of the Southern Baptist Convention.
21. **Credentials Committee Report and Recommendations** – During its September 18-19, 2023, and February 19-20, 2024, meetings, upon the recommendation of the SBC Credentials Committee, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention adopted the following recommendations:

- **Matoaka Baptist Church, Ochelata, Oklahoma**

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the SBC Executive Committee during its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, that Matoaka Baptist Church, Ochelata, Oklahoma, no longer be considered a church in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention based on a lack of intent to cooperate in resolving concerns regarding discriminatory behavior on the basis of ethnicity.

- **West Hendersonville Baptist Church, Hendersonville, North Carolina**

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the SBC Executive Committee during its February 19-20, 2024, meeting that West Hendersonville Baptist Church, Hendersonville, North Carolina, no longer be considered a church in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention on the **basis that the church is acting in a manner inconsistent with the Convention's beliefs regarding sexual abuse** as demonstrated by their retaining as pastor an individual who is biblically disqualified.

- **Grove Road Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina**

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February 19-20, 2024, meeting that Grove Road Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina, be deemed not in friendly cooperation with the Convention, **based on a lack of intent to cooperate in resolving a concern regarding the pastor's mishandling of an allegation of sexual abuse.**

- **New Hope Baptist Church, Gastonia, North Carolina**

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February 19-20, 2024, meeting that the Executive Committee formally recognize the discontinued relationship of New Hope Baptist Church, Gastonia, North Carolina, with the Southern Baptist Convention as demonstrated by the church's **lack of reported financial participation for at least the last five (5) years and its lack of intent to cooperate to resolve a question of faith and practice.**

- **Immanuel Baptist Church, Paducah, Kentucky**

That the Credentials Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention recommend to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention during its February 19-20, 2024, meeting that Immanuel Baptist Church, Paducah, Kentucky, be deemed not in friendly cooperation with the Convention, **on the basis that the church has a faith and practice that does not closely identify with the Convention's adopted statement of faith, as demonstrated by the church having a female functioning in the office of pastor.**

These churches have the opportunity to appeal the decision at the 2024 SBC Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024.

22. **Staff Restructure** – As a result of financial considerations, the SBC Executive Committee instituted a restructuring and downsizing of its staff on September 13, 2023.
23. **Appointment of Brandon Porter, Acting Vice President for Communications** – On August 21, 2023, the SBC Executive Committee Officers of the Board appointed Brandon Porter to serve as acting vice president for communications. During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee received as information that the Officers of the Board approved to extend Brandon Porter's acting position as vice president for communications and compensation until further action by the Officers of the Board.
24. **Appointment of Jonathan Howe, SBC Executive Committee Interim President and Chief Executive Officer** – On August 18, 2023, the SBC Executive Committee Officers of the Board appointed Jonathan Howe to serve as interim president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee. During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee ratified the action of the Officers of the Board in their appointment of Jonathan Howe granting him the rights, powers, duties, and benefits that pertain to the position and approved an adjustment in salary not to exceed his tenure as interim president. Howe has served as SBC Executive Committee vice president for Communications since September 2019.
25. **Resignation of Willie McLaurin** - On August 17, 2023, Willie McLaurin, interim president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee, submitted his letter of resignation to the members of the SBC Executive Committee stating he had included in a recent resume, schools that he did not attend or complete the course of study.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, the Convention referred the following motions to the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee 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 Clarify Whether the Baptist Faith and Message Requires Closed Communion (Items 12 and 65, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 56, 80)**

Motion: J.D. Strouth, Indiana

“That the Executive Committee or Other Committee Consider Clarifying (that) the Baptist Faith and Message Article VII, paragraph 2 does not require closed communion.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports it declines to provide additional clarification regarding Article VII of the Baptist Faith and Message regarding communion. Historically, the SBC Executive Committee does not offer interpretation on the Convention’s consensus statement of faith.

2. **SBC Referral: To amend the SBC Organization Manual to ask ERLC to assist churches and entities in responding to abuse (Items 14 and 68, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 56, 80)**

Motion: Keith Myer, Maryland

“That the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention be amended to add the ministry assignment for the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission to assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting awareness of and resourcing the prevention of and response to abuse.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports it will consider the motion during its June 10, 2024, meeting. The SBC Executive Committee will report its action in the SBC Bulletin.

3. **SBC Referral: To Adjust Policies and Practices Related to Selecting Presidential Executive Leaders (Items 15 and 65, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 56, 80)**

Motion: Barry Holcomb, Mississippi

“That the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention consider adjusting its policies and practices regarding the selection of presidential executive leaders and that the Executive Committee consider making the following recommendation to each entity of the Southern Baptist Convention: ‘In the process of selecting presidential executive leadership of the Executive Committee and of the respective entities of the Southern Baptist Convention, no sitting trustee of the Executive Committee or the respective entities of the Southern Baptist Convention may be eligible for nomination to the office of president, and that former trustees may not be nominated for that office for six months following the end of their tenure as trustees.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports it appreciates the heart behind the motion and desires to ensure all hiring processes are of utmost integrity, and it can encourage president search teams to consider the recommended actions, but the SBC Executive Committee declines to amend its current bylaws and declines to recommend the suggested action to other entities of the Southern Baptist Convention.

4. **SBC Referral: To Provide Timely Trustee Training (Items 16 and 65, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 56, 80)**

Motion: Tim Overton, Indiana

“That a request be made of the Executive Committee to facilitate trustee training for all SBC trustees shortly before their installation at the annual meeting.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that because SBC entities and seminaries are autonomous, it declines to facilitate in-person trustee training; however it agrees to create a document detailing responsibilities of a trustee, in conjunction with all entities, and to provide the document to all persons nominated to serve on Southern Baptist Convention trustee boards before their installation at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting.

5. **SBC Referral: To Require Entities to Submit the Information Found in Form 990 to the Convention (Items 18, 65, and 66, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 57, 80)**

Motion: Rhett Burns, South Carolina

“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 will publish information in the same detail, scope, and quality as would be 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, as if the entity were required to file such a return. 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 will use the definitions applicable by law, as if the entity were required to file the return. This does not require any entity to file a 990 with the IRS or to disclose information that is not normally available to the public, such as schedule B.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that the Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development discussed the matter during its September 18-19, 2023, and February 19-20, 2024, meetings and will consider the matter again during its June 10, 2024, meeting. The SBC Executive Committee will report its action in the SBC Bulletin.

6. **SBC Referral: To Ask the Executive Committee to Study Whether any Executive Staff Member Should Serve as Treasurer for the SBC (Items 19 and 65, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 57, 80)**

Motion: Ben Bowden, Alabama

“That the Executive Committee study whether any staff member of the Executive Committee should serve in the role of treasurer of the Executive Committee and the Convention for the sake of accountability, including the President and CEO of the Executive Committee who currently serves in the role, as stated in Bylaw 18D and Executive Committee Bylaw Article 4, and that the Executive Committee make any needed recommendation to next year’s Convention.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that based on the provisions in the Southern Baptist Convention Constitution, Article V: Officers, Section 4, that the treasurer of the Executive Committee shall be the treasurer of the Convention; SBC Bylaw 18: The Executive Committee, Section D, and SBC Executive Committee Bylaw, Article IV: Officers and Duties, as well as the Convention's longstanding practice for accountability measures stated in the SBC Business and Financial Plan and accountability measures in place at the SBC Executive Committee, it declines to study whether any staff member of the Executive Committee should serve in the role of treasurer of the Executive Committee and the Convention.

7. **SBC Referral: To Amend the Business and Financial Plan for Printing of Financial Reports in the Book of Reports and to Include Information Required by Form 990 (Items 22, 65, and 67, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 57-58, 80)**

Motion: David Norman, Texas

“That the messengers of the 2023 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention amend the Business and Financial Plan of the Southern Baptist Convention in the following manner. Under the section ‘Financial Report,’ point 2 shall be amended to read as follows: ‘Printing of Reports-The financial report of each entity and of the Executive Committee shall be printed in the Convention Book of Reports, or the Convention Annual, and shall contain the following seven items, the first five of which come from its latest annual audit report.’ Further, under ‘Financial Report,’ Point 2, and between sub-point (e) and sub-point (f), a new sub-point shall be added, reading as follows: ‘A form providing financial information in such detail that meets or exceeds the reporting requirements of Parts VII through XI of the 2022 edition of IRS Form 990 for tax-exempt nonprofit organizations.’”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that the Committee on Convention Finances and Stewardship Development discussed the matter during its September 18-19, 2023, and February 19-20, 2024, meetings and will consider the matter again during its June 10, 2024, meeting. The SBC Executive Committee will report its action in the SBC Bulletin.

8. **SBC Referral: To Amend Article III of the SBC Constitution to Replace “Closely Identifies” with “In Accordance With” (Items 74 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 81, 86)**

Motion: Jason Weir, Texas

“That the SBC amend the language of its constitution, specifically Article 3, Section 1, where it reads ‘closely identifies’ to ‘in accordance,’ so that a cooperating church would be identified as a church whose faith and practice are in accordance with the Convention’s faith statement.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports it declines to recommend an amendment to the SBC Constitution, Article III, given that the messengers to the SBC Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, approved the formation of the president-appointed Cooperation Group to consider such matters and report back to the 2024 Convention of messengers.

9. **SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee Study Its Financial Practices (Items 80 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 82, 86)**

Motion: Thomas Beckwith, North Carolina

“That the Executive Committee study its unsustainable financial practices and provide a report of measurable action items to the 2024 Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports the financial practices of the Executive Committee remain viable, as confirmed in the most recent audit by the unqualified (clean) opinion of an independent certified public accountant (the external auditor) in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, and it continues to take steps to ensure the financial stability of the Executive Committee.

10. **SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee Form a Workgroup to Study the Missional Impact of Hosting the 2027 SBC Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City (Items 83 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 82-83, 86)**

Motion: Troy Walker, Utah

“That the Executive Committee form a work group to study the missional impact of hosting the 2027 Southern Baptist Convention in Salt Lake City. We request that there be special attention paid to the impact of the churches following the 1998 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Salt Lake. A report on the wisdom of hosting the annual meeting in Salt Lake City should be released no later than 30 days before the 2024 Southern Baptist Convention.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: During its September 18-19, 2023, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee received as information the creation and appointment of a small workgroup, by the chairperson of the Committee on Convention Events and Strategic Planning, to study the missional impact of hosting the 2027 SBC Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City. During its February 19-20, 2024, meeting, the SBC Executive Committee received as information the report provided by the workgroup and reports it intends to consider the recommendations of the workgroup when coordinating and collaborating with the Local Encouragement Team for the 2027 SBC Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah.

11. **SBC Referral: To Direct the SBC to End All Formal Relationships with Guidepost Solutions (Items 87 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 83, 86)**

Motion: Parker Roberts, Georgia

“That the Southern Baptist Convention end all formal relationships with and to totally disassociate with the Guidepost Solutions law firm.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports it will consider the motion during its June 10, 2024, meeting. The SBC Executive Committee will report its action in the SBC Bulletin.

12. **SBC Referral: To Request the Executive Committee Study How Churches Can Work Together for the Cause of the Great Commission (Items 91 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 84, 86)**

Motion: Paul Kim, Massachusetts

“That the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention study how our churches could work together as the family of God in the love of Christ for the cause of the Great Commission.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that the collective mission effort of the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches reflects an emphasis on churches working together for the cause of the Great Commission. Churches are resources and are called to cooperate through missions endeavors including but not limited to church planting, training and sending missionaries, serving through disaster relief, ministering to widows and orphans, discipling believers, and training and equipping future ministers and pastors. Since 1845, churches of the Southern Baptist Convention have been tasked with the propagation of the Gospel to the ends of the earth, therefore the SBC Executive Committee declines to study additional ways for churches to work together and instead encourages churches to deepen their current commitment until the day of our Lord's return.

13. **SBC Referral: To Request the SBC Consider Hosting the 2028 Annual Meeting in Maui, Hawaii (Items 93 and 113, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, pp. 84, 86)**

Motion: Lyda Wilbur, Oklahoma

“That the Southern Baptist Convention consider to host the 2028 convention in Maui, Hawaii.”

SBC Executive Committee Action: The SBC Executive Committee reports that because the messengers have previously approved a location for the 2028 SBC Annual Meeting, because the island of Maui, Hawaii, does not have a convention center sufficient to host the Convention, and because logistics and timing are prohibitive, it declines to consider hosting the 2028 SBC Annual Meeting in Maui, Hawaii; however, it continues to pray for the people and churches of Maui, Hawaii, in the wake of the devastating fires.

COMPREHENSIVE SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET

	<u>2024-2025*</u>	<u>2023-2024*</u>	<u>2022-2023*</u>
Convention Operating Budget	\$ 8,305,500	\$ 8,335,000	\$ 14,901,244
International Mission Board	284,000,000	283,138,000	268,651,000
North American Mission Board	137,320,000	137,320,000	176,542,906
Lifeway Christian Resources	309,500,000	302,200,000	271,024,000
GuideStone Financial Resources	127,000,000	113,500,000	107,800,000
Gateway Seminary	12,900,000	12,476,000	12,275,000
Midwestern Seminary	35,340,000	33,288,700	31,728,000
New Orleans Seminary	24,896,500	25,023,487	24,458,322
Southeastern Seminary	33,177,000	31,371,300	30,672,810
Southern Seminary	53,328,964	52,251,393	50,236,642
Southwestern Seminary	35,600,000	34,459,000	37,635,341
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	3,351,340	3,413,215	2,578,504
Historical Library and Archives	<u>507,100</u>	<u>512,700</u>	<u>489,218</u>
TOTAL OF ALL BUDGETS	<u>\$1,065,226,404</u>	<u>\$1,037,288,795</u>	<u>\$1,028,992,987</u>

* Actual budget years will vary within each convention year

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SBC OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

I. STATEMENT OF INCOME	Proposed Budget	Budget	Actual
	<u>2024-2025***</u>	<u>2023-2024**</u>	<u>2022-2023*</u>
Cooperative Program	\$ 5,830,500	\$ 5,742,893	\$ 5,956,300
Designations	325,000	260,000	342,247
Lifeway Christian Resources	-	-	-
Interest/Dividends	300,000	540,000	(1,344,623)
Global Relations	-	-	89,237
Vision 2025****, Centennial Celebration, & SBC Prayer Ministry	250,000	200,000	1,245,261
Cost Recovery (Annual Meeting, SBC Life, etc.)	1,500,000	1,380,000	1,820,134
Other Income	<u>100,000</u>	<u>212,107</u>	<u>88,404</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 8,305,500</u>	<u>\$ 8,335,000</u>	<u>\$ 8,196,960</u>
II. SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2024-2025***</u>	<u>2023-2024**</u>	<u>2022-2023*</u>
Convention Administration Expenses			
SBC General Operations		\$ 1,014,300	\$ 1,432,304
-- Global Evangelical Relations			
SBC Committees		75,000	57,821
SBC Annual Meeting		1,000,000	2,422,664
SBC Building Management		<u>739,451</u>	<u>859,709</u>
SUBTOTAL	<u>\$ 2,500,500</u>	<u>\$ 2,828,751</u>	<u>\$ 4,772,498</u>
Executive Committee Operations Expenses			
Administration & Financial Operations		\$ 2,082,218	\$ 2,203,662
Strategic Leadership Development		-	211,005
Executive Committee Meetings		250,000	4,168,697
Great Commission Relations & Mobilization		1,471,029	1,313,806
Convention Communications		1,703,002	1,954,955
Other Designated Expenditures			<u>276,621</u>
SUBTOTAL	<u>\$ 5,813,850</u>	<u>\$ 5,506,249</u>	<u>\$ 10,128,746</u>
Other non-cash year-end adjustments			
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 8,305,500</u>	<u>\$ 8,335,000</u>	<u>\$ 14,901,244</u>

* Source: Actual 2021-2022 Year-End Financial Statements

** Source: SBC Operating Budget approved September 2022

*** Source: Estimates for 2023-2024 based on projected income

**** Source: Priority will be given to Vision 2025 Strategic Action #6, with the anticipation of receiving a request and recommendation from the Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force.

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD

STATEMENT OF INCOME	2025 ⁽³⁾	2024 ⁽²⁾	2023 ⁽¹⁾
Cooperative Program	\$ 98,800,000	\$ 98,300,000	\$ 96,612,000
Lottie Moon	195,811,000	195,263,000	195,947,000
Other Income	<u>10,000,000</u>	<u>10,000,000</u>	<u>9,772,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 304,611,000</u>	<u>\$ 302,563,000</u>	<u>\$ 302,331,000</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	32.43%	32.89%	31.96%

⁽¹⁾ Amounts based on audited financials for contributions and other income. Includes designated LMCO.

⁽²⁾ Amounts based on budget including designated LMCO estimate.

⁽³⁾ Amounts based on estimates including designated LMCO estimate.

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	2025 ⁽³⁾	2024 ⁽²⁾	2023 ⁽¹⁾
Personnel Support	\$ 225,048,000	\$ 224,366,300	\$ 222,818,000
Global Engagement	14,444,000	14,400,000	13,029,000
President's Office	7,187,000	7,164,700	2,658,000
Marketing and Communications	2,427,000	2,420,000	2,595,000
Mobilization	1,103,000	1,100,000	839,000
Logistics & Finance	9,414,000	9,385,000	6,851,000
Technology Solutions	7,474,000	7,450,000	6,988,000
Meetings & Events	12,270,000	12,233,000	8,936,000
Human Resources	2,038,000	2,032,000	1,723,000
Training	1,604,000	1,599,000	1,453,000
Send Relief	<u>991,000</u>	<u>988,000</u>	<u>761,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 284,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 283,138,000</u>	<u>\$ 268,651,000</u>

⁽¹⁾ Amounts based on audited financials.

⁽²⁾ Amounts based on budget. President's Office includes \$4.5M for strategic initiatives.

⁽³⁾ Amounts based on estimates. President's Office includes \$4.5M for strategic initiatives

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

STATEMENT OF INCOME	FY 2025*	FY 2024**	FY 2023***
Cooperative Program	\$ 44,500,000	\$ 44,500,000	\$ 43,677,479
Annie Armstrong	69,500,000	69,500,000	69,359,313
Unrestricted Gifts	7,770,000	7,770,000	7,411,145
Investment & Interest	11,750,000	11,750,000	29,287,543
Other	3,800,000	3,800,000	3,523,377
Total Budgeted Income	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 153,258,857</u>
Restricted Gifts Received			<u>\$ 22,411,618</u>
Total Income	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 175,670,475</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	32%	32%	25%

* Estimates provided for FY25

** Approved budget for FY24

*** Audited actuals for FY23

Total AAEO revenue plus Annie Projects included in Contributions totaled \$70,388,313 for FY23.

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	FY 2025*	FY 2024**	FY 2023***
Church Planting	\$ 71,397,000	\$ 71,397,000	\$ 81,772,595
Evangelism & Relief	18,872,000	18,872,000	43,941,485
Mission Ed. & Opportunities	11,836,000	11,836,000	14,078,472
Sending & Leadership	9,556,000	9,556,000	12,481,504
Administration	<u>25,659,000</u>	<u>25,659,000</u>	<u>24,268,850</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 137,320,000</u>	<u>\$ 176,542,906</u>

* Estimates provided for FY25

** Approved budget for FY24

*** Audited actuals for FY23

Church Planting represents over 51% of total operating expenses for FY25.

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

	<u>2024-2025</u> ⁽¹⁾	<u>2023-2024</u> ⁽²⁾	<u>2022-2023</u> ⁽³⁾
Revenue			
Product Sales	241,000,000	233,800,000	213,277,000
Events & Services Sales	55,300,000	53,700,000	49,248,000
Other Operating Revenue	<u>16,200,000</u>	<u>15,700,000</u>	<u>14,881,000</u>
Total Revenue From Operations ⁽³⁾	<u>\$ 312,500,000</u>	<u>\$ 303,200,000</u>	<u>\$ 277,406,000</u>
Costs and Expenses			
Product Costs/Operating Expenses	<u>309,500,000</u>	<u>302,200,000</u>	<u>271,024,000</u>
Total Costs and Expenses	<u>309,500,000</u>	<u>302,200,000</u>	<u>271,024,000</u>
Funds Provided From Operations	3,000,000	1,000,000	6,382,000
	1.0%	0.3%	2.3%
Net Realized/Unrealized Reserve Fund Income	1,000,000	1,000,000	11,578,000
Pension/Postretirement Credit/Other	0	0	20,171,000
Other Adjustments	0	0	(848,000)
Donated Activity	0	0	0
Discontinued Operations (Lifeway stores, Ridgecrest)	<u>0</u>	<u>(100,000)</u>	<u>(177,000)</u>
Inc (Dec) in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 37,106,000
Inc (Dec) in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(8,000)</u>
Inc (Dec) in Net Assets	<u>\$ 4,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,900,000</u>	<u>\$ 37,098,000</u>

⁽¹⁾ Amounts are preliminary as the 2024-2025 budget has not yet been developed.

⁽²⁾ Information is based on 2024 budget which was approved by trustees August 29, 2023.

⁽³⁾ From audited financial statements.

GUIDESTONE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

	<u>2024*</u>	<u>2023**</u>	<u>2022</u>
Statement of Income			
Operating Revenue	\$ 147,000,000	\$ 117,000,000	\$ 152,000,000
Net Investment Income			
Insurance	4,000,000	3,000,000	(1,000,000)
Mission:Dignity	4,000,000	5,000,000	(6,000,000)
Other Reserves & Benefits Trust	<u>43,000,000</u>	<u>40,000,000</u>	<u>(9,000,000)</u>
Total Income	<u>\$ 198,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 165,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 136,000,000</u>
Entity Summary Operating Budget			
Retirement Servicing	\$ 81,000,000	\$ 72,700,000	\$ 65,700,000
Insurance	44,000,000	39,200,000	40,600,000
Mission:Dignity	<u>2,000,000</u>	<u>1,600,000</u>	<u>1,500,000</u>
Total	<u>\$ 127,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 113,500,000</u>	<u>\$ 107,800,000</u>

* Projected

** Unaudited

GATEWAY SEMINARY

	Proposed* 2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
INCOME			
Educational and General:			
Tuition and Fees	\$ 4,289,652	\$ 4,091,372	\$ 4,057,286
Endowment and Investment	3,006,400	2,864,700	2,950,700
Cooperative Program	3,813,856	3,665,466	3,500,329
Other Gifts	882,600	912,600	846,000
Other Income	136,972	119,812	93,116
Total Educational & General	12,129,480	11,653,950	11,447,431
Auxiliary Enterprises	677,520	696,050	681,648
Total Unrestricted & Auxiliary Revenue	12,807,000	12,350,000	12,129,079
Restricted Transfers	93,000	126,000	145,921
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$12,900,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,476,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,275,000</u>
CP as Percent of Total Income	29.6%	29.4%	28.5%

	2024-2025	2023-2024**	2022-2023
EXPENSE			
Educational and General:			
Instruction	\$ 4,847,267	\$ 4,693,023	\$ 4,861,136
Academic Support	628,712	589,705	585,147
Student Services	1,171,758	1,120,638	1,051,272
Institutional Support	3,446,144	3,381,032	3,329,099
Libraries	734,963	703,892	675,688
Plant Operations & Maintenance	1,764,068	1,687,370	1,489,562
Total Educational & General	12,592,912	12,175,660	11,991,904
Auxiliary Enterprises	307,088	300,340	283,096
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 12,900,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,476,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,275,000</u>

* Budget Pending Approval by Board of Trustees

** Revised down by Gateway in Fall of 2023 after Board approved budget of \$12,646,000

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
INCOME			
Cooperative Program	\$ 8,697,000	\$ 8,481,000	7,872,000
Student Fees	20,615,000	19,665,000	19,389,000
Other Gifts	1,600,000	1,021,000	710,000
Auxiliary Enterprises	3,256,000	3,016,000	2,772,000
Other Income	1,172,000	1,105,000	985,000
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 35,340,000</u>	<u>\$ 33,288,700</u>	<u>\$ 31,728,000</u>

CP as Percent of Total Income 25% 25% 25%

	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
OPERATING AND CAPITAL EXPENSES			
Instruction	\$ 10,428,721	\$ 9,975,269	\$ 9,365,894
Administrative and General	7,728,297	7,318,253	6,975,616
Student Services	3,181,226	2,537,334	2,298,961
Operations and Maintenance	2,689,782	2,377,003	2,187,303
Auxiliary Enterprises	1,561,973	1,330,841	1,150,226
Capital Expenses & Reserves	9,750,000	9,750,000	9,750,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 35,340,000</u>	<u>\$ 33,288,700</u>	<u>\$ 31,728,000</u>

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2024-2025*</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Student Fees	\$ 11,600,000	\$ 10,700,000	\$ 10,115,000
Cooperative Program	6,450,000	6,650,000	6,686,689
Other Gifts	1,425,000	1,375,000	1,250,000
Endowment Income	275,000	275,000	275,000
Other Income	2,521,500	3,400,000	3,500,000
Auxiliary Income	2,625,000	2,623,487	2,631,633
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 24,896,500</u>	<u>\$ 25,023,487</u>	<u>\$ 24,458,322</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	25.91%	26.58%	27.34%

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2024-2025*</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Academic	\$ 7,751,995	\$ 8,947,909	\$ 9,266,047
Administrative and General	3,876,145	4,189,759	4,137,213
SUBTOTAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL	11,628,140	13,137,668	13,403,260
Maintenance/Auxiliary Expenses	13,268,360	11,885,819	11,055,062
TOTAL	<u>\$ 24,896,500</u>	<u>\$ 25,023,487</u>	<u>\$ 24,458,322</u>

* Projected

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Tuition & Fees	\$ 15,815,808	\$ 13,769,208	\$ 14,181,755
Housing & Other Auxiliary Income	5,811,480	5,642,148	5,354,550
SBC Cooperative Program	6,478,428	6,898,824	7,025,722
Development Gifts	1,880,016	1,680,012	1,475,000
Investment Income & Designated Releases	2,559,936	3,017,772	2,454,988
Other Income	631,332	363,336	180,795
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 33,177,000</u>	<u>\$ 31,371,300</u>	<u>\$ 30,672,810</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income	19.53%	21.99%	22.91%

ENTITY SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Education	\$ 13,228,836	\$ 12,503,868	\$ 12,373,806
Administration	5,707,824	5,144,892	4,881,533
Institutional Advancement	3,525,612	3,286,404	3,230,162
Student Life	1,559,868	1,509,792	1,499,114
Facilities	3,386,580	3,209,348	3,145,504
Capital Projects & Discretionary	1,450,008	1,350,000	1,200,000
Auxiliary Enterprises	4,318,272	4,366,996	4,342,691
TOTAL	<u>\$ 33,177,000</u>	<u>\$ 31,371,300</u>	<u>\$ 30,672,810</u>

ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION

	2024/2025	2023/2024	2022/2023
STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Cooperative Program	\$ 3,135,000	\$ 3,196,875	\$ 3,162,257
Other Support	66,000	66,000	61,583
Project And Other Related Income	150,340	150,340	58,960
Reserves	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 3,351,340</u>	<u>\$ 3,413,215</u>	<u>\$ 3,282,800</u>
CP as a Percent of Total Income (not counting reserves)	93.5%	93.6%	96.3%

	2024/2025	2023/2024	2022/2023
SUMMARY OF OPERATING BUDGET	<u>Projected</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 2,339,137	\$ 2,401,012	\$ 1,817,615
Travel	229,945	229,945	128,495
Executive Office	222,934	222,934	90,839
Events & Strategic Initiatives	0	0	103,389
Business & Finance	183,851	183,851	200,543
Communications/External Affairs	287,483	287,483	208,754
Church Engagement	8,000	8,000	0
Public Policy	22,475	22,475	28,869
Research	<u>57,515</u>	<u>57,515</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 3,351,340</u>	<u>\$ 3,413,215</u>	<u>\$ 2,578,504</u>

HISTORICAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

	Proposed	Budgeted	Actual
STATEMENT OF INCOME	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Cooperative Program	\$ 450,000	\$ 468,600	\$ 458,194
Interest	46,000	32,000	37,645
Microfilm/Duplication	3,000	8,500	10,505
Designated & Miscellaneous	5,100	3,600	15,031
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 504,100</u>	<u>\$ 512,700</u>	<u>\$ 521,375</u>
CP as Percent of Total Income	89%	91%	88%
SUMMARY OF OPERATING BUDGET	<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
Personnel	\$ 357,000	\$ 363,400	\$ 346,972
Office Expenses/Equipment	62,300	60,700	60,916
Outreach/Promotion	7,000	5,500	7,791
Acquisitions	7,400	5,500	4,160
Preservation/Microfilm	7,700	9,000	7,543
Travel/Employee Development	4,200	5,800	7,882
Information Services/Digitization	57,000	56,000	48,103
Contingency/Miscellaneous	4,500	4,300	5,711
Advisory Board	<u>0</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>140</u>
TOTAL BUDGET/EXPENSES	<u>\$ 507,100</u>	<u>\$ 512,700</u>	<u>\$ 489,218</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 2023)**

GUIDESTONE FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION, as of December 31, 2023 (unaudited)

Assets	
Investment in Funds	\$ 17,504,000,000
Notes Receivable from Participants	111,000,000
Other Assets	<u>69,000,000</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 17,684,000,000</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Restricted Insurance Reserves	\$ 72,000,000
Other Liabilities	76,000,000
Participant Accumulations & Fund Balances	<u>17,536,000,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 17,684,000,000</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to GuideStone Financial Resources for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of GuideStone Financial Resources' board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD, as of September 30, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 19,318,000
Investments	425,913,000
Investments – Restricted	38,072,000
Beneficial Interest in Trusts	164,903,000
Property and Equipment	14,003,000
Other Assets	<u>12,254,000</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 674,463,000</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 13,753,000
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	86,788,000
Net Assets without donor restrictions	358,693,000
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>215,229,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 674,463,000</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the International Mission Board for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the International Mission Board's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

LIFEWAY CHRISTIAN RESOURCES, as of September 30, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 139,801,000
Investment – Reserve Funds	98,458,000
Fixed Assets, net	16,879,000
Other Noncurrent Assets	<u>34,842,000</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 289,980,000</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 32,901,000
Long-term Liabilities	30,481,000
Pension and Post-retirement Benefit Liability	107,259,000
Net Assets without donor restrictions	119,145,000
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>194,000</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 289,980,000</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to Lifeway Christian Resources for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of Lifeway Christian Resource's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD, as of September 30, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 6,847,982
Investments	121,945,509
Investments – Restricted	5,484,653
Church Loans, net	75,258,072
Beneficial Interest in Trusts	65,773,319
Property and Equipment	135,108,962
Other Assets	<u>15,603,579</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 426,022,076</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 7,901,473
Lease Liability	1,548,093
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	37,799,078
Net Assets without donor restrictions	296,928,013
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>81,845,419</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 426,022,076</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the North American Mission Board for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the North American Mission Board's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

GATEWAY SEMINARY, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 5,879,937
Investments	59,408,016
Beneficial Interest in Split Interest Agreements	7,785,403
Property and Equipment	<u>50,319,471</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 123,392,827</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 1,282,883
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	4,347,851
Net Assets without donor restrictions	83,991,967
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>33,770,126</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 123,392,827</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to Gateway Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of Gateway Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, INC., as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 10,367,657
Investments	30,581,378
Lease Right-of-Use	557,440
Property and Equipment	51,799,006
Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts	<u>394,664</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 93,700,145</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 4,978,357
Net Assets without donor restrictions	70,891,205
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>17,830,583</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 93,700,145</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 5,905,467
Investments	86,280,144
Investments – Held in Trust	3,116,054
Property and Equipment	<u>27,516,042</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 122,817,707</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 2,856,183
Net Assets without donor restrictions	46,071,774
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>73,889,750</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 122,817,707</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 9,808,589
Investments	63,197,623
Lease Right-of-Use	10,598,405
Beneficial interest in split interest agreements	6,076,441
Property and Equipment	<u>34,090,571</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 123,771,629</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 4,024,249
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	11,157,338
Lease Right-of-Use	10,918,440
Net Assets without donor restrictions	44,466,385
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>53,205,217</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 123,771,629</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 51,037,632
Investments	80,756,876
Investments – Held in Trust	25,758,268
Property and Equipment	60,980,011
Lease Right-of-Use	133,431
Other assets	<u>505,709</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 219,171,927</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 6,606,596
Notes Payable	14,607,503
Lease Right-of-Use	133,431
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	4,208,040
Net Assets without donor restrictions	93,311,210
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>100,305,147</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 219,171,927</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 3,892,231
Investments	147,264,455
Beneficial interest in split interest agreements	14,860,716
Property and Equipment	127,347,684
Other Assets	<u>497,205</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 293,862,291</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 2,567,194
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	635,493
Notes Payable	18,619,058
Liability Under Annuity Contracts	9,822,336
Net Assets without donor restrictions	91,645,784
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>170,572,426</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 293,862,291</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES, as of July 31, 2023

Assets	
Current/Other Assets	\$ 223,797
Investments	1,008,285
Property and Equipment	<u>927,072</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 2,159,154</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 19,241
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	320,372
Net Assets without donor restrictions	1,749,517
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>70,024</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 2,159,154</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archive's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION, as of September 30, 2023

Assets	
Current/Other Assets	\$ 1,370,149
Investments	2,425,643
Property and Equipment	<u>393,092</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 4,188,884</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 134,622
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	368,319
Net Assets without donor restrictions	3,460,453
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>225,490</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 4,188,884</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION OPERATING BUDGET, as of September 30, 2023

Assets	
Current Assets	\$ 6,894,269
Investments	7,193,834
Property and Equipment	2,448,228
Other Assets	<u>1,300,920</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 17,837,251</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$ 9,287,459
Post-retirement Benefit Liability	3,229,287
Net Assets without donor restrictions	2,962,681
Net Assets with donor restrictions	<u>2,357,824</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 17,837,251</u>

In compliance with Article XIII B of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan, along with the other financial data pertaining to the SBC Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention for the most recent fiscal year, the chair of the SBC Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention's board submitted a signed statement attesting that the board's officers confirm the existence of the conditions itemized in subparts 6a through 6c of that article. (See page 182)

**Summary of Compliance of Section XIII B6
of the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan**

The statements of the chairs of each entity's board confirming that the officers of their board can attest to the matters prescribed by Section XIII B6 of the Business and Financial Plan have been received by the Executive Committee. (Editor's note: See the provisions of the pertinent section at page 182)

Contributions by State
 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget Receipts
 Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee
 October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2023

Contribution Sources	2022-2023	2021-2022	% Change
Alabama	\$19,189,192.41	\$19,419,870.47	-1.19%
Alaska	\$119,315.42	\$125,117.08	-4.64%
Arizona	\$1,411,361.40	\$1,453,716.67	-2.91%
Arkansas	\$9,757,005.61	\$9,469,862.34	3.03%
California	\$1,979,591.32	\$2,165,022.61	-8.56%
Colorado	\$726,183.92	\$599,931.76	21.04%
Dakota	\$95,787.37	\$108,158.58	-11.44%
Florida	\$14,369,470.47	\$14,870,167.59	-3.37%
Georgia	\$14,253,078.94	\$15,319,190.65	-6.96%
Hawaii Pacific	\$217,432.97	\$223,171.28	-2.57%
Illinois	\$2,151,803.76	\$2,375,945.29	-9.43%
Indiana	\$642,055.15	\$744,097.85	-13.71%
Iowa	\$875,890.86	\$806,574.75	8.59%
Kansas-Nebraska	\$825,497.02	\$833,949.98	-1.01%
Kentucky	\$9,921,967.72	\$10,050,752.68	-1.28%
Louisiana	\$6,754,844.66	\$6,655,207.32	1.50%
Maryland-Delaware	\$1,238,412.12	\$1,617,365.20	-23.43%
Michigan	\$432,759.17	\$424,226.40	2.01%
Minnesota-Wisconsin	\$183,457.65	\$272,028.92	-32.56%
Mississippi	\$11,940,124.38	\$13,467,585.48	-11.34%
Missouri	\$4,904,709.52	\$5,642,592.77	-13.08%
Montana	\$166,378.68	\$180,751.02	-7.95%
Nevada	\$381,044.69	\$427,185.06	-10.80%
New England	\$150,004.94	\$170,104.07	-11.82%
New Mexico	\$958,200.48	\$943,270.15	1.58%
New York	\$220,625.67	\$229,217.50	-3.75%
North Carolina	\$13,217,124.73	\$12,333,662.38	7.16%
Northwest	\$498,341.41	\$536,207.44	-7.06%
Ohio	\$2,297,961.96	\$2,751,312.27	-16.48%
Oklahoma	\$10,529,115.57	\$10,702,892.25	-1.62%
Pennsylvania-South Jersey	\$352,493.09	\$323,867.60	8.84%
Puerto Rico	\$8,502.83	\$18,144.46	-53.14%
South Carolina	\$10,412,311.11	\$10,856,203.58	-4.09%
Tennessee	\$16,210,232.16	\$18,322,933.57	-11.53%
Texas - BGCT	\$8,826,475.74	\$9,934,221.76	-11.15%
Texas - SBTC	\$14,812,381.59	\$15,233,158.52	-2.76%
Utah-Idaho	\$223,350.95	\$232,892.43	-4.10%
Virginia - BGAV	\$888,635.17	\$821,927.13	8.12%
Virginia - SBCV	\$4,727,710.92	\$4,726,356.16	0.03%
West Virginia	\$499,502.29	\$475,353.77	5.08%
Wyoming	\$36,990.23	\$36,796.62	0.53%
Subtotal	\$187,407,326.05	\$195,900,993.41	-4.34%
Churches and Individuals	\$ 4,444,620.97	\$4,551,615.59	-2.35%
Grand Total:	\$191,851,947.02	\$200,452,607.68	-4.29%

2022-2023 Disbursements
Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee

	<u>Cooperative Program Allocation Budget</u>	<u>Percent of CP</u>	<u>Designated</u>	<u>Percent of Designated</u>	<u>Total Gifts</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
International Mission Board	\$96,611,746.52	50.41%	\$137,465,902.10	68.48%	\$234,077,648.62	59.66%
North American Mission Board	\$43,677,478.74	22.79%	\$61,998,316.49	30.89%	\$105,675,795.23	26.93%
Gateway Seminary	\$3,492,710.29	1.82%	\$55,796.75	0.03%	\$3,548,507.04	0.90%
Midwestern Seminary	\$7,903,685.56	4.12%	\$112,367.71	0.06%	\$8,016,053.27	2.04%
New Orleans Seminary	\$6,672,134.95	3.48%	\$92,312.66	0.05%	\$6,764,447.61	1.72%
Southeastern Seminary	\$7,011,879.89	3.66%	\$108,480.14	0.05%	\$7,120,360.03	1.81%
Southern Seminary	\$10,383,510.31	5.42%	\$168,158.05	0.08%	\$10,551,668.36	2.69%
Southwestern Seminary	\$6,546,185.73	3.42%	\$129,971.66	0.06%	\$6,676,157.39	1.70%
Historical Library and Archives	\$459,964.66	0.24%	\$4,430.13	0.00%	\$464,394.79	0.12%
Ethics & Religious Liberty Comm	\$3,162,257.13	1.65%	\$41,983.22	0.02%	\$3,204,240.35	0.82%
GuideStone Financial Resources	\$-	0.00%	\$42,088.87	0.02%	\$42,088.87	0.01%
SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating	\$5,730,393.24	2.99%	\$508,525.53	2.25%	\$6,238,918.77	1.59%
Total Cooperative Program Allocations	\$191,651,947.02	100.00%	\$200,728,333.31	100.00%	\$392,380,280.33	100.00%
SBC Executive Committee - Vision 2025	\$200,000.00	\$-	\$200,000.00	100.00%	\$392,380,280.33	100.00%
TOTAL	\$191,651,947.02	100.00%	\$200,728,333.31	100.00%	\$392,380,280.33	100.00%

**SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
TO THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

Recommendation 1: 2024-2025 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget

The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024, adopt the 2024-2025 SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget in the amount of \$190,250,000 as follows:

2024-2025 SBC CP ALLOCATION BUDGET PROPOSAL

	2024-2025 Budget <u>Allocation</u>	2024-2025 % of Total <u>Allocation</u>
<u>World Mission Ministries</u>		
International Mission Board	\$ 95,779,000	50.41%
North American Mission Board	<u>43,301,000</u>	<u>22.79%</u>
Total: World Missions Ministries	<u>139,080,000</u>	<u>73.20%</u>
<u>Theological Education Ministries</u>		
Seminaries:		
Gateway	3,813,856	2.01%
Midwestern	8,739,624	4.60%
New Orleans	6,461,596	3.40%
Southeastern	6,267,437	3.30%
Southern	10,118,853	5.33%
Southwestern	<u>6,246,634</u>	<u>3.29%</u>
Total Seminaries	41,648,000	21.92%
Historical Library and Archives	<u>456,000</u>	<u>0.24%</u>
Total: Theological Education Ministries	<u>42,104,000</u>	<u>22.16%</u>
<u>Christian Ethics & Religious Liberty Ministries</u>		
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	<u>3,135,000</u>	<u>1.65%</u>
<u>Facilitating Ministries</u>		
SBCEC & SBC Operating Budget	<u>5,681,000</u>	<u>2.99%</u>
Total: Facilitating Ministries	<u>5,681,000</u>	<u>2.99%</u>
Total: 2024-2025 Program Allocation Budget	<u>\$ 190,000,000</u>	<u>100.00%</u>
Special Priority Allocation:		
SBC Vision 2025 Initiative*	<u>\$ 250,000</u>	
Total	<u>\$ 190,250,000</u>	

*Priority will be given to Vision 2025 Strategic Action #6 with anticipation of receiving a request and recommendation from the Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force

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 2: 2024-2025 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget

The Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee recommends the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 11-12, 2024, adopt the 2024-2025 SBC Executive Committee and SBC Operating Budget in the amount of \$10,235,000 as follows:

SBC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND SBC OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

	Proposed Budget	Budget	Actual
	2024-2025	2023-2024**	2022-2023*
I. STATEMENT OF INCOME			
Cooperative Program	\$ 5,681,000	\$ 5,830,500	\$ 5,730,393
Designations	300,000	325,000	278,735
Vision 2025 & CP Centennial	250,000	250,000	200,000
Interest/Dividends	275,000	300,000	435,710
Cost Recovery (Annual Meeting, Sponsorships, etc.)	2,000,000	1,500,000	2,210,397
Other Income	<u>100,000</u>	<u>100,000</u>	<u>879,699</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 8,606,000</u>	<u>\$ 8,305,500</u>	<u>\$ 9,734,934</u>
II. SUMMARY OPERATING BUDGET			
Convention Administration Expenses			
SBC General Operations		\$ 1,561,650	\$ 1,466,358
SBC Committees		60,000	57,510
SBC Annual Meeting		2,100,000	2,290,542
SBC Building Management		670,000	742,643
Guidepost Indemnification & Investigation		500,000	730,508
DOJ & US Attorney Investigations		600,000	1,617,044
ARITF Hotline		250,000	290,336
Outside Funding Source		(250,000)	(290,336)
SUBTOTAL	<u>\$ 5,600,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,491,650</u>	<u>\$ 6,904,605</u>
Executive Committee Operations Expenses			
Administration & Financial Operations		\$ 1,350,000	\$ 1,308,677
EC Other Legal Expenses & Litigation Management		700,000	763,664
Executive Committee Meetings		250,000	374,857
Great Commission Relations & Mobilization		483,000	1,225,182
Convention Communications		1,625,350	1,931,858
Other Designated Expenditures		<u>100,000</u>	<u>305,104</u>
SUBTOTAL	<u>\$ 4,635,000</u>	<u>\$ 4,508,350</u>	<u>\$ 5,909,342</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 10,235,000</u>	<u>\$ 10,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 12,813,947</u>
Unbudgeted Noncash Items			
Investment Gains			543,136
Depreciation Expense			<u>(342,065)</u>
NET SURPLUS (Deficit)	<u>\$ (1,629,000)</u>	<u>\$ (1,694,500)</u>	<u>\$ (2,877,942)</u>

* Source: Actual 2022-2023 Year-End Financial Statements

** Source: Budget Approved by Executive Committee September 2023 with reclassification for new line items

Recommendation 3. Amendment of SBC Constitution Article III. Composition, Section 1, to Expand the Definition of a Cooperating Church Regarding the Affirmation, Appointment, or Employment of Only Men as Any Kind of Pastor or Elder – Final Vote

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention reports to the 2024 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, on June 11-12, 2024, that the Executive Committee previously adopted a position in opposition to the amendment as reported to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on June 13-14, 2023, and affirms Article VI of the *Baptist Faith & Message* 2000 which states, “While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.”

The motion referred to the Executive Committee reads as follows:

Motion: Michael Law, Virginia

“I move that the Constitution of the Southern Baptist convention be amended to include an enumerated 6th item under Article 3, Paragraph 1, concerning composition. The enumerated 6th item would read: “6. Does not affirm, appoint, or employ a woman as a pastor of any kind.”

The amended language, affirmed by messengers during the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, reads as follows:

Amendment: Juan Sanchez, Texas

6. Affirms, appoints, or employs only men as any kind of pastor or elder as qualified by Scripture.





901 Commerce Street, Suite 600, Nashville, Tennessee 37203

JEFF IORG, Chair
WARREN PEEK, President

*"...Serving Him together, shoulder to shoulder."
Zephaniah 3:9*

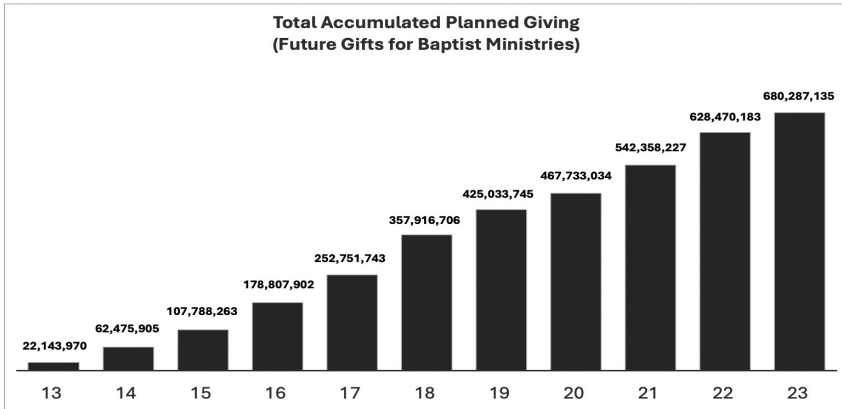
Since 1947, the Southern Baptist Foundation has offered a full range of services to assist Believers in providing for their families and supporting Christian organizations either during one's lifetime or by will.

We know that generosity can be life-changing and life-saving. Throughout the Bible we see powerful examples of generosity that touched the lives of those in need.

- A young boy offered Jesus his lunch in Matthew 14:14-21. There were 5,000 to feed yet the boy had only a few loaves and fishes. Gifts in God's hands can be — and often are — divinely magnified.
- The very definition of generosity can be found in Luke 10:25-37. Jesus tells the story of a man who had been left for dead on the side of the road. The Good Samaritan stopped to help him; he gave his time, resources, and skills to make sure the man was well cared for in a safe place. Gifts can include our time, talents, and tithes.
- Jesus shares the story of the widow's offering in Luke 21:1-4. The poor woman had no source of income after her husband's death. The two small copper coins were all she had and yet she offered them to God. Gifts of all sizes can have Kingdom-impact.

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 3,500 different individuals and families. Over \$680 million in future gifts will be generated for Baptist causes through these estate plans.

The Foundation also provides high-impact biblically responsible investing that supports Christian entities and ministries. Our prudent, socially screened investment funds deliver long-term results that are consistent with our spiritual mandate.



Partnering with the Foundation adds three important advantages for Southern Baptists:

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 \$6 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.

GENERAL BOARDS

One Hundred and Sixth Annual Report



5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 2200, Dallas, Texas 75244

JOHN HOYCHICK, JR., Chair

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

INTRODUCTION

The Apostle Paul penned the epistle we call 1 Thessalonians toward the end of his second missionary journey. From Corinth, he wrote to the church he had started and praised them for their love for one another.

He tells them In 1 Thessalonians 4:9–10a (NASB 1995), *Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia.*

Paul continues, “But we urge you, brethren, to *excel still more.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:10b NASB 1995, emphasis mine).

This verse has been the focus of our REACH strategy at GuideStone. It encourages us to do all that the Lord has commanded and to continue to work to serve our members and ministry partners better.

Mission:Dignity had the largest 4th Quarter on record with over \$5.17 million given. Giving Tuesday was a major driver of this record 4th Quarter, which saw a record \$1.6 million given.

2023 was the second largest fundraising year ever for Mission:Dignity, as almost \$12.2 million was given. In addition to record giving for Mission:Dignity Sunday and Giving Tuesday, giving to the OS & Susie Hawkins Emergency Grant Fund and additions to 13th Check partnerships with state conventions were major drivers of this great year of fundraising.

Mission:Dignity has had long-standing state partnerships with Georgia and Louisiana, but in what has become a hallmark of cooperation and goodwill, the 13th Check partnerships with our state conventions/foundations have dramatically increased the awareness of Mission:Dignity in these states. Overall, 13th Check partnerships increased from 11 to 20 in 2023. We now have partnerships with state conventions/foundations in South Carolina, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, Texas (SBTC), New Mexico, Tennessee, California, Nevada, North Carolina, Virginia (SBCV), Michigan, Minnesota-Wisconsin, Arizona, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, and the Dakotas. They provide a gift to Mission:Dignity for an extra check for recipients in their respective states, and we disburse the funds.

For 2023, Mission:Dignity assisted 2,908 retired ministers, spouses and widows living in 2,164 households nationwide compared to 2,868 retired ministers, spouses, and widows living in 2,115 households in 2022.

At the end of 2022, most analysts were broadly forecasting a recession. Still, the Federal Reserve (“Fed”) has, through the end of 2023, generally navigated the highwire act of maintaining economic growth while lowering inflation. Not only did the U.S. economy skirt a recession and see prices fall, but financial markets posted a solid 12 months of returns.

Headline inflation has peaked across developed economies and is progressing toward lower levels. Nevertheless, prices remain higher than the Fed’s target, and the economy is starting to feel the effects of the drastic monetary policy tightening that began almost two years ago. Global central bank rate reductions are expected in 2024, with cuts already being priced into most markets worldwide. In the United States, monetary policy has yet to achieve its goal of reducing inflation to 2%, but rates are probably more restrictive than they need to be. Rather than “overengineer” interest rates and risk crushing the economy, the Fed will likely be satisfied with targeting a threshold for lowering rates at a core Personal Consumption Expenditures Index (PCE, excluding food and energy) reading of around 2.5% (as of December 31, 2023, this rate was 2.9%). However, officials have communicated that cuts are not imminent as they evaluate if enough has been done to tame inflation.

Government debt in many countries (including the United States) is problematic. While this will unlikely impact 2024 significantly, it looms over long-term economic prospects and the U.S. Presidential election. In fact, elections loom large globally, as half the world’s population will be voting in 2024.

Geopolitical risks (e.g., wars in Ukraine and Israel and tensions between the United States and China) remain higher than usual and add additional economic and financial market uncertainty for the coming months.

In conclusion, we look for financial markets to enjoy a continued run of robust returns for at least much of this year, with dollars flowing from money market funds into risk assets supporting valuations. However, we do see higher downside risks to financial assets as markets are essentially “priced to perfection.”

Insurance added more products to their portfolio, adding Ancillary products such as Vision coverage and value-added benefits, giving our members access to virtual Behavioral Health and Dermatology. The team has also put more emphasis on caring for our population as our members look to retire. We’ve done that by making our Life coverage more affordable upon retirement and setting up new Life products to be available in mid-2024. Lastly, new retiree medical plans are now available, with continued work being done to provide additional options throughout 2024.

GuideStone expanded its Financial Educator program in July to benefit the members we are privileged to serve. In just six months, the Educator team has hosted nearly 1,800 appointments covering such topics as retirement contributions, fund allocation and diversification, retirement income, and Social Security and Medicare. In addition, members are provided with actionable next steps and resources as a follow-up to their engagement. So far, 97% of members surveyed expressed that they felt more confident following their Educator appointment, and 88% took action or planned to take action as a result of their meeting.

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, 2023.

Church Retirement Plan – At the end of 2023 there were 16,759 active churches with a total of 50,448 active participants.

403(b)(9) Retirement Plan – A total of 554 agencies and institutions provided retirement plans for their employees. A total of 32,107 employees comprise active participation in these agencies' plans. (we lost Hendrick, so this number dropped accordingly)

Ministers and Chaplains Plan – The Ministers and Chaplains Plans enrolled 21 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 Two qualified plan employers serving 20 active participants.

Voluntary Retirement Plan – The Voluntary Retirement Plan records 771 participants with an account balance at the close of 2023.

Retirement Income Paid to Members

The heart of GuideStone's ministry is our recipients. Annuity benefits were paid to 21,518 members and beneficiaries in 2023. Systematic withdrawal payments were paid to 20,874 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 2,164 households in 2023.

A total of \$11,743,667 was paid out in financial assistance in 2023, compared to \$11,639,758 in 2022. Of the total granted, Mission:Dignity paid out \$2.8 million in extra assistance-emergency grants, extra checks from state agreements, and Christmas gift checks of \$300, 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 2023 statistical report of the insurance plans (excludes non-Southern Baptist entities).

Life Claims – \$15,534,817

Disability Claims - \$2,180,439

Dental Claims - \$12,171,233

Medical claims (including pharmacy) - \$276,845,818.

Group Plans:

Group Plans Employee Term Life Plans. – A total of 30,841 members were covered on December 31, 2023, an increase of 761 since the same time last year.

Group Plans Medical Plans. – A total of 21,420 members were covered.

Group Plans Dental Plan. – A total of 10,491 members were covered in a dental plan.

Group Plans Disability Plan. – A total of 2,097 members participated in the Short-Term Disability Plans, and 11,702 members participated in the Long-Term Disability Plans.

Group Plans Supplemental AD&D Plan. – Members covered totaled 3,376.

Group Plans Accidental Death and Dismemberment Plan. – Members covered totaled 9,336.

Premium Waiver. – The Group Plans employee life plans had 156 members.

Personal Plans:

Personal Plans Employee Term Life Plans. – A total of 12,251 members actively participated on December 31, 2023, a decrease of 711 since the same time last year.

Personal Plans Disability Plans. – A total of 931 members participated in the Short-Term Disability Plans, and 3,556 members participated in the Long-Term Disability Plans.

Personal Plans Medical Plans. – Members covered totaled 4,113 a decrease of 641 since the same time last year.

Personal Plans Supplemental AD&D Plan. – Members covered totaled 2,044.

Personal Plans Accidental Death and Dismemberment. – Members covered totaled 4,428.

Personal Plans Dental. – Members covered totaled 6,476.

Premium Waiver. – The Personal Plans employee life plans had 169 members.

Property and Casualty Insurance Program

The GuideStone Property and Casualty Program provides broad property and casualty coverages for eligible Southern Baptist churches and entities. Those coverages include property and liability, worker’s compensation, commercial auto, and foreign missions and travel. An important aspect of the program is providing ministry protection education and resources for churches and ministries. The related distribution affiliate, GuideStone Agency Services, now serves over 2,000 clients with a premium volume of over \$69 million at the end of 2023.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Guidestone Financial Resources for consideration, action, or report.

One Hundred Seventy-Seventh Annual Report**INTERNATIONAL
MISSION BOARD****3806 Monument Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23230****KEITH EVANS, Chair****PAUL CHITWOOD, President****INTRODUCTION**

Quoting the prophet Isaiah, the apostle Paul declares in Romans 10:15, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” For 178 years, Southern Baptist churches have obeyed the Great Commission by sending missionaries to share the gospel overseas through the International Mission Board. Your faithfulness and generosity are a blessing to the nations as you continue to send and support missionaries through the IMB.

The world’s greatest problem is lostness. The harsh reality is that 173,451 people will die lost today. More people will die and enter hell tomorrow than today, and even more in the days to come. Southern Baptists, we must embrace the unprecedented opportunities that we have to address this problem with God’s solution: the gospel.

For this reason, the IMB is purposeful, strategic, and laser-focused on reaching the lost. We are obedient to follow the Holy Spirit to the least-reached people groups on the planet. And how beautiful, indeed, are the feet of your IMB missionaries as they tread through slums and cities, and through towns and villages; as they board buses, planes and trains; as they climb countless apartment staircases and walk into the depths of refugee camps — all to declare the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has blessed our work. At the end of 2023, Southern Baptists have more than 3,500 adults, along with their 2,700 children, who serve in long-term missions around the world. Those thousands are joined by tens of thousands more who have served on a short-term mission trip, by thousands of national Baptists around the globe who serve alongside our IMB personnel, and by more than 100 global missionary partners who have been sent from sister Baptist conventions and unions overseas to take the gospel where they are uniquely equipped to go.

What a blessing to be a part of this work! Through the IMB, every Southern Baptist can join the work by making sure our missionaries have everything they need to do what God has called them to do. By that commitment, your IMB missionaries have been able to remain on the mission field, from megacity urban centers to the hardest-to-reach corners of the world, with the continued support of your prayers and your generous gifts through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®.

Global highlights from last year’s work include:

- 67 new people groups engaged
- 728,489 people hearing the gospel
- 178,177 new believers expressing faith in Jesus Christ
- 102,417 baptisms
- 21,231 new churches planted; and
- 146,026 people receiving theologically sound leadership training

While we celebrate growth of new believers, baptisms and churches this year, we also grieve that the growth of lostness around the world is far outpacing gospel advance. As you rejoice with us over the impact of Southern Baptists represented by this report, pray with us that God will send more laborers into His harvest fields.

And as we near the centennial anniversary of the Cooperative Program and celebrate record giving through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, let us never forget that those who are sent to the frontlines of this work absolutely deserve our unwavering loyalty, our undying support, and our unyielding commitment. May we steadfastly hold the ropes for these workers as they lead out to ensure Southern Baptists indeed do all we can to introduce the lost to our Lord.

Paul Chitwood

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 2024 Ministry Report of The International Mission Board.)

Ministry Statement: 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 sending, supporting, and developing of short-term, mid-term, and long-term missionaries again has been the greatest “value add” which our Cooperative Program dollars have accomplished. We see the effect of our missionaries taking the “good news” of Jesus’ offer of salvation to peoples who have never had the opportunity to hear. Our missionaries have presented the gospel in languages and contexts in which people follow false “gods” who only demand sacrifices but do not provide redemption or new life for those who repent and believe. The gospel is also being taken to those who do not even think there is a God or a need for one. Southern Baptist missionaries and partners are also taking a clear and complete gospel to those who have a false or incomplete understanding and practice of biblical Christianity. The greatest value of our Cooperative Program is that it enables Southern Baptists to be called out and be sent in pursuing the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

Opportunities to join The Great Pursuit are growing. In June 2023, IMB launched a new effort to find, explore, and initiate the first introduction of the gospel to the remaining 3,072 people groups that are unengaged and unreached (UUPGs). Current research indicates that these 3000plus UUPGs not only are unreached, but also do not have anyone engaging them with church planting strategies consistent with evangelical faith and practice. The support of Southern Baptists has allowed the IMB to create 300 jobs for Southern Baptists between the ages of 21 and 30 to go find, get to know, and share the gospel for the first time with these unengaged, unreached peoples. We are calling these young missionaries Explorers. The first nine Explorers have been sent and have already begun exploring 75 of these UUPGs. We are praying and working with these Explorers and asking God to use the Explorers and our IMB field teams and partners to change the eternal destinies of these 3000 plus people groups. We are also asking the Lord to use these young Explorers to ignite a new movement of missionaries joining the Great Pursuit to carry out the Great Commission and make disciples as we move toward the multitude of people gathered around the throne of our God.

IMB reports robustly on Missionary Task endeavors in a publicly available report (which can be downloaded or read online: Annual Statistical Report / IMB.org/ASR). In summary, IMB's 2023 annual statistical report includes the following results reported in 2022 by IMB missionaries and their direct partners: 67 new people groups and places engaged with a gospel witness overseas; 728,589 people heard some portion of a gospel presentation through IMB-related work; IMB workers counted 556,035 opportunities people had to respond to a clear gospel presentation; 178,177 people testified they were new believers in Jesus Christ; 102,417 people were baptized as a testimony in obedience to Christ; 146,026 people received church leadership training; and 21,231 new churches planted through Southern Baptists' international work. The task and challenges have grown in 2023 as global population has expanded to over 8 billion.

The 21st century is proving to be challenging with wars, political polarization, earthquakes, storms, displaced peoples, and the greatest number in all history of lost people in need of a Savior. We must be counted among those who "do not draw back" (Hebrews 10:39) but rather move forward in faith, knowing that our God will work through us to bring His Good News to the lost of this century.

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

In the last year, the Field Personnel Deployment Team of the IMB Training Team processed (to the point of approval for deployment) 236 long-term missionary candidates, 188 mid-term missionary candidates, and 29 Team Associates for missionary service.

The Field Personnel Orientation/Stateside Assignment Conference Team trained 310 new adult missionaries and their 113 children in Field Personnel Orientation, and further trained 473 adult missionaries and their 390 children in Stateside Assignment Conferences. The team also served 50 returning Journeymen in Beyond Conferences and 47 adults in the New Emeriti Conference. For the first time in several years, the missionary candidate pipeline grew beyond 1000 candidates, which is essential for us to fulfill our goal of adding a net total of 500 new missionaries by 2025. By the end of 2023, the missionary candidate pipeline surpassed 1,300 candidates.

The Children's Education and Resource Center team partnered with the Mississippi WMU to host the 2023 MK Reentry Retreat for 45 "missionary kid" high school graduates.

The Training Development Team offered multiple online courses and in-person workshops for churches, missionary candidates, and local leaders around the world. They finished the translation of Foundations and the accompanying Foundations Companion Guide into Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, and French, and these are available as online downloads at IMB.org/Foundations. Additionally, in May, IMB launched a new online course, God's Glory Among the Nations: A Course on Mission. This course helps learners better understand the grand narrative of Scripture, God's mission, and how all believers have a role to play in the Missionary Task. The Training Development team has also worked closely with other IMB teams to deploy relevant and transformational training across the organization.

This year the Leadership Development Team launched the pilot of the Leadership Development Process which involved 75 leaders in eight different cohorts around the world. The content and curriculum for the Leadership Development Process is consistent across the organization. It is now being revised based on feedback from the pilot, and it will scale globally to the rest of the organization beginning in 2024.

Staff Training continued the in-house development of digital onboarding training for all newly hired personnel and annual required training courses for all existing employees. In-house development of these courses ensures that required training meets both compliance laws and policy requirements while also affirming and supporting the BF&M. This suite of seven courses is delivered to all personnel worldwide. All of these courses are provided in English, Korean, and ASL, with some translated into an additional six languages.

The Theological Education Strategy Team produced two more editions of the resource, *The Great Commission Baptist Journal of Missions*.

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

IMB's mobilization efforts continued to grow on top of the roll-out of the company-wide Church Connections Strategy, which assigns each IMB missionary with approximately 20-30 churches for intentional engagement. The Church Connections Strategy aims to connect with every Southern Baptist church across the Convention. Since this strategy was launched in 2020, 91% of SBC churches have received one or more communications from IMB missionaries. In 2023, the organization showed 175,000 engagements with Southern Baptist leaders; up from the previous year's 95,000. These engagements by an IMB staff member or field missionary aim to serve their church in fulfilling the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. From these engagements, 3,900 unique opportunities were identified to advance Southern Baptist entities in praying, giving, going, and sending. Partnership opportunities, including short-term mission trip requests, were highlighted via outbound promotion to U.S. churches, state conventions, local associations, and other partnering agencies. At least 520 new church-to-field connections or partnerships were started to better serve strategies to engage people groups within the IMB's eight Affinities.

February 5, 2023, marked the annual celebration for the George Liele Church Planting, Evangelism, and Missions Day. Churches across the SBC were invited to celebrate, pray, give, and go in honor of the legacy of George Liele. IMB also published a month-long "Heroes of Faith" editorial series to share stories of African American missionaries. In 2023, the George Liele Scholarship supported pastors from Georgia and South Carolina to take vision trips to Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia with the goal of forming a long-term partnership for sending volunteer teams.

With the strategic focus of ethnic church mobilizers, engaging non-Anglo Southern Baptist churches and fellowships continues to be an IMB mobilization emphasis. In 2023, IMB reported 2,100 engagements with church leaders in meetings, preaching opportunities, and events across the country. In the IMB's mobilization strategies — including events and communications — we diligently worked to increase presenting opportunities and information in multiple heart languages, including American Sign Language, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese. Numerous videos and prayer resources were included, as well as the IMB's premier mobilization piece for 2022-23, the Global Impact Guide. The IMB also continued working to translate internal communications messages into multiple languages as well.

Mobilization also grew the network of advocates who help mobilize Southern Baptist churches on behalf of the IMB. This includes new IMB trustees, WMU leaders, missionary alumni, missionary parents, donors, and state convention leaders. To better serve, engage, and involve

IMB alumni, parents, and other advocates, Mobilization added a director of alumni and advocate engagement to focus on strategic engaging and equipping of these crucial cohorts.

IMB continued promoting and providing REV 7:9, a missions movement for 18- to 25-year-olds, at key locations in Arizona, Arkansas, Alabama, and Texas. In this event series, the IMB called together young adults to consider how to take a next step in obedience to reaching the nations with the gospel.

IMB utilizes full-time NextGen Missions Recruiters based in the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and South-Central Regions to better engage 15- to 29-year-olds and grow the pipeline of applications for mid-term and long-term service. In 2023, a fifth recruiter was added to the West region. These recruiters are tasked with the launch and execution of a full-scale recruiting effort for youth, college students, and young adults to pray, give, and go. In one year, they helped to add 190 applicants to short term, mid-term, and long-term opportunities.

Pipeline development for future missionaries continues to be a significant focus for IMB. While this is, in part, to aid in the missionary assessment process, it is primarily an intentional effort to equip sending churches and see those who are called choose to go with the IMB. At several state convention annual meetings, the IMB conducted information breakout sessions on pathways to missionary service and the process to apply for short-term, mid-term, and long-term service.

A key area in which IMB mobilizes Southern Baptists is through the development of volunteer opportunities, systems, and processes that serve both field strategy and the local church. Via phone calls, email, and chats each week, the Church Success Center connects with hundreds of Southern Baptists looking to serve in some manner through IMB. This team can be reached at info@imb.org or at 1-800-999-3113.

Southern Baptist churches have a long-standing practice of sending volunteers to serve on mission through IMB. In 2023, over 10,000 Southern Baptists participated in 1,731 volunteer trips. Go Impact, an initiative for high school students to serve one- to two-week projects within the strategy of IMB personnel around the world, also is continuing to grow and bear fruit; over 200 high school students served in 17 projects in six affinities through Go Impact. The Field Partnerships and Pathways Team gives leadership to these initiatives and can be reached at info@imb.org.

The IMB served state conventions and associations by hosting a retreat in Richmond, Virginia, for the newest Associational Mission Strategists to share global updates and mobilization strategies. We continued with Associational Cohorts for the purpose of equipping associational leadership (Associational Mission Strategists/Directors Of Missions) around the country to better understand the IMB — from the missionary task to pathways and partnerships for their churches to grow in missions involvement and support. With a renewed focus on empowering state convention partners, several new comprehensive plans are under development, with goals to see every church provided with opportunities to reach the nations. In the coming year, more strategic gatherings are planned with state convention leaders to continue the mission-focused momentum building within these networks. IMB recognizes the significant efforts of associational leaders as they partner with church staff to see Southern Baptists reach their communities and the nations with the gospel.

We continue to cast vision, mobilize, and equip North American churches not only to engage people groups globally, but also to fulfill the core missionary task among diaspora peoples (international students, immigrants, and refugees) who reside in our own neighborhoods. We updated PeopleGroups.info with new census data and maps to show where people groups reside in North America. In 2022, we joined other SBC entities to develop and form the Diaspora Missions Collective. The Diaspora Collective assists Southern Baptist churches to discover, engage, and resource churches as they reach diaspora peoples. We assisted in forming a one-stop diaspora missions website, DMCollective.org.

The diaspora mobilization team, formed in 2023, has been developing strategy and onboarding new team members throughout the year. The team exists to develop and execute IMB and NAMB strategies that mobilize Southern Baptists to reach refugees, immigrants, and international students with the gospel throughout North America and globally. This involves pathways, partnerships, pipelines, and church planting.

Highlights include a Reaching the Nations conference with over 100 participants from churches, associations, and state conventions. Follow-up was conducted to develop strategies for networking and training. Critical connections were established with IMB personnel serving in the various affinities globally to reach diaspora peoples in select North American cities and to equip them to impact their home countries in a 360-degree model.

The diaspora team has established cohorts in key locations such as Nashville, Phoenix, and Dayton. IMB personnel are teaming with Send Network and Send Relief Centers. We are developing training resources to equip churches and believers to impact diaspora peoples. Demographic information is being captured and utilized to identify where diaspora work is needed and where it is progressing.

A highlight of IMB's reports in 2023 continues to be missionary Sending Celebrations. These events celebrate newly appointed missionaries, while also challenging Southern Baptists to commit to pray and to reflect on whether they may be called to go. The celebrations, available by livestream, inspire Southern Baptist churches to understand their role in sending new missionaries and to pray for the work God has prepared in advance for them among unreached people and places. Nearly 250 full-time missionary appointees were honored in the four Sending Celebrations held in 2023, including special services conducted in conjunction with the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans and the Florida Baptist Convention annual meeting.

IMB's Global Research Team released a public Annual Statistical Report (Annual Statistical Report) which represented work done by IMB personnel and their mission partners in 2022. The report contained data from IMB's eight Affinities and reports on the six components of the missionary task, centered around abiding in Christ: entry, evangelism, discipleship, healthy church formation, leadership development, and exit to partnership. The Global Research Team took great care to provide accurate numbers that represent IMB's commitment, and, as the Apostle Paul advised, to not report upon the work done outside of the sphere apportioned to us by the Lord (2 Cor. 10:12-18). The report provided Southern Baptists a report of God's work among the people groups of the world — work completed through Southern Baptists' commitments to pray, give, go, and send.

In 2023 Cooperative Program promotion, IMB contributed stories of how God is at work on the mission field to the "52 Sundays" resource. In our promotion of the 2023 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® (LMCO), we reinforced how every dollar given by Southern Baptists

supports the work of roughly 3,550 International Mission Board personnel on the mission field to reach the “multitudes” referenced in Rev. 7:9. The IMB sent LMCO direct mailers to Southern Baptist churches; 45,705 English-language LMCO direct mailer were sent, as well as 4,419 of each of the language-specific direct mailers. Additionally, 2,900 LMCO DVDs were created to be distributed through IMB’s Church Success Center. The DVDs included videos in five languages: English, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Spanish.

The IMB distributed promotional materials for the Week of Prayer for International Missions, including more than 2 million English-language prayer guides, as well as 97,695 language-specific prayer guides. Week of Prayer materials distributed also included more than 75,000 posters and over 3 million offering envelopes, covering four languages. Numerous digital downloadable resources, including graphics, PowerPoint slides, bulletin inserts, and more were available in four languages online.

The IMB also printed 48,000 English-language Global Impact Guides. This resource includes missionary stories of God’s work around the world, global highlights of what has been accomplished in the past year, and opportunities for churches and individuals to be involved in solving the world’s greatest problem — lostness. IMB also printed 8,000 language-specific global impact guides.

IMB saw targeted digital advertisements promoting the Loving the Lost prayer resource reach potential audiences. IMB created original media resources, distributed to encourage concerted intercession related to the Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church in November 2023. The Woman’s Missionary Union and IMB worked together to mobilize churches to pray for the nations during the annual Week of Prayer for International Missions. The week of prayer focused on the ways God is at work around the world through Southern Baptists — such as missionaries using a coffee ministry in Belgium; virtual reality in Japan; research in new global ventures; partnerships in North Africa; church planting in Zambia; relationships in Mexico; and among the Deaf in Senegal.

Ministry Statement: 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, expertise, 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 2023, IMB in partnership with Send Relief has impacted over 3.8 million people in 81 countries. Over 1.8 million people have received food assistance; 615,933 received healthcare support; more than 7,000 have received job skills training; and 85,536 people have benefited from clean water or improved sanitation. Through these efforts, more than 1,700 previously closed areas have been opened, offering the hope of the gospel to those who have not heard. Through these compassion ministries, over 197,000* came to faith in Christ and 4,495* 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.*

Based on the listed Ministry Assignment, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2023 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how you are accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

Ministry Statement: 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.

Since 2020 our world has continuing challenges that are necessitating changes and opening new opportunities. The worldwide pandemic has caused what we would traditionally consider normal ways of reaching people to change. Gatherings have been modified with some people moving to a new normal of online and less often being present in person. This has required communication patterns to be updated. About 25% of our teams now have digital engagement strategies which will continue to be an ever-increasing part of our work for evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development. Healthy church formation requires people to be physically present with one another.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a new avenue for proclaiming the gospel and can accelerate translation, education, and communication which will carry our Great Commission work forward. The IMB must build strong protection to guard against those who would use AI to bring harm, fraud, and negative results to our efforts. We will need to learn how to use AI for the advancement of the Great Commission and also how to defend ourselves from potential harmful effects.

The political repolarization of our world is putting up obstacles to our access to unreached peoples and places. We must seek the Lord's way forward and work diligently to develop wise and creative new avenues to regain access to peoples and places who need the Gospel.

The challenges of the 21st century are complex, but our Lord will show the way forward. We pray that many Baptists from other nations will join with us in The Great Pursuit and that we will be stronger together in our effort to carry out the Great Commission.

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

In addition to continuing to assess, deploy and train new missionaries, as well as providing ongoing training for existing missionaries, the Field Personnel Deployment and Training Team is still actively engaged in developing missionary pipelines within Southern Baptist churches, associations, and seminaries. We continue to streamline our processes and develop new training modules to advance the work of the IMB. The Training Development Team is working to better understand our Southern Baptist audiences, their needs, and how we can better communicate with them and get our training resources to them. The Leadership Development Team will be scaling their Leadership Development Process globally, which will constitute the first time the

IMB has had a globally consistent and globally scoped process for training leaders. In addition, the Theological Education Strategy Team will continue to serve as liaisons to connect pastors and professors with short-term teaching/training opportunities on the field.

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

IMB's Mobilization Team continues to focus on increased engagement with Southern Baptist pastors and churches. We find that for many churches today, the IMB is one of many options considered by mission-minded churches that seek to get involved in international missions. As the official international sending agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, the IMB wants Southern Baptist pastors to prefer the IMB as the primary organization to partner in praying, giving, and going to the nations. To accomplish that, we are committed to working tirelessly to build strong relationships, enhance service levels, and promote more field-to-church interactions with the 47,000 Southern Baptist churches in the U.S.

The IMB continues to grow our presence through an event strategy called Together for the Nations, which will reach 12 markets across the U.S. from 2022-2024. As a part of the strategy, missions leaders and influencers can learn about the IMB, the missionary task, and ways to take a next step in missions support or partnership. A primary objective of the day is interaction between Southern Baptists and IMB leaders from the mission field and the home office. In 2024, events are planned in Missouri, Georgia, Arkansas, and Ohio.

To better serve Southern Baptists, the IMB added a director of diaspora mobilization. We also plan to expand our diaspora team to further assist Southern Baptist churches and partners in identifying where diaspora people groups reside, and to share evangelistic and discipleship language resources to be used among diaspora people groups. Our training will expand as we connect churches and partners with field personnel to better understand these people groups and share best practices for sharing the gospel.

With our commitment to expand opportunities for Southern Baptist churches to partner in the missionary task through short-term mission trips, Go Experience launched in 2023. Many churches want to be engaged on mission through IMB but need an entry point. Forty-six Go Experience projects in gateway cities of seven IMB affinities will provide churches with training, hands-on ministry, and next step opportunities for their churches. These experiences will be supported logistically by IMB. For more information, email info@imb.org.

Having identified that inflation is outpacing revenue in the SBC, IMB leadership is pursuing an aggressive strategic-growth plan to ensure that it can sustain support of both current and future IMB missionaries and achieve its 2025 Objectives.

With a commitment to these 2025 Objectives through increased relationships with Southern Baptists, we recognize the critical importance of a deeper understanding of how each church is involved in international missions through praying, giving, going, and sending. We continue to develop comprehensive ways to collect and process information that allows IMB to better serve Southern Baptist churches and partners and celebrate how God is using Southern Baptists to reach the nations.

Ministry Statement: 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.

The needs of people around the world will only increase, and thus continue to grow the need for strategic engagement of human needs and lostness by the IMB. As the IMB serves Southern Baptists in the push toward taking the gospel to the remaining unreached and unengaged peoples of the world, field personnel will encounter more and more physical challenges such as poverty, hunger, and effects of conflict among those who need to hear the gospel.

Long-term crises such as the war in Ukraine and Israel, earthquakes in Turkey, Syria, and Morocco, along with instabilities of governments around the world, have caused an increase in forcibly displaced peoples. Ministering to these needs brings new opportunities for creative response and re-thinking engagement with compassion ministry. They also bring with them new hurdles on how to implement responses, connect with people, and meet needs in light of restrictions and lingering effects of the pandemic. Increased urbanization also brings with it new opportunities to rethink the application of community development principles in an urban context to implement effective compassion ministries that meet both physical and spiritual needs.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, the Convention referred the following motions to the International Mission Board for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To Request International Mission Board to study the long-term effects of the Covid vaccine requirements on missionaries (Items 82 and 111, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC *Annual*, p. 82, 86)

Motion: Clay Hall, Kentucky

"Move that we request the IMB to study the long-term effects of the IMB's Covid vaccine mandate on the health of its missionaries and future financial repercussions to both the missionaries and to our Convention."

Response: That as a self-insured entity which cares deeply about the wellness and medical needs of our personnel, IMB carefully and consistently tracks the health status, medical procedures, vaccines, medications, and effects of healthcare for all field personnel. IMB also carefully and consistently tracks the financial implications of healthcare and how health issues can impact missionary presence, ministry sustainability, compliance with local healthcare laws, and more.

IMB's health and wellness initiatives consistently are discussed with the IMB Board of Trustees and reported to Southern Baptists, as applicable, through the IMB's website and Baptist Press. To receive information about IMB's position on vaccinations and the sanctity of human life, email info@imb.org.

2. SBC Referral: To request IMB to allow missionaries to abstain from vaccinations that bind their conscience (Items 86 and 111, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC *Annual*, p. 83, 86)

Motion: John Jones III, Missouri

"Move that the 2023 SBC annual meeting messengers adopt this measure requesting the IMB to consider allowing medical autonomy to career missionaries by not mandating them to receive vaccines that go against their consciences, especially vaccines created and/or tested in aborted fetal tissues, and not just Covid vaccines. It is continually more evident that these cell lines have been collected in a very ungodly way. Since we regard ourselves as completely pro-life as Southern Baptists, it should be no problem to allow our missionaries to keep their conscience clear concerning these matters and allow them to choose countries that don't require these vaccines."

Response: That as a self-insured entity which cares deeply for the medical needs of our personnel, as well as a commitment to our SBC-mandated task of taking the gospel to unreached peoples in international settings, IMB carefully and consistently considers the medical, moral, biblical and ethical ramifications of any healthcare decisions required of our field personnel; how those decisions can impact the accessibility of the gospel to people who otherwise might be separated from God for eternity; and the catastrophic financial costs which could impair the stewardship of funds intended for gospel advance. IMB leaders commit to continued careful consideration of any healthcare requirements in light of these factors.

IMB's health and wellness initiatives consistently are discussed with the IMB Board of Trustees and reported to Southern Baptists, as applicable, through the IMB's website and Baptist Press. To receive information about IMB's position on vaccinations and the sanctity of human life, email info@imb.org.

3. SBC Referral: To request IMB to print prayer requests from the Tuesday Sending Ceremony in the Wednesday SBC Bulletin (Items 89 and 111, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, p. 83-84, 86)

Motion: Don McAllister, Arizona

"Propose that the International Mission Board would print the prayer requests as stated by the missionaries during the sending ceremony on Tuesday in the Wednesday bulletin, so that the conference as a whole would be able to pray regularly for the sending missionaries as they have specifically requested. This should be done at every Southern Baptist conference going forward to encourage our missionaries through the ongoing prayer of our individual churches and church members."

Response: That the IMB, in gratitude for the committed, concerted prayers of Southern Baptists which undergird our mission to serve Southern Baptists in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations, welcomes the opportunity to publish the prayer requests shared during the SBC Annual Meeting's IMB Sending Celebration in the Wednesday bulletin. We commit to include that effort into our future SBC Annual Meeting plans.

Southern Baptists are invited to continually pray for IMB missionaries and their national partners, as well as other requests. Daily prayer requests can be found on the IMB website (www.imb.org/pray).

ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT BASED ON 2022 DATA*Global summary reflecting work in calendar year 2022, reported in 2023***Sowing**How many people heard a gospel witness? **728,589**How many people had an opportunity to respond to Christ? **556,035**How many who received a gospel witness do you believe are seekers? **190,897****Reaping**How many who heard a gospel witness became new believers? **178,177**How many believers were baptized? **102,417****Gathering**How many groups intended to become churches are meeting now? **41,385**How many new groups intending to become churches are meeting now? **11,068**How many new churches were formed? **21,231**How many 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-generation churches are meeting now? **112,065**How many 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-generation churches have ceased to meet? **1,067**How many baptized believers met in groups or churches? **680,280****Discipling**How many people met in on-going Bible studies? **345,692**How many people are being personally mentored? **132,823****Training**How many men have received practical pastoral training? **27,169**How many people received training to start new churches? **68,239**How many individuals received advanced theological education? **50,618**How many believers were trained in other training opportunities? **65,703**

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 only, and since 2009 no longer include reports from partner conventions and unions. Major movements that are self-sustaining and require only occasional guidance and assistance from IMB personnel have been removed from the statistics this reporting year; which results in some statistics being somewhat different from earlier reporting periods.

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 ASRs will reflect corrected 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

GREG KANNADY, Chair
BEN MANDRELL, President and CEO

It's my honor to bring this report and share how God is using the team at Lifeway to serve churches and church leaders as they spread the good news of Jesus Christ and make disciples everywhere.

First, let me say how thankful I am that the Lord has continued to bless Lifeway. The 2023 fiscal year represents the third consecutive year of revenue growth since 2020. Lifeway's financial position remains very strong with a healthy cash position and a healthy reserve fund, and we continue to operate with no debt. As you know, Lifeway is a ministry funded by a business model, having never received funds from the Cooperative Program. We continue to thank God that He has allowed us to be self-supporting while continuing to serve churches.

You'll find details of the work accomplished in 2023 in our ministry report, but I want to take a moment to celebrate how God has worked through Lifeway this past year and offer a glimpse of where we're headed in 2024.

We were so excited to see camps back at full force this summer, hosting 111,000 campers. More than 3,700 kids and students made first-time decisions to follow Christ. In addition, kids and teenagers attending our summer camps gave more than \$580,000 in offerings to support the work of the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board.

Reaching the next generation and helping them see their role in the mission of God is a huge priority for Lifeway. Along those lines, our team celebrated the successful launch of *Hyfi*, a new next-gen experience designed to help churches engage kids and students in their communities who have little or no background in the faith or may have had no exposure to the church. I could not be more thankful for Lifeway's kids and student teams who have labored tirelessly to make this fresh and innovative resource for local churches.

The CSB translation continues to see incredible gains and is now the fastest-growing Bible translation in the U.S. market. What an honor it is for our team to steward this translation on behalf of Southern Baptists and to get the Word of God into as many hands as possible.

We saw a strong and steady rise in our ongoing curriculum sales in 2023. This past year, Lifeway has served more than 30,000 churches and 6 million people on any given Sunday through our ongoing Bible study curriculum.

Our publishing teams continue to develop books and Bible studies like *You Are a Theologian*, *Upon Waking*, *When You Pray*, and *Experiencing God* that help nurture Christian community so people can read the Scriptures together and grow together in God's Word.

In April of 2023, Lifeway moved into our new teaming space in Brentwood, Tennessee, which provides a state-of-the-art environment for conferencing, meetups, and creative, white-board sessions.

We measure a lot of things at Lifeway—revenue, units sold, readers, participants, and campers—but those numbers don't quite fully capture the spiritual impact of our resources. For every Bible sold, for every Bible study downloaded, for every camper registered, a point of life change occurs that has ripple effects we can't measure but that grows God's kingdom and extends the gospel's reach into every corner of people's lives.

As our team looks to 2024 and beyond, I can't help but think about Lifeway's origin story and Dr. James Frost's desire to create a publishing house to provide churches with resources that help teach God's Word and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Dr. Frost was passionate about equipping leaders in the local church, and we want to carry on that vision.

We continue to sharpen our focus on creating resources for the local church and being a trusted ministry partner to church leaders. We look forward to serving Southern Baptists in 2024 and many years to come!

Gratefully,
Ben Mandrell

MINISTRY GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Assist churches in the development of church ministries.

Sunday School

Throughout the SBC, reports from church leaders indicate many churches have seen growth in their Sunday School/small group ministries and are back to pre-pandemic attendance levels. While this varies from state to state and from church to church, the prevailing indications are that Bible study groups are reaching new people, while efforts are still underway to reengage people who stepped away from church and groups during the pandemic.

Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students introduced the highly anticipated *Hyfi* curriculum for kids and students in Fall 2023. This media-rich resource teaches the truths of Scripture in a way that helps preschoolers, kids, and students understand their true identity in Christ. *Hyfi* utilizes high-quality media, games, and side-by-side learning to foster a fun atmosphere of learning and belonging. *Hyfi* is a fun experience for kids and students while remaining faithful to the Bible. *Hyfi* roots the next generation's identity in Christ through 12 biblical truths that teach them who they are in Him. Every session provides biblically sound content with a clear picture of Jesus and the gospel.

In Fall 2023, the adult version of *Explore the Bible* released an updated Leader Guide that created a new way for group leaders to lead Bible study. The new format is easier to use and creates a better flow from one section of the Bible study to the next. Scripture verses, commentary, and teaching procedures are all contained on two-page spreads, giving a group leader everything he or she might need to guide the study. Positive feedback was heard immediately after the release of the updated *Explore the Bible* Adult Leader Guide.

QR codes were introduced in all adult ongoing Bible study series to provide easy access to short vignettes that provide group leaders with extra commentary and insights about the biblical text they guide their groups to explore. In addition, QR codes also linked group leaders to weekly podcasts in which Lifeway team members talked through the upcoming week's Bible study, offering insights and suggestions for engaging people in active Bible study.

Future Plans — Ongoing enhancements to Bible studies in all age groups continue to take place quarterly. Based on usage by Lifeway team members, customer comments and suggestions, and new approaches to learning, these enhancements continue to sharpen Lifeway’s family of products.

Discipleship

Serving the church through discipleship resources and training remains at the very core of what Lifeway seeks to accomplish. To that end, in the past year, Lifeway has put significant energy into kids, students, women, and adult discipleship through events, Bible studies, and both in-person and technology-based training. Additionally, Lifeway has created and continued blogs and podcasts focused on helping churches and leaders in their mission of making disciples.

Over the last few years Lifeway has continued to develop and refine digital tools created to give churches greater access to discipleship resources. In 2021 Lifeway released its streaming platform Lifeway On Demand and over the course of the last two years, a robust library of Bible studies has been added to the platform. The launch of Lifeway On Demand represents a move toward greater accessibility to life-transforming content through a medium, streaming video, that has become the preferred means for video content. This technology makes discipleship accessible everywhere there’s a smartphone and a connection to a network. Lifeway On Demand allows certain titles to be streamed using technology like Roku, AppleTV, Fire TV, Google Chromecast, etc. In this model, specific Bible study books will include access to the companion videos.

In 2023, new functionality was added to Ministry Grid specifically for delivery of a new all-digital curriculum aimed at the next generation of kids and students. *Hyfi*, is a fully digital curriculum that is delivered through Ministry Grid using a new proprietary curriculum builder tool which allows leaders to customize each week’s lesson modules to meet their church’s individual programming needs. The development of the curriculum builder tool and its integration with Lifeway’s newest ongoing curriculum is representative of Lifeway’s efforts to work with the church to develop new and innovative tools and resources that equip ministry leaders to disciple a new generation of believers.

In addition, Lifeway continues to provide helpful content to disciple-makers through our *Group Answers* podcast and the recent addition of *Disciplemaking in Community* with Ken Braddy, hosted by director of Sunday School Ken Braddy. These weekly podcasts address discipleship within the group context, both on campus and off campus. Content for the *Group Answers* blog and the podcast is curated by and from small-group experts and practitioners. These steps have been taken as a way to be more “by the side” of small-group leaders. Adult blog content and the podcast can be found at lifeway.com/groups.

Lifeway Kids’ most popular discipleship resources, *I’m a Christian Now* Leader Kit, equips ministry leaders to engage kids and families through activities and discussions around core Christian concepts, like becoming a Christian, following Jesus in everyday life, sharing your testimony, and more. New downloadable 60-minute kids and family sessions give ministry leaders more options to meet families where they are. *Faithful Promises* is the latest release of TeamKID (Kids in Discipleship) resources, released in June of 2023. *TeamKID: Faithful Promises* will lead preschoolers and kids to discover the steadfast faithfulness of God through Old Testament promises. Through God’s covenants with Adam, Noah, Moses, David, and others, kids will learn about God’s graciousness in keeping His promises and connect God’s faithfulness to their everyday lives.

Lifeway Students released 24 new 30-day devotionals for teens in 2022 and another 12 in 2023 to continue filling the need for discipleship resources that teens can use independently. These have been received incredibly well, and future issues have been planned for monthly releases through 2025. The Lifeway Students publishing team also produced Bible studies in 2023 with authors such as Sean McDowell, Mike and Daniel Blackaby, Kelly Minter, and Kristi McLelland.

Lifeway continues to serve tens of thousands of churches through our primary ongoing curriculum lines, *Explore the Bible*, *Bible Studies for Life*, and *The Gospel Project* that facilitate discipleship through theology, Scripture, and life application. This past year (2023) marked the 10-year anniversary of *The Gospel Project*, which will reset its study plan in Fall of 2024. In addition to these three legacy curriculum lines, Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students released a new next-gen curriculum resource called *Hyfi*, which was available for first use in Fall of 2023. *Hyfi* is designed to meet the cultural needs for belonging and identity in Preschoolers, Kids and Students. Each year *Hyfi* studies 12 simple, biblical, identity truths in a context of relationship.

Finally, classic discipleship studies from Lifeway like *Experiencing God*, which was refreshed last year, *Masterlife* and more recent studies like *Proverbs: Everlasting Wisdom for Everyday Life* from Vance Pitman, Dan Darling's study *Spiritual Gifts*, Jason Thacker's *Following Jesus in the Digital Age*, *Psalms: Real Help for Real Life* by Ray Ortlund, *Philippians: Rejoice in the Lord* by Juan Sanchez, and the first two releases on Hebrews and Exodus in the new Storyteller series continue to provide great value in varying formats for deep discipleship experiences in the church. Lastly, in October 2022 Lifeway released *Masterlife Together*, a follow-up to the classic study *Masterlife*, from Matt and Allison Willis.

Future Plans — Future short-term study plans include the release of the first 10 Storyteller volumes by June 2024, which are designed to help both individuals and groups understand the story of Scripture and how God's story intersects theirs. Other studies to be released in 2024 include *Kingdom Politics* from Tony Evans, *Revive Us* by Robby Gallaty, and two studies in partnership with the Kendrick brothers to be released with their new film, *The Forge*. Training will continue through various events and by other means.

Lifeway will continue making content available through Lifeway On Demand and migrating backlist titles into this new platform to better serve the church. Lifeway will also continue to seek new discipleship training opportunities, strategic partnerships, and develop Bible study resources that help move people into greater engagement with God's Word, regardless of how or where their groups are meeting.

Leadership Development

Lifeway Leadership's key initiatives in 2023 focused on equipping churches by using Ministry Grid for digital access to ministry training and Lifeway's five lines of ongoing Bible study curriculum. These Bible study lines include *Hyfi*, *The Gospel Project*, *Bible Studies for Life*, *Explore the Bible*, and *YOU*.

With almost 11,000 churches on the platform and over 25,000 leaders on average each week, the Lifeway Leadership team sees great momentum with churches using Ministry Grid as a digital solution for discipleship, training, and development resources. Many churches use the customization features of Ministry Grid to share their own content and resources along with Ministry Grid's 700-plus training courses.

The Lifeway Leadership team also serves 11 churches and organizations through white label versions of Ministry Grid, which allows additional customization of the tool.

Lifeway Leadership continues its partnership with Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) to host 10 free digital courses on Ministry Grid. Lifeway Leadership also continues its partnership with the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) and hosts video lessons and downloadable workbook for *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused* on Ministry Grid.

Lifeway Leadership has also partnered with the North American Mission Board to expand the church planting and multiplication resources offered at NewChurches.com. Lifeway Leadership continues to see success in Leadership Pipeline coaching as an underlying philosophy and framework for leadership development. We also offered 60 *Ready to Use Resources for Smaller Churches* for free on Ministry Grid to provide templates, forms, documents, and other resources smaller churches need but may not be able to produce on their own.

Future Plans — The Lifeway Leadership team plans to continue to add features and enhancements to Ministry Grid to provide church leaders with a digital solution for volunteer training, ongoing Bible studies, and resources for development and discipleship.

Worship and Music Ministry

Over the past year, by God's grace, the season of growth has continued for Lifeway Worship, the church supplies and church music team of Lifeway Christian Resources. The following are some of the blessings we have experienced in 2023.

Growth continued to exceed expectations 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. 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. These services include group texting and church communications services, church buses, church signs, prospect services, and background checks. Our envelope services program also continued to experience robust growth. In our Worship Music area, the initial decision to sunset the lifewayworship.com platform was paused due to an overwhelming response from churches. We continue offering new congregational music arrangements for churches, along with our extensive catalog of choral music resources for adults and children.

Future Plans — Several listening sessions were conducted in 2023 and early 2024 with church music leaders, educators, and denominational music leaders around the country to gather feedback that we are using to develop plans for how Lifeway Worship can best serve church music ministries in the future.

Christian Education

Resourcing group leaders with skills, product knowledge, and encouragement to serve the Lord through their spiritual gifting generated positive comments from attendees throughout 2023. Lifeway continued to develop relationships with church leaders in the area of Christian Education. Conferences were well-attended whether they were in person or held online. Lifeway produced podcasts and webinars enabling church leaders to find on-demand training in a virtual environment and giving them principles for more effective Sunday School leadership.

The book *Breakthrough: Creating a New Scorecard for Group Ministry Success*, authored by Ken Braddy, Lifeway's director of Sunday School, continued to perform well in 2023. The book focused on four essential actions that every healthy group must undertake to have a balanced, effective ministry. State conventions, local associations, and a number of local churches requested training on the book's contents.

Dwayne McCrary, Lifeway's manager of adult ongoing curriculum, released a booklet titled *Farsighted: Fostering a Culture of Outreach in Our Churches and Bible Study Groups*. The book's premise was that if we want our churches and Bible study groups to focus on reaching people far from God, then we must create a culture that encourages and celebrates reaching people. *Farsighted* examined ways of creating a culture of outreach, giving some practical ideas for building and reinforcing such a climate. A free conference training plan was developed, along with other free assets, to assist churches in conducting training on the content.

In-person adult training events such as The Sunday School Essentials Conference, the Big Results Leadership Conference, the annual Black Church Leadership Conference, and women's ministry training events such as You Lead conferences provided training for pastors, group leaders, and church staff leaders. These conferences focused on essential practices for healthy group ministries and included single-day events, two-day events, and week-long events at churches and conference centers.

Lifeway Students continued to engage thousands of youth ministry leaders from across the country through in-person events, online cohorts, and digital resources. The Essentials Roadshows were held in 10 cities, engaging local church leaders in roundtable strategy sessions. Lifeway Students' newest conference gathering, The Experience, continued to grow and provide meaningful preaching practice for youth ministry leaders in several unique Nashville environments. Lifeway Students continued to invest in and promote a new digital resource, Parent Partner, a subscription for monthly customizable parent ministry resources that equip ministry leaders to empower parents to disciple at home.

Lifeway Kids and Lifeway Students co-produced the ETCH Family Ministry Conference in October 2023, at Brentwood Baptist Church in Brentwood, TN. ETCH is an acronym for "equipping the church and home" and has become a premier event for next-gen ministry leaders. Kids and student leaders from across the country journeyed to the Nashville area for this highly anticipated event. Plans for ETCH 2024 are already well under way. The ETCH NextGen Ministry Conference helps church leaders turn their eyes to what's NEXT. 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.

VBS Preview events continued in person in January 2023 and January 2024 in four locations: Brentwood, TN, Fort Worth, TX, Houston, TX, and Ridgecrest, NC. Nearly 2,000 VBS leaders and volunteers experienced various aspects of VBS 2023. Also, Lifeway trained state convention VBS teams through an in-person VBS Institute in Houston.

Future Plans – In-person conferences, webinars, podcasts, learning cohorts, and virtual events will continue to be developed to meet the changing needs of churches and church leaders in a post-pandemic ministry context. Lifeway will continue to be intentional in taking its training events to churches in locations across the country. States outside the Bible Belt will be able to experience in-person events in 2024 and beyond. Lifeway trainers are creating customized content for state conventions that speak to the needs that are seen regionally.

A new Sunday School support booklet was released on December 1, 2023, and is serving as a primary training tool for 2024. The booklet, *Comeback Groups*, was written by Ken Braddy, Lifeway's director of Sunday School. The book examines the revival under King Asa in 2 Chronicles 15 and applies principles of the revival to groups today. A training plan is contained in the book's appendix, making it easily accessible for churches to conduct training on the content. A Spanish version has also been translated.

Finally, the *Disciple-making in Community* podcast that released in 2023 was so well-received that it will continue into 2024. This unique podcast, led by Ken Braddy, Lifeway's director of Sunday School, is released in seven-episode "seasons." Each season focuses on one topic that relates to ongoing Bible study groups and features two to three church practitioners who discuss the assigned episode topic from different angles. Season one (March 2023) focused on enlisting new group leaders. Season 2 (August 2023) focused on starting new groups. Season 3 (released in February 2024) focused on training group leaders. New seven-episode seasons are continually being added to the library of podcast resources.

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. *Three Circles* by Jimmy Scroggins, a teen resource, walks through the three circles evangelism strategy to help believers discover just how simple sharing the gospel can be. Resources such as *Tell Someone* by Greg Laurie and the legacy Bible study *Share Jesus Without Fear* continue to be effective tools for evangelism.

Just released last spring is *Farsighted: Fostering a Culture of Outreach in our Churches and Bible Study Groups* by Dwayne McCrary. This release in Lifeway's ministry support resources contains the steps for establishing a culture of evangelism within a church. What *Farsighted* advocates is different from a single event, study, or Bible study discussion. It has been written to help leaders foster a sense of evangelism that becomes a part of a church culture or DNA through its groups ministry, in whatever context that may be. If we want our churches and Bible study groups to focus on reaching people far from God, then we must create a culture that encourages and celebrates reaching people. In this book, you will examine ways of creating a reaching culture and encounter practical ideas for building and reinforcing such a climate.

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 2024, Lifeway Adults will be refocusing application sections from each ongoing line to better encourage Bible study groups to foster a reaching and evangelistic posture as is commanded by Scripture.

In terms of training within the mandate to evangelize, Lifeway emphasizes evangelism in specific webinar series throughout the year. *Building a Disciple-making Ministry*, *Breathing Life into Sunday School*, *Restarting Groups*, and *3 Roles of a Group Leader* all include a heavy focus on evangelism. Additionally, *Breakthrough: Creating a New Scorecard for Group Ministry*

Success, released in the fall of 2022, focuses on the need for evangelism in and through groups as an aspect of effective group life.

Something Needs to Change by David Platt is a powerful message that focuses on reaching unreached people groups with the gospel. This small-group Bible study experience points out the need to take the gospel message of Jesus into unreached regions. *Marks of a Disciple* by Dean Inerra examines six helpful measurements to test whether we're growing spiritually. In addition to topics like the spiritual disciplines, generosity, and theological groundedness is a heart for evangelism. This last small-group discussion of *Marks of a Disciple* focuses on Jesus' command to share the gospel story, to be a witness for Him, and to lead people to Jesus. Other resources addressing evangelism in some capacity are *Experiencing God*, *Masterlife*, *Radical*, *Spiritual Gifts*, *Follow Me*, and *Gospel Above All*.

Lifeway continues to prioritize evangelism through its summer camp ministries by clearly presenting the gospel to teenagers and kids and by training teenagers to share their faith through mission opportunities and evangelism track times.

Sharing the gospel with kids is one of the most important elements of kids ministry. *The Gospel: God's Plan for Me* Bible study presents the gospel story 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 scripts (including Spanish) to help leaders talk with kids about becoming a Christian.

Another way that Lifeway Kids is helping parents evangelize their own 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.

Share Jesus Without Fear, revised edition, presents a simple and relational approach to witnessing that underscores dependence on God's power for the results. Birthed out of the radical life-transformation of its author, Bill Fay, *Share Jesus Without Fear* teaches believers how to navigate a witnessing conversation in everyday situations. Lifeway has released additional Share Jesus tools to equip believers to share their faith: the *Share Jesus Without Fear* app and *Share Jesus Without Fear* Scripture and Question Cards.

Go & Tell Kids Mission Trip VBS is an easy-to-use, transportable VBS designed to help mission trip teams host a Vacation Bible School anywhere in the world. Simple visuals, 100-plus recreation games, and five sessions of gospel-centered content equip volunteers to explain the good news to kids in any context.

Vacation Bible School is the largest outreach to unchurched kids in a given year for 78% of churches hosting VBS, according to Lifeway Research. Statistics have shown that parents will encourage their child(ren) to participate in a VBS event at a church they don't attend if they are 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.

Lifeway supported churches in 2023 through Lifeway's VBS Twists and Turns: Following Jesus Changes the Game. Preschoolers, kids, students, and adults learned that, even when they mess up, it's never "game over" with Jesus.

Future Plans — 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' 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.

VBS 2024 will take kids to Breaker Rock Beach in the Pacific Northwest. Kids will be challenged to stand firm on the rock-solid truth of God's Word in a world of shifting sands as they discover that God's truth never changes, and everyone needs Jesus.

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

Churches use these resources to help families realize and prepare for the fact that life happens between Sundays. While these magazines provide wonderful leisure reading, they also hit difficult topics of life from a strong biblical perspective.

Lifeway Global

Lifeway Global had a record year in 2023, continuing to develop a unified strategy to better serve global churches and individuals, anchored by our market-leading publishing lines: Bible and Reference, Trade Books, Leadership Resources, Women’s Resources, Kids Resources, Ongoing Curriculum, and Short-Term Studies. Lifeway Global enjoyed another record year in 2023, being awarded Publisher of the Year by the Spanish Evangelical Publishers Association and impacting more than 4 million lives in more than 160 countries through print, digital, licensing, and training.

Our publishing pipeline includes authors from more than 20 nationalities, with new additions including Italian and Kenyan authors. Biblias Holman launched a new text Bible program with more than 30 products, and we started our translation work on the CSB in Spanish, which we hope to launch in 2026.

Future Plans — Lifeway Mujeres and the CSB Spanish Bible are our top priorities for the next few years.

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

Lifeway continues to serve churches seeking to reach and equip college students with the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are almost 23 million college students in North America and churches are continuing to seek ways to reach and equip this important segment of our population. Lifeway provides churches and collegiate ministries with resources that will assist in making disciples of Jesus among college and university students.

Ongoing curriculum provides churches with trustworthy resources that give college students the opportunity to study the Scriptures in small groups, Sunday School, or on their own. *Bible Studies for Life* and *Explore the Bible* Daily Discipleship Guides, *The Gospel Project* curriculum series, and *YOU* Bible studies all address relevant and crucial issues of how the Scriptures intersect with the lives of college students. Whether the starting point in these groups is life, the text, or theology, the various lines of curriculum that Lifeway offers for college ministry will help students grow in their walk with Christ.

Short-term studies continue to be produced by Lifeway that are great for 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.

These titles can be found on lifeway.com and include studies such as *Anxious* by Scarlet Hiltibidal, *With Us in the Wilderness* by Lauren Chandler, *Stories Jesus Told* by Daniel Fusco, *Encountering God* by Kelly Minter, *Romans 8* by Noe Garcia, *Ecclesiastes: Finding Meaning in a World of Passing Pursuits* by Barnabas Piper, *He’s Where the Joy Is* by Tara Leigh Cobble, *From Beginning to Forever* by Elizabeth Woodson, a study on Philippians by Juan Sanchez, and *Spiritual Gifts* by Dan Darling. In addition to these studies, available from the Lifeway Student team are two college specific resources, *A Different College Experience* by Ben Trueblood and Brian Mills and *In My Feels* by Mackenzie Wilson and Mackenzie Durham.

Future Plans — Short-term studies will continue to be offered that are relevant to issues that young adults and college students are facing within their culture. Some studies planned in the next year include *Everyday Evangelism* by Preston Perry and new releases in the Storyteller series.

3. 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 — Lifeway continues to provide consultation to schools and churches related to a wide range of topics about Christian school and homeschool education.

4. Assist churches with ministries to men and women.

Men's Ministry

Our culture is confused about what it means to be a man. Even notions of masculinity have, in many corners, become toxic. In this context, Lifeway released the *Kingdom Men Rising* Bible study. This release from the Lifeway Adult Publishing Team speaks truth into a poorly defined and disoriented culture about the purpose and future of masculinity from a biblical perspective. In this Bible study, men are challenged to wrestle honestly with the unique questions and circumstances they face today. It invites men deep into their own stories to reveal the true expression of masculinity—God's intent. Over the last year this has been one of Lifeway's most popular Bible studies across all ministry areas — a good sign that Lifeway is reaching men with timely messages.

In June of this past year Lifeway Men released an eight-week study in the book of Daniel with author and pastor J.D. Greear. This resource has already been a huge success and has served to be an important addition to our catalog of men's resources. It has done so primarily because of its focus and its book of the Bible starting point. The book of Daniel is about how to thrive in a dark world. In this resource, we hope men facing the cultural challenges of today will connect to the ancient wisdom of Daniel and learn that the power to make a difference is found in the commitment to be different.

In January of 2023 Lifeway Men launched a new initiative that will serve as a daily devotional and small group guide for men called *Daily Anchor*. This digital only resource will connect men with God's Word in a daily rhythm throughout the year and then bring small groups of men together 52 weeks a year for intentional conversations around the reading they have been doing throughout the week. Lifeway Men has partnered with local pastors and church leaders to develop these devotionals. It will feature authors and pastors like Dean Inerra, Gregg Matte, Noe Garcia, Robby Gallaty, J.D. Greear, Vance Pitman, Ray Ortlund, Juan Sanchez, and many more. This resource will offer fresh content every quarter and currently has two full years of devotional content to choose from. Groups can decide for themselves what topic, book of the Bible, or author to study next. We hope this will create a wave of disciple-making among men within the churches we serve.

Lifeway Men continues to provide biblically trusted resources, most notably *Kingdom Man* and *No More Excuses* and six volumes of *33 The Series with Authentic Manhood*, but also studies that meet the needs of men such as *Marks of a Disciple*, *Help My Unbelief*, and John 1-3.

In April of 2024, Lifeway Men released *Titus Ten*, a new men’s resource by Josh Smith. Josh has distilled 10 foundations upon which to build godly men. Using his time-tested teaching process, which he implements with the men at his church, this study will serve other churches as a manual for becoming the kind of man God intends for us to be all while leading other men to do the same. This study was adapted from the B&H book by the same title. Also released in spring of 2024 was the CSB Daily Men’s Bible from B&H designed to help men engage God’s Word and see how Scripture can inform every aspect of their lives.

Future Plans — Lifeway continues to develop new tools and resources for men’s ministry.

Women’s Ministry

Lifeway Christian Resources and the Women’s Event and Publishing Team continue to equip and minister to women across the country and beyond with multiple live events and resources for a diversified audience, both to the SBC and other women of faith.

Over 150,000 women were connected to Lifeway Women through our live and digital events. The Lifeway Women team hosted four simulcast events in 2023: Lifeway Women Live Simulcast in April, Going Beyond Simulcast with Priscilla Shirer in August, Glory Livestream with Jackie Hill Perry in October, and Prepare Him Room Digital Event with Kristi McLelland in December. These simulcast events reached over 120,000 women.

Lifeway Women was also able to train more than 3,000 women in fiscal year 2023 through our live You Lead Events and Women’s Leadership Forum. The 2023 Lifeway Women Leadership Forum was held in November 2023. More than 625 women participated in this training.

We had a year full of releases from the short-term Bible study team. These included: *Abide* (1, 2, & 3 John) by Jen Wilkin; *Navigating Gospel Truth* by Rebecca McLaughlin; *When You Pray*, an ensemble study featuring Kelly Minter, Jackie Hill Perry, Jen Wilkin, Jada Edwards, and Kristi McLelland; *Desperate for Hope* by Vaneetha Risner; *Devoted: 30 Days with the Women of the Bible*; *As for Me: Life Through the Lens of the Psalms* by Adrienne Camp; *Grateful: Giving Thanks to God in All Things*; *Without Wavering* by Alexandra Hoover; *Ashamed* by Scarlet Hiltibidal; and *Life Under the Sun: Ecclesiastes* by Hannah Anderson.

The Lifeway Women app has had over 48,500 downloads since the launch in August 2020. This app provides free plans that correspond with our Bible Studies and allows women to form groups within the app to study together. It also includes a few paid plans that contain all the content from a Bible study. This app also makes it easy to listen to the *Marked* podcast and read the latest news from Lifeway Women. *Journey* devotional users also have access to their devotionals through the app.

Future Plans — Lifeway Women will continue to offer the multi-platform Lifeway Women Live event as well as events with Priscilla Shirer. The publishing pipeline for 2024 includes plans to publish the following women’s Bible studies: *Sermon on the Mount* Re-Release by Jen Wilkin; *The Gospel of John* by Melissa Spoelstra; *Alive* a Lifeway Women Release; *Revelation* by Jen Wilkin; *Ephesians* by Jackie Hill Perry, Jasmine Holmes, and Melissa Kruger; *Come Home* by Caroline Saunders; *Luke in the Land* by Kristi McLelland; *Joy to the World: An Advent Study*; *Dwell On These Things* by Natalie Abbott and Vera Schmitz, and *Esther* by Kelly Minter.

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

CentriKid, Student Life, and FUGE camps hosted more than 111,000 people in 2023. It was an exciting summer from the very first moment as our staff and church attendees arrived on

location ready for the fun, for the relationships, and for the life-change that happens each year through camp ministry. In summer 2023, more than 3,700 campers placed their faith in Jesus for salvation. Additionally, kids and teenagers gave over \$580,000 in offerings to support the work of the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board.

Not only is camp ministry a great moment for the churches who attend, it also has an impact in the surrounding communities. In 2023, registrants served and shared the gospel at 445 mission sites.

Future Plans — Lifeway continues to host camps across the country through FUGE, Student Life, CentriKid, and Student Life Kids. In 2024 FUGE Camps and Student Life Camps adopted the theme “Revival Generation” and will explore stories in the Bible of great change and revival that resulted in generational impact. Students will be challenged to make a difference for generations to come.

In April 2020, Lifeway’s board of trustees authorized a recommendation for the organization’s executive team to pursue viable options for the disposition of Ridgecrest Conference Center and Summer Camps. Lifeway’s transfer of the conference center and camps to the Ridgecrest Foundation was completed by December 30, 2020. Lifeway continues to use Ridgecrest for events including student camps, kids camps, the Black Church Leadership and Family conference, and the Lifeway Partners Summit.

6. 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 and service. In 2023, B&H released 77 books for all ages and audiences, from children and college students to new believers, lay leaders in the church, men and women serious about personal discipleship, pastors, missionaries, and professors.

B&H Books — Jackie Hill Perry’s *Upon Waking: 60 Daily Reflections to Discover Ourselves and the God We Were Made For* was B&H’s strongest release of the year, making the bestseller lists of USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, and Publishers Weekly. Other top authors included Richard Blackaby, Jen Wilkin, Priscilla Shirer, and Tony Evans.

B&H partnered with New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary president Jamie Dew to publish *Let This Mind Be in You*, an invitation to servanthood, and with North American Mission Board executive director of church replanting and rural strategy Mark Clifton to publish *Reclaiming Glory: Creating a Gospel Legacy throughout North America*. The imprint also explored topics such as pastoring in small towns, spiritual disciplines, deacon ministry, women’s identity and work, Islam, and preparing for missionary service. Key devotional books included *This Blessed Life* by Kelly Minter, *Putting Jesus First* by Courtney Tracy, and *JESUS* by Lisa Harper.

B&H Kids — Committed to transforming children’s hearts and minds by biblical principles, B&H Kids published books by influential authors such as Ellie Holcomb, Lauren Chandler, and Sam Allberry. Some titles recounted biblical stories, including *10 Days of the Easter Story and Noah’s Gloomy Joyful Ark*, while others introduced children to important Christians and Baptists of the past like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Lottie Moon.

B&H Kids also tackled tough topics that children today are exposed to, such as God’s design for marriage, in *God’s Signpost: How Marriage Points Us to God’s Love, God Gave Me Mommy, and God Gave Me Daddy*. Other books celebrated God’s creation and stimulated children’s

imagination, including *Great and Small: Bible Animals* by B&H Kids staff editors and *The World God Made* by Hannah and Nathan Anderson.

B&H Academic — Focused on providing theologically faithful textbooks and classroom resources for scholars, professors, and students, B&H Academic published 22 books in 2023. Notable releases included *Baptist Political Theology*, edited by Thomas Kidd, Paul Miller, and Andrew Walker, and *Humanity in the Theology for the People of God* (TPG) series, co-authored by John Hammett and Katie McCoy. *Baptist Political Theology* was selected for a Christianity Today book award, and *Humanity* continued the TPG series' unique integration of biblical and systematic theology from a Baptist view.

B&H Academic also published books for specific subject areas, such as ethics (*Fundamental Christian Ethics*), K-12 pedagogy (*Transformational Teaching*), philosophy (*Unraveling Philosophy*), biblical studies (*Old Testament Survey, 3rd ed.* and *Jesus and the Gospels, 3rd ed.*), evangelism and discipleship (*Recapturing Evangelism*), and women's ministry (*Empowered and Equipped* and *Women Leading Well*). Notable authors included Daniel Akin, David Dockery, Nathan Finn, Paul House, William Cook III, Jason Thacker, and Brandon Smith.

B&H Bible & Reference—Holman Bibles publishes Bibles, commentaries, and reference titles to support individuals of all ages in their understanding of Scripture. In 2023, the Holman Bible imprint continued to see significant growth in market share of the CSB—its proprietary Bible translation—ranking near the top of all major English translations. In addition, the Holman imprint continues to be recognized as one of the largest Bible publishing houses by the ECPA.

In addition to market share recognition, the ECPA also awarded the *CSB Explorer Bible* for Kids the Bible of the Year Award for 2023. It is only the second time a kids' Bible has won this prestigious award throughout ECPA's award history and is reflective of the immense reception this Bible has received among families and Kids' ministries.

Other notable 2023 releases and contributions in the CSB portfolio included the release of the *CSB Life Counsel Bible*, which brings together an expansive list of expert Christian counselors and scholars who are capable of helping readers directly apply biblical principles to literally hundreds of everyday life issues in ways that are Christ-honoring, immensely practical, and pastorally helpful.

Future Plans — Looking ahead to 2024, the B&H Publishing Group plans to grow its number of releases from over 75 to nearly 100. It will publish authors such as O.S. Hawkins, Malcolm Yarnell, Tara Dew, Ray Ortland, Gary Habermas, and Stephen Wellum. The year's key releases will be *I Surrender All* by Priscilla Shirer and *Devoted to Jesus* by Stephen and Alex Kendrick.

The B&H Publishing Group and Bible & Reverence division is honored to partner with others throughout Lifeway and across the denomination to produce resources that address needs in the context of ministry in the SBC.

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

In 2023, tens of thousands of churches were served through lifeway.com. Throughout the year, we focused on creating a frictionless and delightful experience for customers visiting our website. New features at lifeway.com included the launch of biometric login, improved product pages, updates to the My Lifeway account tool, and a new shopping cart. These improvements continue to help church leaders find the resources they need for their ministries.

Lifeway.com continues to be recognized on Newsweek's list of Best Online Shops in the category of media (e.g., books, CD, DVD, software).

In addition to lifeway.com, Lifeway interacts with customers in a variety of channels and multiple touch points including our Customer Service Center, as well as external channels that help customers interact with our resources.

Southern Baptists have access to Lifeway material through channels such as the Amazon Marketplace, retail chains such as Walmart, Books-a-Million, and Mardel Stores, and a network of more than 500 independent Christian retailers in 45 states who serve as authorized Lifeway dealers. Through these channels, Lifeway has extended its reach to new markets and more customers.

Another value for churches obtaining resources and services through Lifeway is the team of experts who can help churches and church leaders find just the right resource for their ministry needs.

Future Plans — Lifeway is continuing to sharpen our focus on creating resources for the local church and being a trusted ministry partner to church leaders. In alignment with this focus, we have decided that moving forward we will only carry Lifeway and B&H published resources on lifeway.com. While we will still offer a select assortment of books and Bibles from other publishers at regional and national events, we will move away from selling products by other publishers on our website in the first half of 2024.

We know churches look to Lifeway.com as a trusted source for biblical resources whether they are published by us or another publisher. Although we may not stock every book as we have in the past, we will still curate a trustworthy list of resources and guide customers to purchase what best meets their needs.

In the coming months, you will see continued improvements to lifeway.com as we will develop customized experiences for specific ministry areas. 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. Through this approach we will not only offer trustworthy Lifeway products, but also a rich assortment of content and experiences that will directly address the felt needs of each unique ministry leader role. Ultimately, we want to be known as a trusted ministry partner who understands the needs of church leaders and helps fuel their ministries.

8. Assist churches through church architecture consultation and services.

As Lifeway's strategic partner in providing architecture, planning, and construction services to churches and nonprofits nationwide, Visioneering Studios specializes in delivering creative, innovative, Budget Savvy spaces that further a church's mission. Together, we're incredibly proud of the many accomplishments and accolades Visioneering's work has produced in 2023.

As a trusted resource dedicated to helping organizations impact their communities through design, construction and expansion, Visioneering offers comprehensive Master Planning, Architecture, Real Estate Development, Wayfinding/Branded Signage and Graphics, Interior Design, and Construction General Contracting services.

New Studios in Texas and Tennessee

Building on the momentum of 2022, Visioneering's Nashville and Dallas locations moved into new spaces in 2023 to better fit their growing team. These beautiful offices are not only showcases for innovative design, they're also strategically located to be a short flight from anywhere in the lower 48, helping the Visioneering team reach more churches across the country.

Introducing Enviropop

Also in 2023, they launched a sister-company called Enviropop to better serve their dedicated wayfinding, branded signage and environmental graphics clients. Made up of an elite environmental design team from Visioneering Studios, Enviropop blends imagination with fabrication to bring buildings and spaces to life in ways you never thought possible. Launched in June, Enviropop has already had a banner first year, with five projects either completed or in progress.

2023 Projects

Even with the broader economic challenges in their path, Visioneering guided over 100 churches along the path to launching their visions into reality. Running the gamut from new construction projects to refreshing renovations to wayfinding upgrades aimed at improving how visitors navigate a church's grounds, the Visioneering team stayed busy—and incredibly fulfilled!

One such project completed this year was the much-anticipated Legacy Park at Long Hollow Church in Hendersonville, TN. Garnering rave reviews, this breathtaking space brings the indoor and outdoor together to create an active, immersive place for the community to gather and grow together.

Visioneering started 40+ projects in 2023, including Red Bank Baptist in Chattanooga, TN, Peavine Baptist Church in Rock Springs, GA, Journey Baptist Church in Saint Joseph, MO, Watermark Church in Fort Worth, TX, New Vision Baptist Church in Murfreesboro, TN, and many more.

Future Plans— Visioneering Studios has broken ground on over 10 new construction projects in 2023 leveraging their creative and collaborative Design+Build approach supported by their Budget Savvy Guarantee™ that keeps costs in check. Visioneering Studios can't wait to shepherd these projects, and many more, to the finish line in 2024.

Also in 2024, Visioneering Studios is continuing their push to help churches increase revenue by finding innovative ways to leverage unused land for commercial development. With 20 potential real estate projects in the pipeline, including Hulen Street Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, the Visioneering Real Estate team is proving that church leaders can tap into hidden resources to further fund their missions—without losing their non-profit status, or their minds. Even if you don't see an opportunity on your grounds, call Visioneering. You might be surprised what revenue sources are hiding in plain sight.

Have a vision for your church that you're ready to make a reality? Call Visioneering Studios at (888) 539-1957 or visit VisioneeringStudios.com to learn more.

9. Assist churches in capital fundraising.

As the consulting arm of Lifeway, Auxano navigates church, ministry, and denominational leaders through innovative and collaborative processes to reach breakthrough clarity on their growth challenges. Areas of focus range from visionary planning and discipleship alignment to leadership development and generosity initiatives.

As a key “on-the-ground” resource for Lifeway, Auxano not only works directly with a wide variety of churches across the country but also is able to provide Lifeway with insight of what ministry leaders are facing day to day. In doing so, Auxano is part of the Lifeway team that is building a nimble, integrated approach to address the most important disciple-making and growth issues of churches as we look to the future. This includes a variety of ways to grow customer acquisition, client nurturing, and resource influence. Examples in 2023 included:

Virtual and in-person consulting services to a wide variety of vision clarity and capital campaign clients, including church plants, small churches averaging fewer than 200 in worship, mega-churches averaging 3,000-10,000+ in worship, and multi-campus churches.

Launch of a nine-part Multiplication Operating System and six-phase Multiplier’s Journey in partnership with the Exponential national network. Book launch of *Mind the Gap: Leading Your Church to Agility & Effectiveness in Any Environment* by Clint Grider (B&H Publishing). In a fast-changing world, this resource helps leaders become more adaptive and nimble, and maximize their effectiveness no matter what they’re facing. It shows how churches of all sizes with varying challenges can know they’re doing the most impactful things to deepen their growth and disciple-making impact.

Continued development and deployment of cutting-edge assessments such as:

- Engagement Survey (how people are assimilating in the church)
- ViewPoint Survey (what congregations currently think about their church’s identity and future)
- Mind the Gap Survey (the degree to which church discipleship approaches are actually working and how to improve them in real-time)
- Campaign Assessment (how people perceive their involvement in generosity/capital campaigns). Facilitation of innovative national, regional, and local webinars/meetings/podcasts to help leaders navigate practical challenges and increase passion for the church’s mission among all of their people.

Continued launch of cutting-edge capital campaigns and generosity consulting tools to posture our services as both proven and entrepreneurial

Future Plans— The year 2024 will see continued expansion and integration of deeper discipleship resources, events, and other tools that Auxano is developing with Lifeway. As we continue bringing breakthrough clarity to church leaders, we will provide what they need when they need it to respond to challenges to realize their vision.

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

Lifeway Research released a variety of significant research studies in 2023. These included research on Hispanic Protestant Churches in the U.S., churchgoers’ time alone with God, racial reconciliation, regular church attendance, payday lending, tithing, adoption and foster care, prosperity gospel, congregational fears, deconstruction, skipping worship services, livestreaming, church security, church switching, and women’s ministry.

These findings and daily 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).

Future Plans— Lifeway Research will release research studies in 2024 on prison ministry, Baptist views on political theology, wellbeing of Hispanic pastors, groups ministry, and discipleship.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Lifeway Christian Resources for consideration, action, or report.



4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, Georgia 30022

ERIC J. THOMAS, Chair

KEVIN EZELL, President

At the North American Mission Board (NAMB) we are grateful to have the privilege of helping Southern Baptists move the mission forward in North America every single day. In everything we do, we strive to make pastors (and the churches they lead) our number one “customer.” It’s churches that send missionaries. It’s churches that plant churches. And it is churches that baptize new believers.

None of what we do at NAMB would be possible without the faithful generosity Southern Baptists demonstrate through their giving. Because of that giving, more than 3,000 Southern Baptist missionaries are able to have gospel-driven ministries in North America.

In 2023, Southern Baptists gave an all-time record high of \$70.2 million to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®, all of which funds missionaries and sends evangelistic resources to the field. This, combined with faithful giving through the Cooperative Program, allows NAMB to help Southern Baptists start new churches, meet needs and share Christ during times of crisis and provide evangelism resources that churches are utilizing to train their members to live on mission with the gospel.

Because you give:

Our ***Evangelism Team*** is seeing great engagement from churches. In 2023 more than 10,000 copies of NAMB’s new Evangelism Kit were distributed to churches. The kit is designed to help pastors create a culture of evangelism in their church that will endure even as programs and emphases come and go. We had the opportunity to train more than 1,300 pastors and ministry leaders who plan to implement the training in their churches.

Our Refresh Retreats give ministry leaders a chance to be equipped, encouraged and re-energized, and in 2023 we were able to provide this experience for more than 1,200 pastors and their wives. Since launching our Youth Leader Coaching Network in 2021, more than 800 youth leaders have attended the in-person gatherings, and more than 1,500 youth leaders have participated in the online sessions. Our Collegiate Coaching Network launched in the spring of 2022, and since then has had more than 260 collegiate leaders participate in the in-person gatherings and more than 400 engaged through the online sessions. Both networks equip leaders to engage students in evangelism, discipleship and missions.

Send Network, our church planting arm, is helping Southern Baptists start new churches everywhere for everyone. In 2023, we celebrated as Southern Baptists surpassed more than 10,000 new churches started since 2010, an incredible testimony to God’s faithfulness and the Great Commission commitment our churches have. Under Vance Pitman’s leadership, more than 400 church planters attended Send Network orientation at NAMB in 2023. In addition, we hosted five Send Network Gatherings throughout North America where church planters and their wives received training, coaching and encouragement as they met with fellow planting couples and Send Network leaders. Also this year, we launched the new Mobilization Pathway which helps churches take their next step in church planting.

In 2023, Southern Baptists added 840 new congregations. That includes 608 new church plants, 44 replants, 122 new affiliations and 66 new campuses.

Send Relief, the compassion ministry we lead in collaboration with the International Mission Board, is meeting immediate needs for thousands of people while also pointing them to salvation through Christ. In North America, Send Relief engaged more than 33,000 from more than 3,300 churches in 2023. We also added new resources designed to help churches start and sustain gospel-centered compassion ministries in their local communities. Send Relief has launched seven new video courses as part of its Church Guide to Ministry, with expert practitioners in each of their respective fields. We have cultivated a network of Affiliate Ministry Centers over the last year, allowing Send Relief to walk alongside other like-minded ministries in the hope of elevating their presence and sharing their best practices as they seek to serve their communities and resource SBC churches.

NAMB-endorsed Southern Baptist **Chaplains** number more than 3,300 as they serve and minister all over the globe, reaching people that churches often cannot access. This includes more than 1,100 military chaplains who serve men and women in the United States Armed Services stationed on military bases throughout the world. In addition to endorsing chaplains on behalf of Southern Baptists, NAMB provides training, resources and encouragement to chaplains serving in hospitals, prisons, in disaster settings, law enforcement and as first responders.

At NAMB, it's all about the gospel and we are here to serve and support pastors and churches as they minister on the front lines of lostness. Our more than 6,600 missionaries and chaplains were disciplined, raised up and called out from local Southern Baptist churches, and we are grateful for each one of them.

Thank you, Southern Baptists, for the privilege to serve you and to partner with you in taking the gospel to North America.

Serving Together,

Kevin Ezell
President

Eric J. Thomas
Chair

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 2024 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. The Pipeline allows a church to intentionally raise up leaders who may one day plant a church or serve in another

leadership capacity within the church. To date, 1,751 churches are exploring or implementing the Multiplication Pipeline, and they have engaged 22,702 participants in Pipeline training. Our Multiplication Pipeline is available online for any church, free of charge, through the Send Network's Church Development Library.

We are encouraging SBC churches to offer residencies, through which they can intentionally discover, develop and deploy missional leaders and church planting teams. Thus far, there are 434 churches offering residency opportunities, and we are seeking to identify more. This is an increase beyond the 359 churches that had residencies last year.

In 2023, Send Network also launched a new Mobilization Pathway that helps churches take their next missional step in church planting. This tool is designed to help a local church participate in the goal of reaching North America through church planting and highlights the various ways that churches can get involved in the process.

In 2023, newchurches.com added new church planting resources to equip church planters and Sending Churches. This included the Preaching Masterclass video course which ended the year with more than 6,000 registrations. The newchurches.com site offers free courses, e-books, podcasts, articles and other resources to help provide planters and churches with the tools they need for starting effective, sustainable new churches.

Send Network introduced the Church Planter Profile in 2023 as a way of providing a general framework for preparing, assessing, training, coaching and resourcing church planters. The profile walks through nine different areas: the heart, relationships, calling, theology, mission, teaching, the Church, the nations and practical leadership.

Send Network continues to provide a clear pathway for SBC churches to utilize in deploying God-called believers across North America. The 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. Send Network's Planter Development team then takes the baton once an individual is endorsed by the Discovery team, providing the opportunity for orientation, training, coaching and care for all SBC planters.

In 2023, NAMB hosted 47 assessment retreats and conducted 371 assessments.

Send Network Orientation took place with a total of more than 400 in attendance. During orientation, newly endorsed planters are informed of the vision and mission of Send Network and equipped to embody the network's shared values: seek first the kingdom, deepen devotion, stick together, think multiplication and engage your city. Planters also 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 we provide 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 church planters and help them process the next steps to personal, familial 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 and the church plant is transformational. Send Network provides care and has implemented a strategy to train and coach our planting 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.

In June, Tony Merida, founding pastor of Imago Dei Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, joined Send Network to become vice president of planter development. Merida will oversee Send Network's planter pathway, as well as the equipping and development of church planters.

NAMB is working to provide all Send Network Planter Pathway tools and resources to be used by Send Network 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 national Send Network brand recognition.
- Gain special access for their church planters at church planting and mission events.

GenSend gives college students hands on experience with church planting and compassion ministry. In 2023, 1,100 collegiate students participated in GenSend Break opportunities and 385 students participated in GenSend Summer opportunities. GenSend celebrated 10 years of ministry sending students to some of the hardest to reach parts of North America. These students served in cities across the nation through church planting and compassion ministry opportunities to reach people with the hope of the gospel.

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 will help reach their community with the hope of the gospel. In 2023, the Evangelism team had the privilege of serving thousands of pastors and ministry leaders, 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 2023, the Evangelism team offered a new NAMB Evangelism Kit to churches across the SBC. The kit is designed to help churches develop a roadmap for creating a culture of evangelism in the life of the local church. NAMB distributed 10,000 of these kits in Fall 2023 to churches, associations, and state/region conventions. The kit is also available in Spanish, and both English and Spanish kit content are also available as online courses. Evangelism Training events began in late summer 2023 for a total of 13 training events with more than 1,300 attendees by the end of the year. Additionally, the Evangelism team is working on versions of the evangelism kit for women, youth leaders, collegiate leaders and other language groups. These versions will be available as online courses in 2024 at nambevangelism.com.

Free Resources

In addition to the new Evangelism Kit, NAMB continues to offer free evangelism resources to help pastors lead their church in evangelism, including the 3 Circles Kit, Best News Kit, and the Who's Your One Kit. Since the launch of Who's Your One, we have distributed more than 36,300 kits, more than 713,400 prayer guides and 2.29 million bookmarks to churches. In addition, NAMB also distributed more than 3,000 Spanish kits, more than 28,600 Spanish prayer guides and more than 148,600 Spanish bookmarks.

NAMB continues to offer a free resource periodically, typically a book, to pastors who request it. This resource provides either equipping or encouragement for pastors in evangelism and leadership.

Refresh Retreats

NAMB hosted six Refresh Retreats for pastors and wives in 2023. These were scattered across the U.S.—Atlanta (2); The Billy Graham Retreat Center: The Cove in Asheville, N.C. (2); Anaheim, Calif.; and Chicago. For the first time, NAMB partnered with the National African American Fellowship at The Cove for a Refresh Retreat designed specifically for African American pastors and their wives. The other Refresh Retreat at The Cove was focused primarily on serving bivocational pastors and their wives. 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 1,200 pastors and wives attended these retreats, and they shared numerous testimonies of how the Lord provided much-needed rest, encouragement and refreshment.

Next Gen

There is massive mission field of teenagers and college students in need of the gospel. NAMB continues to provide relevant next gen resources for youth and collegiate pastors and leaders as they reach their students with the gospel and mobilize them to live on mission through post-graduation. The resources can be found online at www.gensend.org.

In 2023, NAMB's Evangelism team hosted two cohorts for the Youth Leader Coaching Network (YLCN) led by Shane Pruitt. The Spring semester had more than 300 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions, and more than 150 leaders came to the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB's building in Alpharetta. The Fall semester had 496 youth leaders sign up for the online sessions with more than 200 leaders attending the two-day in-person gathering at NAMB. Since YLCN's launch in 2021, more than 800 youth leaders have attended the in-person gatherings, and more than 1,500 youth leaders have participated in the online sessions. The Collegiate Coaching Network (CCN), led by Paul Worcester, had over 180 college leaders attended the Fall semester in-person gathering at the NAMB building in Alpharetta. There were also over

200 leaders who participated in the online sessions. CCN launched in the spring of 2022, and since then has had more than 260 collegiate leaders participate in the in-person gatherings and more than 400 engaged through the online sessions. Both networks equip leaders to engage their students in evangelism.

The Evangelism team also created and released two new digital resources this past year that are available for all churches, ministries and state partners. Life Essentials: New Believers Guide for Students is a video-based “next steps” for students once they make a profession of faith in Jesus for salvation. Also, Understanding a Calling to Ministry is an online course that provides videos and discussion guides to help lead people who feel called to ministry.

NAMB emphasized the second annual SBC National Student Baptism Day on October 29, 2023. Churches across the nation gave students an opportunity to take their next steps of faith through believer’s baptism. It’s encouraging to see the number of students who are boldly following Jesus.

The spiritual lostness in North America with students is great and the need to reach people with the gospel is urgent. In 2024, more new resources and trainings will be released to help churches and ministries create a culture of evangelism in their church in an effort to change the trajectory of the ever-growing number of young people who do not know Jesus.

Other teams across NAMB continue to see great results through their evangelistic work. In 2023, Send Relief reported its volunteers had 47,356 gospel conversations. Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDL) volunteers reported 32,546 gospel conversations with 8,561 professions of faith. With reporting for the year still incomplete, Southern Baptist chaplains reported more than 65,000 gospel presentations with 11,023 professions of faith.

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

NAMB currently has 3,299 missionaries and 3,300 endorsed chaplains.

To grow the number of missions personnel, NAMB’s Send Network team has a comprehensive training resource for the local church to discover and develop future church planting missionaries. The Multiplication Pipeline allows a church to intentionally raise up 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.

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 missions strategy for making disciples in their community. 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 and 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.

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 in need. Send Relief's and NAMB's desire is that mission education 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, carries missions awareness, advocacy and engagement features. Our annual prayer calendar not only equips Southern Baptists to pray for North American missionaries, it also informs them about where the missionaries serve, the types of ministries they lead and 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 work. NAMB produces missions videos for use in Lifeway student camps and Vacation Bible School as well as assists with other entity requests for materials to enhance 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 ministry centers and ministry events. In 2023, through national efforts, Send Relief has worked directly with 1,909 churches across North America and Puerto Rico. Send Relief

mobilized churches to serve throughout North America, which resulted in 32,142 individuals engaging to serve 246,481 people across diverse communities and catalyzed 47,365 gospel conversations.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers, with support from Send Relief, prepared more than 1,022,084 meals and shared the gospel 32,546 times. Send Relief also helped catalyze churches to participate in a Backpack Day in their local communities. There were more than 903 churches that registered for the event and more than 80,000 backpacks distributed to local SBC churches for them to use in their Backpack Day mission project.

Send Relief's focus area coaching has become a key initiative that has taken off with more than 210 churches receiving direct coaching over the last year in a specific area of compassion ministry. We have coach ambassadors for each of Send Relief's five focus areas. Church leaders receive hands-on help to evaluate, investigate and discover how they could implement best practices in their community. These coaches are men and women who have worked with the vulnerable most of their adult life and can offer expert advice to churches in a customizable, culturally appropriate way. This is a resource available to any church that may be ready to take that next step. From the shallow to the deep end of the pool, coaches 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 seven new video courses as part of its Church Guide to Ministry, with expert practitioners in each of their respective fields. Whether a person has been in ministry for six months or 60 years, he or she will walk away encouraged and inspired by these thoughtful and time-tested best practices for engaging in practical and gospel-centered methods. Five of these 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. The two newest trainings give a deep dive into how a church can be ready to respond to a crisis—since it's not “if,” but “when” crisis will strike a community—and a hands-on practical approach in establishing a local ministry.

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 by primarily by local churches and their extended ministry goals to generate long-term impact 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, service is given with the goal and intention of sharing Christ—our ultimate Hope—through the process. It is about meeting needs to earn the right to share the gospel.

The insight these churches and local experts have provided has given a unique opportunity for volunteers to have the most transformative impact possible through 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 a dramatic response from churches taking part and working together in 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.

Through Send Relief’s Serve Tour, since 2021, there have been over 9,094 volunteers who have served more than 38,000 people and engaged in 8,365 gospel conversations. The national Serve Tour’s 2024 locations and dates are:

- Augusta, Ga.: Feb. 9-10, 2024
- Dallas, Texas: Mar. 15-16, 2024
- Flint, Mich.: Aug. 9-10, 2024
- West Virginia Coalfields: Apr. 19-20, 2024
- Brownsville, Texas: Oct. 11-12, 2024.

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 Retreats

In 2023, NAMB hosted six Refresh Retreats for pastors and their wives. These were scattered across the United States—Atlanta (2); The Billy Graham Retreat Center: The Cove in Asheville, N.C. (2); Anaheim, Calif.; and Chicago. For the first time, NAMB partnered with the National African American Fellowship at The Cove for a Refresh Retreat designed specifically for African American pastors and their wives. The second retreat at The Cove was focused primarily on serving bivocational pastors and their wives. 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 1,200 pastors and wives attended these retreats, and they shared numerous testimonies of how the Lord provided much-needed rest, encouragement, and refreshment.

Replant

In 2023, the Replant team conducted various training sessions for pastors, replanters, and leaders at different levels. The sixth Replant Practitioner Lab in March trained more than 260 Associational Mission Strategists in how to consult with declining churches and churches that are nearing closure.

The Replant Summit in August, held in Alpharetta, Ga., focused on equipping more than 215 replanting pastors, their spouses and leaders for effective and enduring ministry in replanting local churches.

Replant Hub, an online resource for sermon and worship materials, launched in March, attracting 846 unique church subscribers from 12 content-providing churches and four worship providers.

Replant sponsored six residencies in New York, Oregon, North Carolina and Colorado, training more than 190 replanters. NAMB's Replant team members led training to thousands of pastors and leaders across North America and conducted equipping events for Hispanic Southern Baptist leaders. Additionally, our podcast, Revitalize and Replant averages more than 6,100 downloads a month and our Replant Collective subscribers average more than 4,800.

In March 2023, the Replant team hosted a Rural Summit to highlight the significant work taking place in rural areas. The event offered encouragement and equipped leaders serving in those locations.

The Replant Cohort, a strategic partnership with Practical Shepherding, delivers weekly training and regional cohorts for free to its participants. Each week, nearly 100 replanters participate in this program, which also includes an online community for participants to engage in dialogue regarding their shared goal of renewing local churches. More than 1,200 revitalization and replant pastors from 48 states and 38 countries have undergone a 40-week training, with nearly 600 continuing to the second year for regional gatherings and ongoing support.

Pastoral Leadership

Early in 2023, NAMB announced the addition of Ken Whitten to lead the Pastoral Leadership team. Whitten has come alongside pastors to care for them and assist in their leadership development. He works with NAMB's Research and Resource Development team to produce and source a variety of practical and free tools for pastors. These are featured on namb.net/pastors.

For additional statistics and information, see Ministry Inquiry 12 and Challenge V.

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 sharing the gospel. State and local leaders continually seek to engage SBDR for long-term assistance in their communities. Send Relief is seeking to consistently be a catalyst for churches in Crisis Response and specifically to support state convention teams. In addition to the logistical support, Send Relief has, within the last year, created two web-based trainings for anyone to access: 1) How to Respond to a Crisis and 2) Ready Church (available in second quarter of 2024). These resources help a church prepare and respond effectively when crisis strikes. These and other resources are available on SendRelief.org.

In addition to the 103 responses during 2023, 34 of our state convention partners responded to national natural disaster events for which Send Relief provided coordination and/or response supplies. In serving communities during these times, SBDR volunteers contributed to the following statistics:

SBDR Summary Activity Reported 10/1/2022 – 9/30/2023

Professions of Faith	8,561
Gospel Presentations	32,546
Volunteer Days	76,569
Work Hours	636,069
Total Meals Prepared	1,022,084

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 32,142 volunteers, served 248,481 individuals, and impacted 1,909 churches, allowing 47,356 people to hear the gospel.

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

The North American Mission Board's Collegiate Coaching Network is designed to engage and equip leaders to lead evangelistic ministries while reaching and mobilizing their students in evangelism. In 2023, the Collegiate Coaching Network saw more than 180 collegiate pastors and leaders participate.

Paul Worcester, national collegiate director, and Shane Pruitt, national Next Gen director, partner closely with BCM state directors and Collegiate Church Network leaders to help train collegiate leaders across the nation. Paul focuses on leading one-day training events for networks of collegiate leaders on building evangelistic momentum as well as speaking and leading at other collegiate leader events. Paul and Shane were involved in training more than 2,000 collegiate leaders in 2023. They also spoke to thousands of college students across the nation, equipping them to live on mission.

NAMB emphasized the second annual SBC National Student Baptism Day on October 29, 2023. Churches across the nation gave students an opportunity to take their next steps of faith through believer's baptism. It's encouraging to see the number of students who are boldly following Jesus.

NAMB continues to provide relevant next gen resources for collegiate pastors and leaders to use to reach their students with the gospel and to mobilize them to live on mission from freshman year of college through post-grad. The GenSend Podcast and many more resources can be found online at www.gensend.org.

In 2023, 1,100 collegiate students participated in GenSend Break opportunities and 385 students participated in GenSend Summer opportunities, which celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. These students served in cities across the nation through church planting and compassion ministry opportunities to reach people with the hope of the gospel.

Send Network, NAMB's church planting arm, has also focused on planting evangelistic churches in collegiate communities in recent years. These efforts are designed to reach both the college campus and the surrounding community with the gospel and empower college students to be sent on mission both during their time in college and as they enter their professional careers. Send Network has come alongside church-based networks, such as The Salt Network, to support these church-planting efforts throughout North America.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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 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 to cultivate more church planting missionaries. 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 launched a new Mobilization Pathway in 2023 that helps churches take their next missional step in church planting. This tool is designed to help a local church participate in the goal of reaching North America through church planting and highlights the various ways that churches can get involved in the process.

In 2023, 77 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, and of those who attended, 70 percent were approved for moving forward as a church planter. In 2023, NAMB hosted 47 assessment retreats and conducted 371 assessments of candidates. But we continue to need more qualified applicants.

While we continue to raise 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 also increases the bond between the 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, NAMB has developed the Multiplication Pipeline. This allows a church to intentionally raise up prepared and qualified planters from within their congregation. The Multiplication Pipeline resource and process can be implemented in a local church or church plant, which will allow the church to discover, develop and deploy greater numbers of planters and other missionaries to meet this challenge.

Along with the Pipeline, NAMB and Send Network generate content for newchurches.com, which includes online courses, articles, e-books and podcasts. Courses like the Sending Church Masterclass and the Church Planting Masterclass are designed to help churches discover and develop church planting missionaries. NAMB's Church Development Library also provides resources and training for Sending churches.

In addition, Residencies help churches multiply through intentionally developing and deploying missional leaders and church planting teams. They help aspiring leaders identify a ministry call. Mature leaders pursue God's leading in their lives and prepare future leaders and teams for new missional opportunities.

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 campaign. An evangelism campaign has a start and end date, but a culture of evangelism builds evangelism into the DNA of every ministry, gathering and other aspects of the church. The NAMB evangelism team must continue serving 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 2024, opportunities for training will be held at a variety of locations scattered across North America.

Another challenge is discouragement and burnout among pastors. NAMB Evangelism hosted six Refresh Retreats in 2023 for pastors and their wives to be refreshed and encouraged in fulfilling their call to serve and lead in the local church. Refresh Retreats will continue in 2024.

For our next gen evangelism efforts, one of the challenges is to help students live on mission now and influence their friends with the gospel now. These students are not the church of tomorrow. They are today's church and serve an important role in taking the gospel to the world. 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 2024, our highest priority with middle school, high school and college students will be to equip, resource, network and coach leaders to help them be as effective as possible to reach, disciple and mobilize Gen Z with the gospel. Gensend.org is the hub for multiple resources and tools to help 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.

Also, statistically speaking, less than 15% of all Protestant ministry leaders are under the age of 40 according to Barna Research. Since the pandemic began, anecdotal evidence suggests more men and women are leaving ministry leadership than entering ministry leadership. There is 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 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. The arrival of Vance Pitman as president of Send Network in 2022 spurred a season of prayer and evaluation as Send Network sought to heighten its effectiveness for the decade ahead.

We will continue to promote and develop tools and processes to ensure that the best and most effective missions personnel are placed appropriately and 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 the only two continents on which Christianity is on the decline.

This 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 the skills and heart 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 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 will create missionary hearts in many members of the next generation and cause them to want to serve in long-term mission roles.

As a way of encouraging interest in church planting, Send Network established a pilot program with Midwestern Seminary in 2023. The pilot will allow seminary students to participate in Send Network events, such as Send Network Gatherings. Additionally, Midwestern’s For the Church Cohort students will, among other things, 1) undergo Send Network’s Assessment, 2) attend the annual Send Network week on Midwestern Seminary’s campus, 3) connect with key Send Network leaders through quarterly video calls, 4) travel to select Send Cities for vision trips and Send Network events.

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 missions education efforts and provide opportunities to engage more Southern Baptists in mission work, we expect to add training and missional education resources, increase accessibility for Spanish speakers and open up avenues that help church members engage those who have endured trauma.

Regarding new training resources, Send Relief has launched and is actively curating and producing training resources (webinars, ministry guides 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 webinars 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.

eBooks are one of the newest forms of resources that are being added for churches and church leaders to have practical, in-depth knowledge of how and why to pursue compassion ministry. These will be theologically sound to equip churches wanting to engage in compassion ministry in their local context. These eBooks will serve as added resources to the video-based Church Guide to Ministry courses that already exist and are continually developed. eBooks serve as easily accessible resources for those who desire to engage with the principles of compassion ministry before beginning a multi-video training course. 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 they can be involved. Missions experiences are currently available or in development in ministry centers across the nation. As we assist churches, our 2023 national goal is to have approximately 205 mission trips available through our various ministry centers. Opportunities to register for these trips are available through SendRelief.org/trips.

A constant theme that arises in ministry to the vulnerable is that of trauma. Creating a new level of trauma awareness for those who are called to serve “the least of these” is a critical component in loving and caring for those who have experienced tragedy. Send Relief is exploring new opportunities for how this can be done in a palpable and attainable way for those serving with Send Relief, as well as for our extended audience.

Send Relief now has two certified trauma coaches to help train others in how to identify and deal with trauma. Through continued efforts, those coaches will soon 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

Pastors have always appreciated spending time with and learning from fellow pastors. This desire gives NAMB a great opportunity to provide venues to share best practices (e.g., evangelism workshops, replant conferences, pastor roundtables, etc.). NAMB also has the opportunity to deliver updated content of these best practices by utilizing multiple forms of electronic media. This allows content to be fresh, digestible and self-paced. It is also the intention that pastor-centric events include content that addresses other felt needs pastors have as they seek to strike a balance with their personal faith, family life and serving the church.

Through the efforts of several of NAMB’s teams, there are more opportunities for pastors to participate not only in leadership development opportunities but also for NAMB to receive feedback about their needs and how we can help.

Refresh Retreats

For 2024, Refresh Retreats will continue to provide pastors, ministry leaders, and their spouses with affordable opportunities for relaxation and reflection in high-quality, desirable locations. We will continue to pursue our goal of serving those on the frontlines of ministry with excellence so that they may return to their churches rested and with a renewed sense of God's call on their life. In 2024 we will host retreats in one new location while returning to several perennial favorites.

2024 Refresh Retreats

Atlanta 1	Feb. 26-28
Atlanta 2	Feb. 28- Mar 1
Philadelphia	Apr. 22-24
Branson	Sep. 9-11
Asheville	Oct. 4-6 (Bivocational)
Anaheim	Nov. 4-6
San Juan, PR	Nov. 14-16 (For Puerto Rico-based pastors and planters)

Replant

In the upcoming year, Replant is adopting a multi-layered approach to equip leaders for church renewal. Since 2022, the demand for accessible conferencing, equipping, and resourcing from field partners has tripled. Anticipating sustained demand and facing resource constraints in a tightening economy, Replant is prioritizing regional equipping events, expanding online cohorts and enhancing virtual training and resource delivery.

Revive Events – Replant will host four regional equipping events for pastors, AMS leaders, and church members. These events will feature practical teaching, inspirational worship, and targeted breakout sessions emphasizing dependence on God, mission in the community, vibrant worship and congregational unity.

AMS Lab - The seventh Replant Practitioner Lab in February 2024 will train more than 260 Associational Mission Strategists in how to consult with declining or near-closure churches toward revitalization and replanting.

Rural Summit – Acknowledging the growing importance of rural ministry, the Replant team initiated a summit in 2022 to raise awareness and provide encouragement and equipping for leaders in rural areas. Another Rural Summit is scheduled for 2024.

The Replant Cohort – Weekly training and regional cohorts, delivered through a partnership with Practical Shepherding, will continue in 2024.

Podcasting – Recognizing the impact of podcasts in North American culture, Replant has developed and is affiliated with leading podcasts on church renewal, revitalization and replanting. The “Revitalize and Replant” podcast with hosts Mark Clifton and Mark Hallock, The “Replant Bootcamp” with hosts Bob Bickford and Jimbo Stewart and the “Rural Pastor Podcast” with Andy Addis and Mark Clifton rank among the top tier in the field of church renewal.

Replant Summit – Held annually in August in Alpharetta, Ga., the summit focuses on equipping replanting pastors, spouses and leaders for effective and enduring ministry in replanting local churches.

Residencies and Training – Replant continues to support four regional residencies to train and equip pastors for replanting. NAMB’s Replant team members participated in training over 9,000 pastors and leaders across North America and conducted equipping events for Hispanic Southern Baptist leaders.

Am I a Replanter? – This event, held on seminary campuses across the nation, helps students explore replanting concepts and discern their calling.

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

Disaster Relief

One of the long-term challenges we face is that most of our Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) kitchens rely on other, non-SBC disaster relief organizations to supply the food they prepare and serve from their mobile kitchens. In the aftermath of any disaster, it can be difficult to assess how best to distribute food supplies, and SBDR typically must wait for our ministry partners who support our mass feeding kitchens. To prevent SBDR kitchens from facing the challenge of being staffed by volunteers and waiting for food supplies to be delivered, Send Relief has continued to explore food resources that might be purchased to fill the need for immediate feeding. This would enable Southern Baptists to respond more quickly to the needs of survivors in the aftermath of disaster.

In 2023, during the Hurricane Idalia response, Send Relief was able to supply food resources that enabled SBDR kitchens to have gap feeding resources until other partners could begin supplying food, but we feel that we must continue to explore other options so that SBDR’s feeding ministry following disasters can be sustainable into the future. Send Relief continues to work with SBDR leadership to determine the appropriate supplies needed and seeks to have long-term solutions in place by 2025. Send Relief has been engaged in discussions with The Salvation Army to strengthen our partnership in feeding and providing spiritual care to disaster survivors as one means to strengthen our SBDR feeding capacity.

Send Relief, in support of our SBDR partners, initiated a plan in 2023 to roll out Send Relief supplies and set up a supply distribution site for responding SBDR teams within the affected area of the disaster. The first opportunity for the distribution site occurred during Hurricane Idalia in Florida and Georgia, and the strategy greatly increased our ability to mobilize supplies to our SBDR partners more efficiently while also enabling a shared stewardship.

Send Relief continues to work with SBDR leadership to develop a more consistent model for utilization of untrained church volunteers in partnership with SBDR.

Send Relief has also worked with SBDR leadership to strengthen our minimum standards for SBDR chaplains to ensure the continued ability of SBDR chaplains to provide compassionate trauma care to disaster survivors in the aftermath of crisis events.

Continued Need for Compassion Awareness and Education

Send Relief has the opportunity in 2023 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. There is an active pursuit in continuing to develop classroom and experiential training, catalyzing us all into better “loving our neighbor” while opening up doors for sharing the gospel.

Virtual Training offers the opportunity to multiply the reach to a wider audience through experts who have been and are still serving daily in the trenches of gospel work.

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

Trauma Awareness

Trauma is a common issue for the vulnerable and the “least of these.” There is an intentional effort being put forth to offer training and resources both to those serving with Send Relief as well as the wider audience of churches who may have an interest in learning more.

Through our ministry centers across North America, we expect to expand our reach to those in need by bringing physical and emotional help as a supplement to 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 such 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.

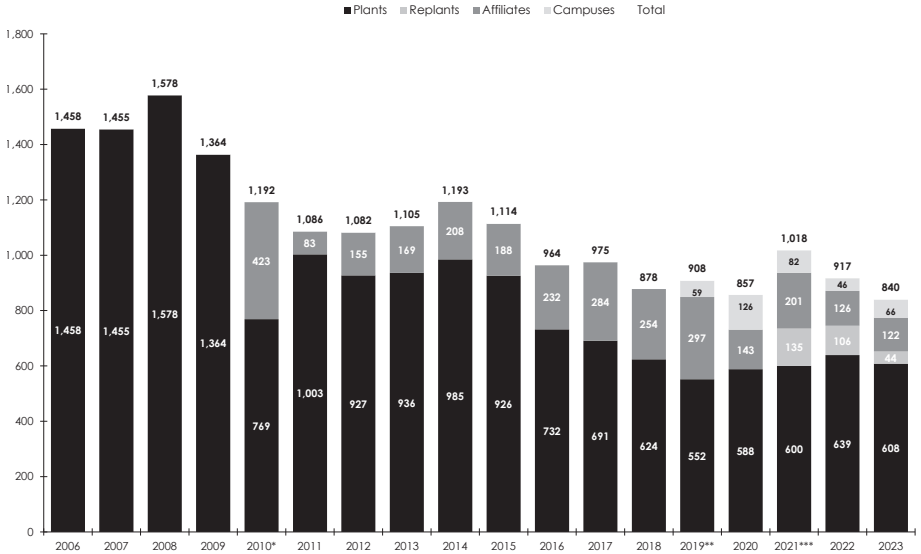
There are also opportunities to bring more unity between the different streams of collegiate ministry. Our GenSend Team, along with our National Collegiate Director and our National Next Gen Director, has been able to help bring a sense of unity and collaboration between the different streams by building 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. Our 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 all with the same 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.

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 for continual learning and growth opportunities for next gen Leaders.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

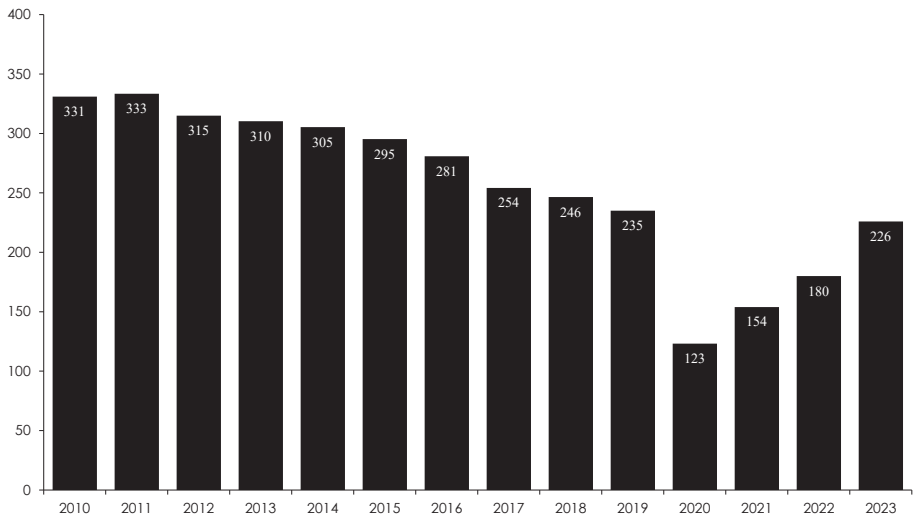
During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to the North American Mission Board for consideration, action, or report.

Figure 1—New Congregations (Church Plants Plus New Affiliates), SBC, 2000 - 2023



Sources: 1. Reports from State Directors of Missions compiled by the North American Mission Board, Alpharetta, GA. 2. New SBC IDs created in SBC Workspace
 * 2010 was the first year a SBC ID # was required for each reported congregation. In 2023, There were 652 new church starts and replants, 66 new campuses, and 122 new affiliations.
 ** 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.
 *** 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, 2010 – 2023 (In Thousands)



Source: Annual Church Profile, LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville, TN
 *2023 Baptisms as reported from the Lifeway ACP Statistical Summary, 2024

INSTITUTIONS



GATEWAY SEMINARY

Biblical • Missional • Global

3210 E. Guasti Rd., Ontario, California 91761

PHILLIP KELL, Chair
ADAM GROZA, President

Gateway Seminary remains resolutely focused on its mission of shaping leaders who expand God's kingdom around the world. The seminary community, in the midst of significant transition, continues to demonstrate missional integrity, spiritual maturity, and a remarkable work ethic which reflects our genuine devotion to Jesus Christ and the role we are assigned in his kingdom.

Over the past year, the seminary has experienced steady progress and continuing challenges as described in the following report. We are grateful for the faithful support of Southern Baptists, their prayers, and their gifts – particularly through the Cooperative Program – which make our work possible.

Presidential Transition

In 2018, the Board of Trustees considered the inevitable transition of Gateway's veteran executive leadership team and adopted a general plan to manage these changes. The adopted plan called for an overlapping period of service between arriving and retiring executives to assure seminary operations continued without interruption. The process was implemented to replace two long-tenured vice-presidents in 2020-22.

These successful transitions established a pattern (and an institutional expectation) that executive transition will be done well. The current presidential transition plan applies the insights and practices from these recent transitions to the search for a new president. The Board-adopted process involves three phases:

Search – This phase was initiated in October 2023 when Dr. Jeff Iorg asked the Board of Trustees to launch the search for his successor. The Chairman of the Board then nominated a Presidential Search Committee to the Board, which was considered and then elected by the Board. The Committee is now conducting a search (which may be concluded by the publication of this report).

Launch – This phase begins when the President-elect is selected by the Board and ends when the new president assumes office. The length of this phase will be determined by the time needed for the new president to transition out of his existing leadership role, relocate his family, etc. Dr. Iorg will remain president until the new president assumes office.

Coach – This phase begins when the new President assumes office. Dr. Iorg will then serve in an advisory role for a time period determined by the new President and Board. At the end of this phase, Dr. Iorg will retire from full-time employment at Gateway and assume whatever future role with the seminary the new president deems appropriate.

Fall 2023 Enrollment

After setting an all-time Fall enrollment record in Fall 2022, the enrollment in core programs for Fall 2023 was down slightly compared to the previous year. The overall headcount in Fall 2,023 was 893, compared to 933 last year. The overall credit hours enrolled in Fall 2023 was 4,352, compared to 5,017 last year.

The comparisons for new student enrollment were also disappointing. The overall headcount for new students in Fall 2023 was 215, compared to 235 last year. The overall credit hours enrolled by new students in Fall 2023 was 922, compared to 1230 last year.

In contrast to these declines, the approved applications for Fall 2023 were 249, compared to 215 last year. Clearly, prospective students are still interested in attending Gateway. What then caused the enrollment decline this year? Why are fewer new students enrolling at Gateway? Why are continuing students enrolling in fewer hours this year? The answer is clear: money.

Student surveys indicate the primary reasons prospective students are not enrolling or continuing students are under-enrolling is lack of financial resources to pay for seminary. Another factor causing declining enrollment was record graduation in Spring 2023. Last year, we had the largest graduating class in our history – 348 graduates. These students had to be replaced with new students and the financial factors mentioned above made that more difficult. In short, we lost more graduates than we gained new students.

Enrollment trends are still healthy at Gateway, despite these setbacks. We are committed to helping students solve the financial challenges of attending seminary. Spring 2024 enrollment, for example, was stronger than anticipated with a slight increase over Spring 2023 (although final data, and Summer 2024 data, was not available at the deadline for this report). Fall 2023 enrollment seems more like an anomaly than a trend.

2023-24 Budget Adjustments

The enrollment decline mentioned above had a direct impact on our revenue budget. The original 2023-24 budget adopted by the Board was \$12,646,000, which had to be reduced in light of enrollment. We did this successfully and anticipate operating with a balanced budget in 2023-24.

Academic Program Degree Review

The comprehensive degree program review for the 2022-2023 academic year focused on the Doctor of Ministry degree. These annual program reviews are a crucial component of our internal quality control processes. The faculty members of the Degree Program Review Taskforce (DPRT) analyze all the relevant data and provide recommendations for the improvement, or in rare cases, the termination of degree programs. They confirm the financial viability of academic programs and evaluate the effectiveness of each degree in producing successful student outcomes. The DPRT reports to the Degree Program Assessment Committee (DPAC) which reviews their work and provides a report to the faculty.

The review of the D.Min. found, among other positive things, that the degree remains in line with the mission of the seminary, has established strong relationships with its students and alumni, and is fiscally stable. In short, Gateway's D.Min. degree is well organized and efficiently managed to accomplish its objectives. The most significant recommendation was to explore options for a new degree for students who complete the seminars but are unable to complete the final project. This possibility is now under consideration.

Faculty and Staff Transitions

One faculty member, Dr. Kon Yang, retired from Gateway in 2024. His wife, Patsy, was also a long-time seminary employee. Together, this couple served more than 55 years at Gateway. We are grateful for their faithful service.

The only director-level employee change this past year was the retirement of Harrison Weaver, Director of Finance and Controller, who served Gateway for 22 years.

Capital Projects

The Ontario Campus roof was replaced at a cost of \$450,000. This was paid for by resources from the Capital Needs Fund established by the Board of Trustees a few years ago. We are grateful we have limited deferred maintenance on our facilities and a workable plan to maintain them for the future.

The solar parking project permitting and installation will begin soon at the Ontario Campus. This project will provide 1,560 PV modules and is projected to save the seminary more than \$3 million in utility costs over the next 25 years.

Sexual Abuse Prevention

During the SBC annual meeting in Anaheim in 2022, the report of the Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force was adopted. We have reviewed seminary operations and curriculum to make sure we have an intentional and thorough response to the recommendations in the report. Gateway already has many policies and procedures in place related to sexual abuse, but will continue to improve in this area.

Gateway Imperative Report

In October 2019, the Board adopted The Gateway Imperative as the strategic document to guide the seminary through 2030. The seminary consistently works to prioritize changes in response to the six key findings in the report - mission, identity, marketing, innovation, collaboration, and stewardship. The following identity values in the report are used in organizational decision making – biblical convictions, missional priority, global mindset, academic excellence, student focus, and cultural diversity.

Part of the report includes seven goals which are used as a framework for strategic planning and decision-making. A full report on each of those goals is provided to the Board annually, and summative report prepared every five years. Through this process, the seminary remains focused on its mission with transparency and accountability to the Board of Trustees.

Enrollment Report

Gateway Seminary operates five fully accredited campuses in Ontario, California; Fremont, California; Phoenix, Arizona; Denver, Colorado; and Vancouver, Washington – as well as a teaching site in Salt Lake City, Utah and an extensive distance learning program (online and video access).

In addition, Gateway Seminary supports 40 ADVANCE contextualized leadership development centers in partnership with Southern Baptist churches, associations and state conventions. The centers offer courses in English, Spanish, Burmese, Thai, Lao, Karen, Cantonese, Korean, Mongolian, Nepalese, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Russian.

The most recent revision of the SBC Seminary Funding Formula has significantly changed how Gateway reports its enrollment. For that reason, this report reflects changes initiated since 2018. The incongruity with past reporting patterns makes comparisons to past years difficult without understanding the intricacies of the formula. For that reason, we are reporting our enrollment in the following format.

ENROLLMENT

Campus	2020-21	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22	2022-23	2022-23
	Total Enrollment	Total FTE	Total Enrollment	Total FTE	Total Enrollment	Total FTE
Ontario	678	234	784	276	800	237
Arizona	73	19	81	28	73	27
Bay Area	41	9	48	12	30	8
Pacific Northwest	30	6	25	6	26	4
Rocky Mountain	38	8	47	11	46	9
Advance Ministry Training	567	98	661	170	643	187
Online Program	433	147	336	163	386	208
Video Access Program	135	129	113	109	156	106
Online/Video Combined			87		99	
Totals	1,995	650	2,182	775	2,259	786

Enrollment Report by Degree Program

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
<u>Prebaccalaureate</u>			
Diplomas		140	166
Diplomas – Advance		636	814
Special Status		0	0
<u>Basic Degrees</u>			
Master of Divinity		400	339
Master of Arts		414	434
Special Status		107	112
<u>Advance Degrees</u>			
Master of Theology		8	14
Doctor of Ministry		272	281
Doctor of Philosophy		18	22
Totals		1,995	2,182

Enrollment Report Summary

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total Enrollment	1995	2182	2259
Total FTE Generated	650	775	785
SBC Fundable FTE	296	298	242
SBC Formula FTE	400	400	400
New Students - FALL	468	497	413
Total Graduates	302	305	402

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention for consideration, action, or report.



5001 North Oak Trafficway, Kansas City, Missouri 64118

CHAD MCDONALD, Chair
JASON K. ALLEN, President

Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College exist to equip men and women *for the Church and for the Kingdom*. It is our unwavering belief that the seminary's determination to exist for the local church is biblically mandated and denominationally needed. We stand faithful to the Bible as the Word of God, our Southern Baptist doctrine, and the importance of the Great Commission.

With the continued rise in global population and the continual need to supply Southern Baptist churches with ministers who are equipped and ready for service in Christ's Church, it is our unabating ambition to yield church leaders who will remain steadfastly committed to truth regardless of where our culture turns.

This is one of the reasons we are so thankful for another record enrollment at Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College. More than viewing these students as mere numbers, we see how God is raising up the next generation of ministry leaders to serve His Church. Not only are students attending, but they are also completing their courses of study and graduating. We had over 250 graduates in the Spring, and since have had over 300 students finish their program in either the Summer or this Fall. We praise the Lord that He is continually raising up workers for the harvest.

During our Spring Convocation, I was pleased to announce a \$2,500,000 gift that helped us launch a new institutional initiative on missions in partnership with the International Mission Board. I referred to it as our "Missions Moonshot" because our goal is so big and unachievable by our own energies that it requires God's blessing and help. Our goal is to annually produce 100 missionaries who are committed to at least two years of overseas service to unreached and unengaged people groups. As Paul Chitwood frequently says, "Lostness is the world's greatest problem." We are committed to doing our part to foster a greater zeal for the lost around the world.

Turning to Spurgeon College, it has been an exciting season as we continue to witness the Lord's blessing. We are encouraged by the engagement of students, faculty, and staff as we continue to equip students to follow God's call wherever He may lead. Our athletics programs are in full swing, and we are thankful to see the growth of our student athletes. Additionally, we are thrilled to welcome students to a newly renovated Residence Hall. With a 40% increase in capacity, we are able to provide more students with quality housing and amenities.

As a part of our Fusion program, which focuses on international missions, we were excited to see 63 students deployed this summer in teams around the world. These students spent the fall and spring semesters training on campus and were then sent all over the world to work with IMB missionaries in some of the toughest environments. Hearing of all that our students saw, did, and accomplished is truly heart moving, and we are so grateful for the IMB missionaries who helped make it possible.

At the master's level, we are training God-called men and women *for the Church* by implementing two recent initiatives. These initiatives involve curriculum, student cohorts, and faculty connections. First, we have reorganized our master's curriculum to ensure that students can access degree-program emphases early in their course of study and maximize the potential for students to move from a shorter master's degree into the MDiv. We have added a 36-hour Master of Christian Studies degree as the core curriculum for our 45-hour master's degrees.

Second, we were delighted to announce our new For the Church Cohorts. FTC Cohorts is a one-year program that equips like-minded residential seminary students through enhanced discipleship, focused study, and intentional community. The different cohorts include: Shepherds Fellowship, Biblical Counseling, Fusion Masters, Women in Ministry and Scholarship, Spurgeon Fellows, Biblical Studies, and Theological Studies. Each week, students in these cohorts will gather together to be mentored by our world class faculty while pursuing their studies and learning in community. Additionally, thanks to our generous donors, we are able to offer 100% tuition scholarships for all cohort participants. I believe that by combining these substantial scholarships for our students with cohort community and life-on-life mentorship by our faculty, the participants will gain invaluable knowledge and experience.

The Midwestern doctoral programs have seen continual growth over the last year as well, for which we are very grateful. In August of 2022 there were a total of 1,268 students, whereas August 2023 has had a total of 1,307 students. Additionally, we have also commenced a Doctor of Ministry program with an emphasis in Ministry to Women. I continue to be grateful for all of the doctoral students who are being equipped to be leaders in the church and in the academy. We saw the fruit of their studies in November, when 46 seminary representatives presented at the national meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in San Antonio. This was the most presenters represented from any one school.

Next, we had another year of God's blessings in our Institutional Administration division. The results we have achieved during the challenging context of Christian theological higher education amplifies how much God has blessed our institution and the work of the countless hands who serve our students and convention. In addition to our Residence Hall renovations mentioned above, we have also completed a renovation on the Vivion House on campus which will allow us to host more events in the President's Home. Additionally, at our Fall Trustee Meeting, we were pleased to announce the establishment of the Rex and Jackie Smith Endowed Chair of Biblical Studies, and pray the Lord would bless the seminary's work in Biblical Studies for years to come through their generosity. I continue to praise the Lord for how He is providing for us with these endowed chairs.

Moving to Institutional Relations, over the past twelve months, we have been busy launching the For The Church Fund, establishing innovative partnerships with NAMB, redesigning donor pathways, onboarding our new Student Success team, publishing new FTCl courses, launching our new FTC Cohorts, redesigning two websites, and much more. The Communications Office continues to work diligently to support and promote the events on campus through the development and execution of marketing plans and technical production.

Our For the Church National Conference brought over 1,100 pastors and ministry leaders to our campus. This year, the conference theme was "A Glorious Calling," focusing on reminding pastors of just how glorious ministry is. We were honored to have many wonderful speakers who preached on the importance of ministry calling and sought to encourage attendees to faithfully pursue their ministry with joy. Also, multiple workshops and breakout sessions for

conference attendees were offered, led by pastors and ministry leaders from the Southern Baptist community. It was a delight to see the campus alive with excitement.

Additionally, we have been honored to host several notable chapel speakers and guest lecturers on our campus this year. During the Spring semester, Dr. Bob Yarbrough joined us on campus to deliver our annual Sizemore Lectures focusing on the topic, "Just Jesus: Taking His Full Measure," in which he sought to "unite academics and doxology" as he considered the person of Jesus Christ. In our chapel services, we were thankful to hear the preaching of God's Word from guests such as Dr. David Choi, Dr. Mark Clifton, and Dr. Don Whitney. In the Fall semester, we hosted a panel discussion on "Human Identity and Pornography," including speakers Dr. Denny Burk, Dr. Alan Branch, Mr. Jared Wilson, and Dr. Dale Johnson. In chapel services, we were encouraged by speakers such as: Rev. H.B. Charles Jr., Dr. Brian Arnold, and Dr. Danny Akin as he delivered the Spurgeon Lectures.

Most recently, we announced our acquisition of the Heritage Collection from Spurgeon's College UK. The Heritage Collection offers an unparalleled glimpse into the life and ministry of Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) and the Pastor's College that he founded. This collection consists of thousands of books, manuscripts, letters, artifacts, newspaper cuttings, and more from Charles Spurgeon. The Heritage Collection is truly a one-of-a-kind collection and an invaluable stewardship. This is a stewardship we feel well beyond Midwestern Seminary. It's a stewardship for Southern Baptist pastors and churches, for the broader Baptist and evangelical world, and one that I could not be more delighted for Midwestern Seminary to exercise.

We praise God for all His continued blessings on Midwestern Seminary and Spurgeon College. As we look forward, we will strive to project forward and outward in our mission and ministry and will continually assess how our commitment to exist *for the Church and for the Kingdom* will direct us. May we never cease to be thankful to God for the victories He has given us these past 10 years, and may we never cease to serve Him in such a way that He is pleased to give us such victories going forward.

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 2024 Ministry Report of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

I. Assist churches by programs of pre baccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

In the fall of 2023, Spurgeon College launched a more holistic cohort model for residential education and community. All five cohorts are designed to strengthen students' on-campus experience through enhanced discipleship, focused study, and intentional community. The five cohorts are Fusion (missions), Accelerate (dual-degrees), Athletics, Marketplace, and Ministry. Cohort participants gather regularly for fellowship, discussion related to their field, and to grow in their respective disciplines. While the cohorts have distinctive rhythms specific to their disciplines, each cohort will be led by a staff coordinator and a male and female student cohort captain. Additionally, the cohorts participate in a year-long competition to win the Cohort Cup. Throughout the year, cohort members can earn points toward the Cohort Cup through academic

achievement, engagement in campus events, community service, participation in intramural sports, and performance at the annual Cohort Olympics events. This expansion of cohort culture on Spurgeon College's campus is designed to provide students with a more meaningful social and spiritual experience during their season of study.

Another major accomplishment for Spurgeon College campus life in the fall of 2023 was the opening and dedication of our newly renovated undergraduate Residence Hall. The need for this project and the completion of this project speaks to the vital and growing role that Spurgeon College students play on the campus of Midwestern Seminary. Similar to recent years, the fall of 2023 saw a record enrollment at Spurgeon College.

The past year has been another year of growth and accomplishment for Spurgeon College Knights athletics. This was Evie Stanton's last year as the women's volleyball coach, and she led the team to set the record for most wins in a season. Spurgeon has since hired Lauren Willow to serve as our new women's volleyball coach. This men's soccer season, Zach Nichols, Adwell Malunga, and Caleb Hawkins all made the All-Region team. Moreover, the inaugural Spurgeon JV men's basketball season has begun, and the Knights won their first-ever game. Spurgeon College has hired Kaden Huck to be the assistant men's basketball coach and the head JV men's basketball coach.

In the summer of 2023, our Fusion cohort deployed 49 students, engaged 32 people groups around the world, made 2,156 gospel proclamations, and saw 24 professions of faith. Such statistics prove the effectiveness of time, energy, and donorship invested in Spurgeon College's mission training program.

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 the most fitting degree to prepare for ministry. The MBTS MDiv serves as the standard academic program for our institution. At 81 credit hours, this degree includes 72 Foundational-Core credit hours and 9 hours of Electives.

Midwestern Seminary works closely with local churches to prepare seminarians for vocational ministry. Through our Timothy Track program, residential students can earn their degrees and obtain invaluable ministry experience at the same time. Through practicum-based coursework, students labor alongside local church ministry leaders for hands-on training. 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.

The success of our Timothy Track program, now relabeled as the Shepherds Fellowship, has led us to develop six additional cohorts for incoming residential Master's students. These are called For the Church cohorts, and we have cohorts in Biblical Counseling, Women in Ministry and Scholarship, Fusion Missions, Spurgeon Fellows, Biblical Studies, and Theological Studies. Students select a cohort and, for the first year of their Master's degree, enjoy regular meetings with full-time faculty who teach in those departments. The cohort learning model provides access to key faculty and a learning community for each student. Our cohorts prepare students by providing opportunities to engage content in a community.

At MBTS, we value the opportunity to train students in Kansas City but recognize that many God-called leaders are already gainfully employed in locations worldwide. Our Global Campus

students serve faithfully in their local contexts, 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 a cohort learning experience, gathering with key full-time faculty and peers for regular video conferences throughout the year. The Midwestern Seminary Global Campus cohorts include Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, and Applied Theology.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Midwestern Seminary has served churches by offering professional doctoral training since 1971, and the essence of this training is (a) to optimize the work of ministry in local congregations and other ministry settings and (b) to address any areas of difficulty in those settings. In that sense, the professional degrees of Midwestern Seminary, that is the DMin, DEdMin, and EdD, are practical, problem-solving degrees that emphasize leadership and data-driven decision-making. An important part of how Midwestern Seminary serves the SBC and its ministries is that the institution offers these degrees in modular format, such that students can pursue their studies while remaining on-site in their own areas of service. Midwestern Seminary makes professional doctoral study available in multiple languages, including English, Korean, Spanish, Mandarin, and Romanian, so that the institution can serve churches beyond North America. A core component of the professional doctoral degree is the creation and implementation of a ministry project on which the candidate's dissertation subsequently reports. Over the past year Midwestern Seminary students have benefited their churches through projects concentrated on preaching, discipleship, education, revitalization, and biblical counseling, with other topics also included. In all cases, the goal is to serve local churches and their ministries with training in biblically grounded leadership and resource optimization.

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 (Biblical Counseling, Apologetics, Leadership, Missiology, Ecclesiology, and Biblical Spirituality). These degree emphases vary in the extent of their practicality, with Applied Theology being stronger in this sense than, say, NT or OT; nevertheless, all of the research doctoral programs of Midwestern Seminary have as their intended effect the sending of highly trained servants into SBC ministry settings. These graduates are able to divide God's word rightly and apply that word to the opportunities and challenges of local church ministry, educational service, and missionary endeavors. The application of God's word to new challenges is especially urgent in the modern world, given the changes that we have seen in recent years concerning the nature of humanity, marriage, and gender roles. Through a combination of on-campus, modular, and online courses, Midwestern Seminary has been able to serve its research doctoral students while it permits them to remain in their current ministry settings. With ongoing support from the local church ministry, doctoral candidates are not discouraged by the cost of their education at Midwestern Seminary due to the invaluable instruction that allows them to continue serving effectively.

Based on each of Midwestern's Convention assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2023 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.

While the past year has been a year of unprecedented favor and kindness from the Lord, Spurgeon College looks to the future with anticipation of new opportunities to be able to fulfill our ministry assignment more fruitfully. First on this list is the addition of our Politics, Philosophy, and Economics major. The addition of the PPE major and strategic addition to our marketplace degree offerings will open a new recruiting tributary for Spurgeon College and allow us to train students in a multidisciplinary fashion for service in the public and private sectors.

Moreover, in the season ahead, Spurgeon College will continue to investigate the possibility of adding new sports programs. Since the launch of Spurgeon College athletics in 2019, our athletics programs have proven to be a fruitful recruiting tributary and have added great esprit de corps to our residential campus culture.

Finally, the expansion of our dual enrollment and dual credit partnerships has proven to be constructive academic partnerships. In the future, we will continue to pour institutional resources into the expansion of these partnerships.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

First, we see a need for students to achieve entry-level value in their Master's degree program. The MDiv is the flagship degree of our master's curriculum at Midwestern Seminary. We have reorganized our entire master's curriculum to ensure that students can access degree-program emphases early in their course of study and maximize the potential for students to move from a shorter master's degree into the MDiv. We have added a 36-hour Master of Christian Studies degree as the core curriculum for our 45-hour Master's of Theological Studies degrees. The credits from the 36-hour Master of Christian Studies or the 45-hour Master of Theological Studies degrees can transfer into the MDiv. Students enrolled in a 45-hour Master of Theological Studies degree choose one of three tracks: Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, or Applied Theology. Within each of these three-degree tracks, students can choose from several emphases. For instance, the Biblical Studies master's degree track includes emphases in Hebrew, Greek, Biblical Theology, or Biblical Languages. The Theological Studies master's degree track offers emphasis in Christian Theology, Historical Theology, and Apologetics and Evangelism. The Applied Theology track has twelve emphases, including Missions, Pastoral Ministry, and Biblical Counseling.

Second, we recognize that students want to learn in various formats, including via video technology. Midwestern Seminary will continue to innovate our academic programs to deliver quality education using the most recent video technology. The Midwestern Seminary Global Campus will continue to refine our Online Live courses, which offer students live video lectures from residential faculty. Our Residential+ classes offer online students live video for courses with residential students seated in the room. Our Residential+ format is proving especially helpful for students taking language courses.

Finally, we understand that students in every generation face financial challenges that might impede their seminary education. Through strategic fund-raising, Midwestern Seminary has secured resources to enable 100 new master's residential students to receive a full tuition discount for their first year of study if they participate in one of our cohort learning groups. God's favor upon Midwestern Seminary is seen in these gifts, and we know they will bless students as we train them *for the Church*.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Several factors are imposing new challenges on Midwestern Seminary, along with every other institution of higher education in the United States. The past several years have seen rising levels of inflation that are not matched one-for-one by rising levels of take-home pay. The cost of providing theological education and training continues to rise, while the ability of prospective students to cover has not increased by the same measure. This fact, combined with domestic depopulation, is likely to put added pressure on educational institutions like Midwestern Seminary. For such reasons, Midwestern Seminary has sought to manage its resources and business model in ways that anticipate lean years, and the doctoral programs of Midwestern Seminary are no exception to this strategic mandate. Every effort has been taken to keep the cost of educational delivery within reasonable limits and, in that sense, to keep the programs of Midwestern Seminary accessible to students having ordinary financial means. Innovations made at the professional doctoral level are sought and implemented with accessibility and quality receiving equal emphasis, as per the institution's *for the Church* mission.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

The research doctoral degrees at Midwestern Seminary face the same challenges as were mentioned in the case of the institution's professional doctoral degrees, starting with the rising cost of providing specialized education on this level. Changes made that affect the duration of a student's course of study also affect the overall cost of that student's education and, in turn, the possible range of ministry settings in which they would be free to serve. Such realities have driven Midwestern Seminary, along with other institutions, to find the most cost-effective ways of delivering the same education that a research doctoral degree presupposes. These adjustments must fall within parameters set by external accrediting agencies like ATS, ABHE,

and the Higher Learning Commission, and Midwestern Seminary is committed to maintaining its strong position in that regard.

ENROLLMENT

Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	60	55	71	86	110
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	419	367	459	463	608
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	573	728	780	862	863
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	1,733	1,884	1,910	2,002	1,954
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	1,215	1,340	1,503	1,504	1,609
Total	4,000	4,374	4,723	4,917	5,144

Credit Hours

Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	139	196	192	319	341
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	687	1,227	1,947.20	1,566.30	1,270.10
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	10,624	13,460.50	14,444	15,468	15,960
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	19,108.50	21,372.50	22,841.50	23,305.50	21,120
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	7,449	7,949	9,943	9,993.50	10,616
Total	38,007.50	44,205	49,367.70	50,652.30	49,307.10

SBC Annual Formula FTE

Annual Total	1,395	1,615	1,615	1,674	1,733
Three-year rolling average	1,228	1,425	1,542	1,635	1,674

New Student Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment

Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	39	26	51	61	55
CLD (taking Associate level courses)	352	212	386	346	464
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate)	244	299	330	357	347
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	682	646	686	706	646
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	346	417	455	464	585
Total	1,663	1,600	1,908	1,934	2,097

Graduates

Prebaccalaureate (MWI)	0	3	5	6	13
Undergraduate (Bachelor's & Associate (Bachelor's & Associate [CLD graduates])	56	118	162	160	99
Basic Degrees (MDiv, MTS, MA-)	240	250	338	384	380
Advanced Degrees (PhD, DMin, DEdMin)	89	101	151	191	189
Total	385	472	656	741	681

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for consideration, action, or report.



NEW ORLEANS
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



LEAVELL
COLLEGE

3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, Louisiana 70126

WAYLON BAILEY, Chair

JAMIE DEW, President

Greetings, Southern Baptists!

The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College family is grateful to God for the partnership we share with you in the work of preparing servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission. Without your support through the Cooperative Program, our work would be exponentially more difficult. Your giving helps NOBTS and Leavell College provide high quality and affordable theological education.

I want to offer an additional expression of gratitude to all of you who came to New Orleans for the Crossover/Send Relief Tour and the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. I pray that you had a wonderful time in our city and that you were able to get a small glimpse of the ministry opportunities those of us who live here see in New Orleans.

While New Orleans hosted the annual meeting, NOBTS was able to honor the faithful legacy of former Southern Baptist Convention president and current pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, Fred Luter Jr. At the end of the annual meeting we dedicated our newly remodeled and renamed student center in honor of Fred Luter. This important hub of campus life will carry the name Fred Luter Jr. Student Center in honor of the significant impact that he has made as, what we like to say, the Pastor of New Orleans. As a little *lagniappe*, we named the study rooms in honor of Mrs. Elizabeth Luter. The two of them have worked so faithfully to serve New Orleans and Southern Baptists. Over 4,000 Southern Baptists and local New Orleanians enjoyed the dedication event and heard from local and state elected officials, seminary trustees, and pastors. This will be an indelible memory in the history of NOBTS.

At the start of the semester we had the opportunity to name our dining facility in honor of our seventh president, Dr. Landrum Leavell. He faithfully led this institution for over twenty years as president and helped NOBTS maintain its focus on the task set before us, to provide theological training to the men and women that the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention send to us each year.

What a joy to serve an institution that has as a part of her story such faithful men and women like the Luters and the Leavells.

These are happy days at NOBTS and Leavell College. Every day I see the men and women of this institution faithfully serve where God has called them.

Each semester we set aside time to focus on how we can serve our neighborhood and city. We hold a Serve Day each semester where we cancel afternoon classes in order to serve the people of New Orleans. Everyone from staff to students, to faculty and trustees, will join us for these Serve Days. In October we had over 200 members of the seminary family go out into our city to serve senior adults, clean up trash, provide supplies to homeless communities, prayer walk

neighborhoods, and share the Gospel. Forty individuals went out for door-to-door evangelism and saw several come to faith in Christ that day.

The partnerships we have with national entities, area churches, and our local association are invaluable to the preparation of our students for service in the local church. Across the 130 churches in the New Orleans Baptist Association, over ninety of them are led by an NOBTS alumni, current students, or faculty members. Over sixty percent of our faculty are actively serving on a church staff today. I am grateful to God for the spiritual vitality I see in the members of the NOBTS and Leavell College family. God is at work among our people and I am so thankful to be able to share this good news with you.

In the past year we have seen a positive trend in the number of students enrolling at NOBTS and Leavell College. Not only are we seeing an increase in our enrollment, we are also seeing a wonderful caliber of student coming to our institution. These are men and women clearly called by God who desire to be nothing more than faithful servants in His kingdom. I pray for more of these students to come and join us in their preparation here in New Orleans and in our service to this city.

In addition to increased enrollment, over the last two years we have experienced some of the best fundraising years in our history. Just recently we set a goal before our alumni and friends to meet a \$400,000 fundraising goal for Giving Tuesday 2023. The NOBTS family rose to the challenge and exceeded that goal by contributing \$421,000 for Giving Tuesday. This support, and so much more from the friends and family of NOBTS and Leavell College, in partnership with Cooperative Program giving, is so important. With it, we are able to continue to prepare the men and women you send to us, so we can send them back out into your churches and ministries as quickly as possible and with little to no debt that will burden them.

These are just a few examples of what God is doing at your seminary here in New Orleans. Let me encourage you, do not wait for the next annual meeting in New Orleans before you visit again. Come and see what God is doing here at the School of Providence and Prayer. Come and see us. Pray for us. 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 1&E]. At their request, the following content is provided from the 2024 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 train men and women without an undergraduate degree for ministry. Last year, Leavell College of NOBTS trained 1,088 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. While more and more of our students are traditional, some of our students are older, second-career people called into ministry later in life. Non-traditional students are prime candidates to fill the many bi-vocational and small church ministry positions in the SBC. Leavell College also has our highest 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 232 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 the initiatives in this area by the SBC.

Leavell College continues to strive to make training accessible in many ways. Students can take their entire bachelor's degree online, but in addition to traditional online courses, we offer NOLA2U Flex courses which allow students to participate in live classes or view the class meeting during the week the class is taught. Many undergraduate students appreciate the flexibility of this delivery method. 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 great option for students.

NOBTS developed the BA + MDiv program that allows 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. Students will save significant time and money with this program, and they can move to the ministry field more quickly.

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, and we focus a great deal of effort on this task. The seminary master's programs do not require an undergraduate degree in Religion or Christian Studies; therefore, the training is typically broad. 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. The faculty recently revised the MDiv and MA offerings to align with the mission to prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission. Students have responded favorably to the new degrees, and we are excited about the training that is taking place.

NOBTS had 1,284 master's-level students last year, 650 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 offered online, at extension centers, and on campus. The remaining 634 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 a world-class 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 311 students enrolled last year. The DMin program continues to be one of the largest and best such programs, with 281 students enrolled. Of that number, 43 are Korean DMin students. The NOBTS DEdMin is one of just a handful of such programs in the United States. The DEdMin has 30 students enrolled.

In many churches, the DMin has become the required degree for consideration of prospective pastors. This program provides students with those credentials, and does so with excellence. The professional doctoral degrees at NOBTS were recently revised, allowing some students with an MA degree to pursue these professional doctoral degrees. We are excited about new opportunities to equip students. Since the DMin and DEdMin programs require substantial experience for entry, 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 since students pursuing the DMin and DEdMin degrees are able to study while continuing to minister in their churches. NOBTS provides training in a workshop format, which allows students unable to travel to New Orleans to participate in each seminar through web conferencing software. Thus, NOBTS is providing opportunities for this training in a variety of ways.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

NOBTS has worked hard to make the research doctoral degrees accessible for students wherever they might live. Each PhD major is available through web conferencing technology or in person. Many students pursue a PhD who would otherwise not be able to attain the degree because they are called to a church some distance from New Orleans. Students may still choose to travel to New Orleans for various parts of the 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, 225 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 2023 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.

The greatest challenge confronting most undergraduate students is degree affordability and student debt. Some students are taking fewer hours a semester and as a result, have a hard time completing their degree. Some of our older students have children, and it is very difficult for them to juggle several jobs (ministry and secular) in order to subsist while pursuing their

theological education. NOBTS has sought to address this in several ways. With the tuition cap, qualified students who take between twelve and eighteen hours pay the same tuition. Thus, students are able to save \$1,950 each semester if they can focus on being a full-time student. In addition, we have continued to raise scholarship funds to support student education. Even with the discounts offered, many students just do not have the time or money to take classes full-time. The end result is that students may not complete their degree at all. NOBTS continues to encourage students to take the appropriate number of credit hours to facilitate successful completion of their training.

The so-called “enrollment cliff” is another approaching challenge for Leavell College. Due to population trends, studies estimate there will be 15% less college-age students beginning in 2025. While traditional colleges will likely see more of an impact than Leavell College, this situation is something that we are monitoring. The need for seminary-trained ministers has not lessened; thus, we will need to work diligently to maintain enrollment in the college.

Also, we are watching for long-term impacts from the pandemic. Traditional students entering college in the next few years may lack needed preparation as a result of the school closures during the pandemic. Many colleges are seeing students struggle with deadlines, persistence, and mental health. We will be monitoring our new students closely and looking for ways to help them succeed. In addition, we have seen some signs that one result of the educational responses to the pandemic is a shift towards more online education. This area has been growing for some time, but the growth has accelerated. Leavell College is well prepared for this challenge since we have been offering degrees online for some time.

NOBTS and Leavell College continue to explore avenues to help undergraduate students get a master’s degree in a timely manner. Programs like the BA + MDiv allow students to begin their master’s degree while they are completing the undergraduate program. These hours count for both the undergraduate and graduate degrees, enabling Leavell College students to achieve their BA and MDiv in as little as five years.

We are also exploring potential partnerships for students to receive vocational training while receiving theological education at the seminary. This past year, we approved a Teaching and Learning major in Leavell College that prepares students for teaching in a local school. We will continue to equip students for potential bivocational ministry or missions service in every way that we can.

II. Assist churches by programs of master’s level theological education for ministers.

The greatest challenge confronting most graduate students is degree affordability and student debt. Many students are choosing shorter degrees primarily because of the cost and time required. Some students are taking fewer hours a semester and as a result have a hard time completing their degree. Some of our students have children, and it is very difficult for them to juggle several jobs (ministry and secular) in order to subsist while pursuing their theological education. NOBTS has sought to address this in several ways. With the tuition cap, qualified students who take between twelve and eighteen hours pay the same tuition. Thus, students are able to save \$1,890 each semester if they can focus on being a full-time student. In addition, we have continued to raise scholarship funds to support student education. Even with the discounts offered, many students do not have the time or money to take classes full-time. The end result is that students may not complete their degree at all. NOBTS continues to encourage students to take the appropriate number of credit hours to facilitate successful completion of their training.

As delivery methods for education have multiplied, NOBTS continues to search for the best way to make theological education available to those who are called by God to the ministry. NOBTS has offered the full MDiv degree as well as several master of arts degrees online since the accreditors allowed fully online degrees. We are happy to be able to provide training to those who may never be able to attend a class on campus. At the same time, we regret the loss of personal interaction this transition brings. Therefore, we have sought to supplement the experiences of online students through hybrids, intensives, and various other means. The mentoring program of NOBTS allows students to gain practical experience while pursuing their theological education. We are convinced that partnering with churches to equip students for ministry is a great opportunity for students.

While encouraging every student to come to New Orleans and invest in the city as our faculty invests in them, we will also continue to develop and improve our offerings to those students who are unable to move to New Orleans. NOBTS offers online training that allows students to participate in live classes through NOLA2UFlex classes. These classes let students participate in the class while it is meeting from their own home or office or watch the recording in the next week and follow up through various online activities. We have seen these offerings expand and expect that to continue in the near future.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral programs at NOBTS allows students who are already serving in ministry an opportunity to sharpen their skills, network with peers, and gain further theological training. Recently revised admission guidelines allow students with at least a master of arts degree to pursue this training. 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.

NOBTS allows students to choose from a variety of specializations in their degree programs. Students find the customization of our program attractive. We work hard to shepherd our students through the program, and students seem to appreciate the care demonstrated by the faculty and staff. We think this is an area that can continue to grow as more and more ministry staff desire further training.

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. Recent revisions to the PhD program ensure that each new 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 have appreciated the ability to participate in the class as if they were there in person while remaining on the field of ministry. We recently added degree majors in Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, and Missiology, and we look forward to training students in these areas.

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	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Graduate Certificate	81	70	42	28	24
M.Div	833	735	730	688	652
M.A.C.E.	134	125	92	85	67
M.M.C.M.	18	6	9	7	14
D.Min.	275	261	250	262	281
D.Ed.Min.	46	48	37	28	30
Th.M.	59	72	67	53	63
Ph.D.	95	107	106	104	135
D.M.A.	19	21	21	21	22
EDD	9	12	11	15	25
M.A.M.F.C.	78	80	98	112	119
M.A.	379	342	305	293	329
MTS	64	63	59	68	78
Certificate	699	668	515	460	232
Associate	93	82	110	101	98
Baccalaureate	870	703	641	623	678
Internet	*711	*668	*627	*610	*572
Nondegree	51	56	75	43	148
Formula allowances for off campus programs	249	174	121	124	213
Total FTE Enrollment	3803	3451	3168	3072	2995

**This amount is included in the degree programs.*

Annual Accumulative Enrollment (nonduplicating head count) 2022-2023: 2995

Graduates	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Prebaccalaureate	149	55	70	84	67
Baccalaureate	154	78	127	121	123
Graduate	259	240	266	198	236
Doctoral	62	60	70	66	84
Total	624	433	533	469	510

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for consideration, action, or report.



P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, North Carolina 27588-1889

ARTHUR WERRY, Chair
DANIEL L. AKIN, President

Dear Fellow Southern Baptists,

At Southeastern, we are dedicated to glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission. We are grateful for our affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention and the collaborative efforts to equip students for ministry in our nation and globally. Your support and partnership are invaluable, and we express our sincere thanks to Southern Baptists for contributing to the Cooperative Program. This past year, we received \$7 million through the Cooperative Program, a testament to Southern Baptists' consistent generosity.

Our mission at Southeastern is firmly rooted in the scriptures, particularly drawing inspiration from the Great Commission as depicted in the four Gospels and Acts, most notably in Matthew 28:18-20. We pride ourselves on being a Great Commission school, where every classroom, professor, and student embodies this mission. We emphasize spiritual vitality, teaching in a way that deepens love for God and passion for His mission. Our doctrinal convictions are unwavering, with the inerrant and infallible Word of God as our foundation. We are committed to both theological education and ministry preparation, partnering with local churches to train students at all levels as faithful teachers of God's Word. Our global focus aims to prepare missionaries, pastors, church planters, and more, representing every tribe and nation, to build a church on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Central to our mission is the Master of Divinity program, designed to address the current leadership crisis in the church by training the next generation of servants in collaboration with local churches. This program is pivotal for preparing men to become pastors and fill the increasing number of vacant pulpits. Due to God's gracious provision, we've offered full tuition scholarships for residential Master of Divinity students for three consecutive years. With these scholarships in place, it makes attaining a Master of Divinity degree feasible for many of our church leaders.

We celebrate many achievements this year, including our largest-ever incoming class in the fall of 2023. We sent 132 participants on nine mission trips through our Center for Great Commission Studies, with more planned for 2024. Dr. Chuck Lawless now leads our Center for Preaching and Pastoral Leadership, bringing a renewed vision for training biblically grounded, theologically sound pastors. We've also had a record year in charitable giving, receiving over \$7 million and successfully completing our four-year "For The Mission" campaign, raising over \$25 million. Plans are underway to renovate a building for new dorms and expand our dining hall to accommodate our growing college.

We are steadfast in our commitment to the Bible's inerrancy, sufficiency, authority, and necessity for fulfilling the Great Commission. This commitment is exemplified by the opening of the new Caskey Center for Biblical Text and Translation, which aims to enhance the quality of Christian scripture editions and ensure accurate, clear Bible translations worldwide.

This center supports the Southern Baptist Convention and the broader Evangelical community by providing resources for Bible translation.

Our mission relies heavily on the partnership with local churches. A key aspect of our mission is to work with local associations, state conventions, and church leaders to equip and support your efforts in spreading the Gospel. As our campus enrollment grows, we are increasingly grateful for these partnerships. Southern Baptist seminaries were established to support, not replace, local churches in Great Commission efforts.

Many in our communities and around the world have yet to hear and respond to the Gospel. Therefore, we remain dedicated to our mission, standing on the Word of God. We thank you for your partnership in the Gospel and in fulfilling the Great Commission. We also thank you for entrusting the men and women from your churches to our care and training. Together, we can accomplish more than we could alone. Thank you, Southern Baptists, for enabling us to carry out the final commands of King Jesus, fulfilling the Great Commission until His return.

In Christ,
 Danny Akin
 President
 Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Figures by Degree Programs and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Students as Per the SBC Funding Formula

	2018- 2019	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023
Special Students					
Credit Only	888	740	1,455	1,201	607
Certificate/Diploma	552	1,008	923	937	785
Special Student Total	1,440	1,748	2,378	2,138	1,392
Prebaccalaureate & Baccalaureate					
Associate of Divinity	17	22	23	16	12
Associate of Arts	11	25	23	11	9
Bachelor of Arts/Science/Business Admin	514	568	600	544	502
Prebaccalaureate & Baccalaureate Totals	542	615	646	571	523
Basic Programs					
Master of Arts	739	842	980	955	882
Master of Theological Studies	204	50	210	184	236
Master of Divinity	1,231	1,353	1,100	951	878
Basic Programs Total	2,174	2,245	2,290	2,090	1,996
Advanced					
Master of Theology	74	71	69	67	60
Doctor of Ministry	262	250	247	230	253
Doctor of Education	90	90	89	92	98
Doctor of Philosophy	193	196	190	182	162
Advanced Total	619	607	595	571	573

	2018- 2019	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023
Total Unduplicated Headcount	4,775	5,215	5,909	5,370	4,484
Cooperative Program Funded FTEs					
Full-Time Equivalent Students	2,551	2,914	2,800	2,515	2,230
Unfunded FTEs					
Over 70 Hours BA Deduction	(68)	(66)	(75)	(54)	(57)
Online SBC FTE Students	(655)	(792)	(855)	(714)	(663)
Adv Degree Students Past Time Allowance	(295)	(312)	(307)	(267)	(258)
Other Non-Countable SBC Students	-	-	(98)	(123)	(82)
Non-SBC FTE Students	(348)	(476)	(640)	(594)	(462)
<i>Total Unfunded FTEs</i>	(1,366)	(1,646)	(1,975)	(1,752)	(1,523)
Total Cooperative Program Funded FTEs	1,185	1,268	825	763	707
Graduates					
Prebaccalaureate & Special	42	30	33	56	86
Baccalaureate	46	71	107	70	102
Basic Programs	336	351	454	405	359
Advanced	84	80	87	88	85
Total Graduates	508	532	681	619	632

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for consideration, action, or report.



**THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40280

**JOSHUA POWELL, Chair
R. ALBERT MOHLER, JR., President**

Dear Southern Baptists:

Each year, it is my privilege to present a report on behalf of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. That means that I have presented more than thirty of these reports over the course of three decades. Those same decades have seen enormous change in The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in the Southern Baptist Convention, and in the larger culture. As I make this report, I would like to make reference to all three of these dimensions.

In the first place, the last thirty years have seen tremendous transformation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The background of this has to be the enormous change in the landscape of higher education in general and theological education in particular. Thirty years ago, it seemed that boom years were ahead for higher education. We now know that that was true, but that an inevitable correction was coming. The first of these corrections is just a matter of demographics. There is a significant fall off in the number of eighteen-year-olds who will be going to America's colleges and universities. Schools must be increasingly competitive, even in order to stay level in enrollment.

Other transformations include the rapid and somewhat irresponsible expansion of institutions into virtually every kind of program. Predictably, many of those programs are now closing and many of those institutions are now endangered. In the world of theological education, thirty years ago the landscape included many dominating schools associated with Protestant Liberalism. Those schools are now largely absent, not only from the scene, but from the conversation. We are in a very different place, and there is no question that the entire world of theological education has been reshaped so that the more liberal schools have had to move off into very different directions (or close), and the more conservative schools now have the vast majority of those who are actually enrolled in training and education programs for Christian ministry. Theologically, we now know that this was entirely predictable.

Nevertheless, Southern Baptists in this generation should note this massive transformation and see it as both encouragement and warning. It is encouragement because God still calls out ministers of the gospel for service in his churches. They are gravitating to institutions that actually believe the gospel, teach the Bible, and believe in the ministry of the local church—and in the imperative of taking the gospel to all peoples. It is discouraging simply because we understand that higher education that is unreservedly committed to Christian truth is going to face significant headwinds in the culture.

I am very pleased to report that The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is incredibly strong, and in every dimension. Our enrollment is the largest among classic seminaries of any form and certainly the largest in the Southern Baptist Convention. We continue to maintain very strong programs in theological education, particularly for the training of pastors. Furthermore, we have just revised our Master of Divinity in order that we be assured that it is the frontline program for theological education for Southern Baptists. That reshaping of the program is a return to the historic basis of one third of the program being in theological studies, one third in biblical studies,

and one third in ministry studies. Students are now allowed wide latitude in assembling those three areas, given their own calling and interests.

We remain absolutely committed to enriching and extending the reach of Southern Seminary's historic and respected doctoral programs. Our central purpose is graduate theological education, and that is fully reflected in our enrollment and strength.

We are also incredibly thankful for how God has blessed Boyce College. As an undergraduate institution completely committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and to biblical truth, it attracts hundreds of young people, and their presence is a continuation of Southern Seminary's founding vision and a remarkable demonstration of stewardship for this campus, this faculty, and this entire institution. It is a great joy and privilege to see what God is doing in the lives of these wonderful young people.

The second dimension would represent vast changes in the Southern Baptist Convention. Thirty years ago, the SBC was in the midst of the Conservative Resurgence that reshaped much of the denomination and brought Southern Baptist institutions back to an unreserved and joyful affirmation of biblical inerrancy and conservative Baptist doctrine. Many changes have come to the Southern Baptist Convention since then, but I want to register my concern that in every generation, Southern Baptists must affirm absolutely unconditional commitment to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. We face even more theological challenges than in the past and on issues ranging from the LGBTQ revolution to open attacks upon biblical complementarianism to the subversion of doctrine by pragmatic arguments. All of these things require the Southern Baptist Convention to affirm in every annual convention that we are fully committed to biblical truth and are unmovable in that commitment. The Southern Baptist Convention is not immune from all the temptations and trends affecting other denominations, but I am absolutely convinced that God will bless this convention of churches if we will remain faithful to the stewardship entrusted to us.

As we look at the third dimension, the challenges represented by the larger culture, I must come back to say that conservative warnings issued thirty years ago about the challenges to come in the culture turn out, not only not to have been overblown, but to have underestimated the scale, scope, and velocity of the challenges coming to us. If Southern Baptists are not faithful in this generation to push back against the age, the age will simply overcome us. We are absolutely certain that Christ will maintain his church, and even that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. At the same time, we know that many denominations have abandoned the faith and have been quickly abandoned by their own members. There is no reason for the Southern Baptist Convention to think that the same will not happen to us if we do not stand gladly, joyfully, but immovably upon biblical truth.

As always, I must conclude with a word of energetic gratitude to the Southern Baptist Convention and its churches. I want to particularly thank the Southern Baptist Convention and those thousands of churches for the generous support that comes to Southern Seminary through the Cooperative Program. The faithfulness of Southern Baptist churches channeled through the Cooperative Program remains one of the wonders of church history. If you need any encouragement in what difference this makes in the church and in the world, simply come to the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Just a few moments walking on this campus, seeing the students and faculty, joining us in a chapel service, or sitting in a classroom will convince you that what we are doing matters more than ever. Thank you to all Southern Baptists for helping to make this possible.

In the sweetest way possible, I just want to tell you that there is no way for Southern Baptists to know what you have done. We will only know the answer to that question in the glorious age to come.

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 2024 Ministry Report of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

1. 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 1,343 students in 2022-2023.

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 2022-2023, we recruited four new faculty members who are experts in their respective fields and are excited to serve our students. 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, and in 2022-2023 our women's volleyball team competed for the first time in the national tournament and their coach won regional Coach of the Year. We also fielded our first cross country team in 2022-2023, beginning with a successful season. The Augustine Honors Collegium 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 developments such as the Worldview Intensive Year program; a Digital Media emphasis within several majors; four marketplace Seminary Track programs, Business (MDiv), Communications (MDiv), and Teacher Education (MDiv and MACE); and the state and national accreditation renewal for our Teacher Education program. 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.

2. 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-five countries are enrolled in degree programs from undergraduate to doctoral. 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 1,000 students have already been enrolled in the program, and over 140 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 2,175 students for 2022-2023. 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 also 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 2022-2023 alone, Southern Seminary professors published numerous books and contributed many articles to various academic journals. 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.

3. 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 2022-2023 academic year, the total annual headcount for all Professional Doctoral Studies degree programs was 388 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. Two new programs in 2022-2023 have expanded our ability to provide quality professional doctoral education around the globe. The Doctor of Ministry degree with a concentration in Biblical Counseling is now reaching a series of new markets due to its full availability online, and the launch of the new Hispanic DMin has increased accessibility to Spanish-speaking students and met a clear need as both of our first two cohorts in the program have reached maximum enrollment.

4. 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 leadership, academics, and entity leadership. In recent years, Research Doctoral Studies has expanded our modular PhD programs to include Biblical Studies, Historical and Theological Studies, and most recently 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. For the 2022-2023 academic year the total annual headcount for all Research Doctoral Studies degree programs was 389 students. The program, however, is not merely large but of the highest quality. Our faculty and students presented in over fifty-five 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 a chapel experience and lunch 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. Amongst 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.

1. 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 2024 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 2023-2024, we welcome our largest ever on-campus Boyce student population, eclipsing 500 residential Boyce students for the first time. Serving these students well, therefore, while growing our capacity and improving their educational experience, is our key opportunity moving forward. Our two new Seminary Track programs, both in Teacher Education with one leading to an MDiv and the other a MACE, offer opportunities to offer both undergraduate and graduate level education to those wanting to serve both in full-time ministry and in public and Christian schools around the country and world. 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.

2. 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 Fall 2023, we announced our new, simplified MDiv program, reducing the overall hours required for the degree and simplifying the curriculum in order to offer a robust yet more streamlined and flexible MDiv for students. 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 hope to expand our reach and provide more tangible opportunities for continuing education and training for pastors, missionaries, and ministry leaders around the world. We also announced a new 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.

Another opportunity that comes out of this commitment 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. Professors are 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. With the rising number of online courses being taken, Southern Seminary maintains deliberate efforts to connect online students to the campus.

3. 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. Our two new programs—a fully online Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Counseling and a fully online Doctor of Ministry offered totally in Spanish—launched in 2022-2023 have already begun to further our reach and allow us to serve more churches through the training of ministers.

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. One area of opportunity is to improve both our application and admissions processes, as well as revising our programs to provide a better education all around. 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.

Another area of opportunity will be to continue to improve our non-residential offerings in our traditional programs (Church History, Systematic Theology, Old Testament, and New Testament), as we have already begun to do through our expanded modular PhD programs in Biblical Studies, Historical and Theological Studies, and most recently Philosophical and Theological Studies. These programs will continue to strengthen the pastor-theologians within the SBC in foundational disciplines. 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.

Enrollment by Degree Program Converted to Full-Time Equivalent As per SBC Seminary Formula

Prebaccalaureate Programs:	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023
Diploma Theology	31	33	31	30
Diploma Missions	64	72	68	53
Boyce: Associate of Arts	24	28	22	28
Special (including Prebacc. and SWI)	183	239	140	130
Baccalaureate Programs:				
Boyce: Bachelor of Arts	222	255	290	294
Boyce: Bachelor of Science	670	643	685	672
Basic Degree Programs:				
M.Div	1,516	1,505	1,475	1,346
M.A.	198	213	258	287
M.A.T.S.	179	176	187	181
M.C.M.	15	12	4	2
Special (Postbacc.)	28	36	28	60
Advanced Degree Programs:				
T.h.M.	99	86	106	72
D.Min.	217	233	241	235
D.Miss.	14	11	9	7

D.Ed.Min.	193	197	187	153
Ed.D.	37	32	24	14
Ph.D.	270	304	325	303
Special	0	0	0	2
Total FTE Enrollment	3,960	4,075	4,080	3,869
Official FTE	2,762	2,762	2,102	1,979
(Nondup. HC)	5,568	6,151	5,697	5,651

Degree Program Graduates

Degree Programs:

Prebaccalaureate Programs:	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023
Diploma Theology	0	0	0	0
Diploma Missions	0	0	0	0
Worldview Studies Certificate	5	3	1	4
Seminary Wives Institute	16	15	10	13
ESL Cert.	2	4	6	4
Boyce: Associate of Arts	8	12	5	4

Baccalaureate Programs:

Boyce: Bachelor of Arts	37	22	28	23
Boyce: Bachelor of Science	74	80	94	89

Basic Degree Programs:

M.Div	274	245	276	274
M.A.	60	65	59	74
M.A.T.S.	78	73	65	82
M.C.M.	5	2	2	1
Cert. Great Comm. Studies	2	1	2	10

Advanced Degree Programs:

Th.M.	38	59	83	67
D.Min.	35	38	34	44
D.Ed.Min.	19	39	34	37
D.Miss.	2	2	1	0
Ed.D.	11	13	4	5
Ph.D.	23	27	40	25
Total Graduates	689	700	744	756

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for consideration, action, or report



Southwestern

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2001 West Seminary Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76115-1153
P.O. Box 22040, Fort Worth, TX 76122-0040

JONATHAN RICHARD, Chair
DAVID S. DOCKERY, President

Dear Southern Baptist Family,

Thank you for the faithful and ongoing support of Southwestern Seminary through your gifts to the Cooperative Program. During the past year, we have prayed for and seen God's gracious favor on the Southwestern campus as we have continued our mission of seeking to glorify God by providing theological education for God-called men and women engaging in Christian service. Our heart is to assist churches by biblically educating and equipping these men and women for ministry, which encourages the priority of the Great Commandment and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

This year has been characterized by markers of God's providential blessings for the Southwestern community. We remain grateful for the dedication of the Board of Trustees, the investment in students by our gifted teaching faculty, and the overall support of Southwestern's caring staff, alumni, and friends. Watching several hundred graduates in 2023, who have been equipped to live out their calling in a faithful manner, walk across the stage served as another example among many others which point to a hope-filled future for Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College. With heartfelt gratitude to God, it is a joy to reflect on some of these significant events of recent months.

Our 2023 graduates represented every region of the United States and numerous countries from around the globe. The graduates were blessed with wise and challenging words from the commencement addresses from Chancellor O. S. Hawkins in the spring and Provost Madison Grace in the fall.

During this past year, the Southwestern community has recommitted itself to faithful prayer, recognizing our dependence on God for the work to which we have been called. We have prioritized our desire to exemplify all that it means to be a grace-filled, Christ-centered, Scripturally-grounded, confessionally-guided, student-focused, and globally-engaged academic institution. We have once again been reminded of the importance of the vision of those who have gone before us, such as B. H. Carroll and L. R. Scarborough, to dedicate ourselves anew to the truthfulness of God's inspired word and to follow the footsteps of our founders with courage, conviction, consistency, and cooperation.

Building upon and expanding our founder's vision, Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College have worked to prepare equipped men and women to serve churches, entities, and institutions across the globe. To support these efforts, donors have given generously to provide operational gifts and endowed gifts to support faculty and students. Dean Sieberhagen was named to the Charles F. Stanley Chair for the Advancement of Global Christianity, Mark E. Taylor was named to the Wesley Harrison Chair of New Testament, and Chris Osborne was named to the James T. Draper Chair of Pastoral Ministry. In addition to the appointment of Madison Grace as Provost and Vice President for Academic Administration, Travis Trawick was appointed as Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategy, Chandler Snyder

was named Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services, and Adam Dodd was invited to carry out the role of Vice President for Campus Technology. Jack Terry continued to serve with excellence as the Interim Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Dale Ford has offered capable guidance as the Interim Vice President for Financial Services.

On Mondays of each month, the Southwestern community gathered in the beautiful campus rotunda for a time of prayer. Furthermore students, faculty, and staff joined together for prayer before the bi-weekly chapel services. Convinced that we need the Lord's guidance and wisdom in these days, we were led to ask the Lord to help us be a joyful, prayerful, and thankful people (1 Thess 5:16-18).

I hope you will join with us in this season of renewal as we seek the favor of the Lord for Southwestern Seminary and for our greater Southern Baptist family of churches. Please know of our deepest gratitude for the privilege and honor to serve you in these days.

Faithfully,

Jonathan Richard
Chairman, Board of Trustees

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 2024 Ministry Report of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

Cooperative Program:

1. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary offers certificates at the pre-baccalaureate level as well as at the post-baccalaureate level that serve the churches of the SBC by equipping men and women for ministry. These certificates provide a range of offerings to support local church ministry including, church planting (offered in Spanish), student ministry, children's ministry, and biblical counseling. Additionally, Southwestern offers a seminary studies for student wives certificate (offered in both English and Spanish), which serves a vital role in our seminary community of providing affordable classes to wives of seminary students to grow their understanding of theology and Scripture. In the 2022-2023 academic year, Southwestern saw growth in the various certificate programs.

The undergraduate school of Southwestern, Texas Baptist College (TBC), provides a formative Christian educational environment to prepare students for service in the church, marketplace, mission field, and beyond. In the 2022-2023 academic year, 310 students were enrolled at the associate and bachelor levels. Associate and bachelor's degrees are offered in humanities and Christian studies, which prepare students for a life of faithful Christian service. TBC also offers a bachelor's degree in intercultural studies to prepare students for cross-cultural service in a variety of fields. Finally, three bachelor's degrees in the areas of music and worship, which prepare students for technical excellence and ministry faithfulness in worship for service in the local church and beyond. TBC also offers an undergraduate certificate in faith and culture designed to prepare students to understand their own cultural context and how the Christian faith answers the needs of their culture.

TBC also offers a five-year program where students can earn a bachelor's and master's degree in an accelerated pace (BA/MDiv). The five-year program couples the bachelor's degrees and the Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master of Christian Education, or the Master of Music in Worship Leadership. In fall 2023, Southwestern saw the first graduate from the BA/MDiv program.

Significant emphasis has been given to the areas of spiritual development and student life. Students are given the opportunity to attend two chapel services each week, where the word is faithfully ministry by Southwestern faculty and guests from across the SBC. Initiatives in whole-life discipleship have been an important addition to the work.

2. Assist churches by programs of masters' level theological education for ministers.

The primary purpose of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is to provide theological education for men and women preparing for Christian ministry. In the 2022-2023 academic year, 2,265 students were enrolled across Southwestern's master programs. At the heart of that calling is the training of pastors and missionaries for the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention. The heart of our master's program is the Master of Divinity degree (MDiv), which is specifically tailored to prepare students for Christian ministry in the local church and mission field. A variety of concentrations are offered for students to specialize in a ministry area or traditional area of study.

In addition to the MDiv, Southwestern offers a variety master's degrees. The Master of Arts (MA) is offered in theology, biblical counseling, Christian education, church music, and worship leadership. These degrees prepare students for specialized vocations in support of a variety of Christian ministries. The Master of Music (MM) offers students the ability to hone their technical skills within a context that values church music and worship. The Master of Theological Studies degree (MTS) comprises the core of the MDiv at Southwestern and prepares students for further study. All our master's programs are designed to equip students for their desired ministry areas.

Most of our master's programs at Southwestern are offered in residential and online formats. Students may attend either in person or online, or view lectures in an asynchronous manner. Southwestern also offers an accelerated online program that offers students six eight-week terms in the academic year. Because the impact and ministry of the Southern Baptist Convention is global, Southwestern assists in this global ministry by offering online master's level degrees in Spanish (MTS, MDiv), Chinese (MTS, MDiv), and now Portuguese (MTS) starting in the spring of 2024.

3. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The professional doctoral program at Southwestern serves churches by developing reflective and expert practitioners in their ministry fields. The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) and Doctor of Educational Ministry (DEdMin) challenge students to think deeply and humbly about theology and ministry practice. In these programs, students must complete course work and write ministry projects that can then be potentially modeled by other churches. DMin and DEdMin programs share concentrations in biblical counseling, apologetics, Christian leadership, church planting leadership, church revitalization, discipleship and Christian growth, evangelism and missions, executive leadership, evangelism and missions, family ministry and worship leadership. The DMin requires an MDiv (or its equivalent) and so also offers the concentrations specific pastoral ministry, text-driven preaching and pastoral theology. In the 2022-2023 academic year, 400 students were enrolled in professional doctoral programs.

DMin and DEdMin degrees are offered in an intensive format, where students complete their coursework and attend class meetings remotely during the semester, and then a week on campus for two seminars in order to have time together, to present their academic work, and to interact with our excellent faculty. This allows students to continue to have maximum involvement in their ministry area and join their studies with ministry practice.

Because of Southwestern's institutional history and influence in South Korea, the professional doctoral studies program also offers a DMin in Korean. Starting in the 2022-2023 academic year, a DMin in Spanish is also offered to serve Spanish-speaking churches in Southwestern's local context and beyond. These programs attest to Southwestern's global impact in service to the Southern Baptist Convention.

4. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary offers the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA), and the Doctor of Education (EdD). For the 275 students enrolled in research doctoral programs during the 2022-2023 academic year, these programs prepared persons of exceptional ability to serve in teaching, research, and writing for the churches and institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention. Research doctoral study requires a high degree of originality, independent thinking, analytical research, thoughtful judgment, and skill in articulating research findings.

The PhD program emphasizes the attainment of expertise in a field of study, resting upon competence in both biblical and modern languages and demonstrated through quality research and critical evaluative skills, resulting in a significant contribution to the student's chosen field of study. The PhD program is offered in a format where students can complete their coursework residentially or online. This allows students, should they choose to do so, the real-time experience of doctoral education while not leaving their ministry location.

The EdD program equips students with scholarship, educational, and leadership competencies. The EdD is an accelerated cohort-based program. The degree prepares students to serve in contexts that range from higher education to service in the local church.

The DMA program provides intensive study in a student's major music performance area augmented by 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.

Based on each of Southwestern's 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 Southwestern is accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

1. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

Southwestern is looking to expand our certificate and microcredential offerings as well as providing the delivery methods for greater accessibility for these and other program offerings. In this way we seek to help and assist bi-vocational ministers in Southwestern's main constituencies of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Southwestern hopes to continue to see enrollment growth in both undergraduate and graduate programs. New agreements with several area high schools have been initiated to offer affordable dual-enrollment courses for students to earn credit towards their degree at the college. As we look to the next few years, we hope to be able to expand these opportunities, especially for SBC-affiliated students and families. New partnerships have been initiated with several organizations to host events for high school students in our constituencies, including hosting Lifeway's Fuge camps.

The Southwestern Board and administration will seek to continue to improve the undergraduate student experience with regular campus events, clearer expectations for students, and a grace-filled and Christ-centered context of care for all students. This fall, a new and expanded student handbook was implemented. Regular Town Hall meetings with students to solicit their input regarding the student life experience have taken place and will continue to take place. In addition to these measures an increased emphasis on prayer has brought students, faculty, and staff together to regularly pray for the advancement of the Southwestern mission.

2. Assist churches by programs of masters' level theological education for ministers.

In the 2022-2023 academic year the Southwestern community approved a new academic plan, "Advance Southwestern 2030." The plan was created to bring order, clarity, and a coherent direction to the Southwestern community. This plan was presented and unanimously approved by the trustee board in the Spring of 2023. The plan includes revised vision, identity, and mission statements, as well as six new core values. An overarching emphasis of the plan is a renewed focus on the priority of the Great Commandment and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The Southwestern community has wholeheartedly embraced the core values: grace filled, Christ centered, scripturally grounded, confessionally guided, student focused, and globally engaged, which we trust will shape the life and work of the Southwestern community inside and outside the classroom.

Because master's level education, in particular the MDiv, is at the heart of Southwestern's mission, the MDiv degree and Southwestern's distinctive emphasis on academic excellence and ministry preparation is central to the academic plan. A first practical step to ensuring Southwestern continues to fulfill its mission is the establishment of a faculty led curriculum committee comprised of faculty across the institution to review the MDiv curriculum and other programs in order to serve churches more faithfully in the days to come.

The improvement of the graduate residential student experience has also received much attention and will continue to be a priority in the coming months. Regular campus events, student-focused communication and expectations, and the adoption of the new core values highlight the areas of renewal. The new student handbook, noted above, also serves graduate students. For both residential and online students, a new faculty mentorship program has been initiated to better connect faculty and students. While all student degree levels can participate, the focus of these groups is on master's students preparing for a life of ministry.

Because the primary focus of our academic community involves equipping those for local church and missions work, opportunities for students to engage in evangelism and missions remains central to our future institutional planning. Examples of this emphasis include international mission trips, preaching and church service through our Spring Revive This Nation initiatives, and faculty-led weekly local evangelism in Fort Worth.

The reach and scope of online education at Southwestern is currently global and will continue to increase in enrollment with students enrolling from locations as near as Arlington and as far away as Australia. It is essential that Southwestern translate its historic distinctives into this new mode of delivery by further preparing faculty to engage online students and creating formative online communities. As Southwestern looks to a more global future, the online language programs, which offer full master's degrees in languages such as Spanish and Mandarin, have proven to be of great importance to engage the world missionally and prepare pastors and ministers for ministry in as many contexts as possible. This work continues with a newly launched master's degree in Portuguese. An emphasis on prayers and dependence on God has permeated the Southwestern campus in recent months. We trust that Southwestern will continue to be a campus characterized by a bowed head and a trusting heart

3. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Southwestern's professional doctoral programs offer unique educational opportunities for students who have already earned a master's degree and gained a level of practical ministry experience. As those currently serving in ministry know, the culture is rapidly changing, and we must be willing to assess and adapt our methods. We seek to continue to expand our concentration subjects for our DMin and DEdMin programs and actively recruit for all areas of our professional doctoral programs.

We have worked to improve the student experience for those enrolled in our professional doctoral degrees. The professional doctoral studies offices has worked to update and improve the program handbooks for both students and supervisors to add further clarity to the mechanics of the program, including project development and supervision.

4. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

Southwestern's research doctoral programs offer a rigorous and focused course of study that prepares individuals of significant academic ability for teaching, research, and scholarship in support of Christian ministry. The research doctoral studies office has worked to support faculty supervisors by providing resources to advise students effectively. Since the program is structured to allow students to study remotely throughout their doctoral seminars, consistent communication with and by supervisors is key to student success and has been a focus of this work to improve the program. Active recruiting among the master's student body and across other constituencies is an emphasis that will continue to foster an invigorating academic community.

Another focus of improving the program includes further developing the annual seminar students complete on campus for their first three years to ensure that the program is beneficial for students, enabling them to develop into Christian scholars formed by theological virtues.

Caring Well Response:

How is SWBTS protecting against sexual abuse and harassment within the organization and as it trains its employees? How does SWBTS integrate aspects of Caring Well into its policies and practices, and engage its broad network of SWBTS leadership?

Consistent with the objectives of the Caring Well initiative, Southwestern Seminary is committed to strengthening our policies in order to better protect students and the entire seminary community by creating a safer environment for all. To that end, we have taken the following steps:

- updated admissions policies to prohibit anyone who is listed on a sex offender registry from being admitted as a student;
- evaluating curriculum and identifying opportunities to incorporate sexual abuse prevention training into relevant courses;
- required MinistrySafe training for all of our full-time employees;
- communication from the Office of the President and Dean of Students regarding the importance of MinistrySafe initiatives;
- continued process of reviewing and updating administrative and personnel policies to ensure compliance with expectations for mandatory reporting;
- created and published a new Student Handbook with strict guidelines on behavioral policies as well as penalties for failing to uphold them;
- maintained employment of a campus police force consisting entirely of professional, sworn officers.

Southwestern Seminary supports all efforts in the life of the Southern Baptist Convention to better educate our churches –both ministers and members –about the biblical, moral, and legal obligations to oppose sexual abuse in our midst and to minister effectively to those harmed by such sinful activity.

PROGRAM REPORT

I. Enrollment by Degree Program in SBC funded Full-Time Equivalents

	2015– 2016	2016– 2017	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022	2022– 2023
Undergraduate and Certificate Programs								
A.A.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
B.A.	81	148	179	163	152	110	106	93
B.S.	146	79	35	13	4	1	0	0
B.M.	23	34	33	32	27	19	13	27
Certificate	15	15	11	14	25	11	18	40
Diploma	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special	25	31	20	13	11	5	6	16
Basic Degree Programs								
M.A.A.B.S.	9	10	9	5	4	0	0	0
M.A.B.C.	63	59	53	39	39	30	17	15
M.A.C.C.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.C.E.	84	76	66	49	53	41	28	25
M.A.C.M.	11	9	8	10	8	5	2	5
M.A.C.S.E.	9	10	6	4	1	0	0	0
M.A.I.S.	8	5	8	6	4	2	2	2
M.A.L.M.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.M.	17	16	16	9	5	4	7	3
M.A.P.	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	3	5	5	2
M.A.Th.	11	14	14	11	11	9	3	2
M.A.W.	3	6	6	4	2	1	2	1
M.Div.	424	398	353	260	281	203	152	153
M.M.	39	31	29	31	20	24	25	23
M.A.C.A.	7	6	7	5	5	3	2	1
M.T.S.	33	36	39	30	74	42	27	19
Advanced Degree Programs								
D.Ed.Min.	13	14	12	22	32	60	59	73
D.Min.	39	47	73	79	89	106	104	92
Ed.D.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21	23	23
Ph.D./D.M.A.	170	155	156	193	223	176	143	125
Th.M.	18	23	31	35	53	67	49	59
Total SBC FTE Enrollment	1,249	1,222	1,164	1,029	1,126	1,126[1]	793	801
Headcount Enrollment	4,276	4,076	4,007	3,848	3,907	3,703	3,455	3,646

¹ Actual FTE for 20-21 was 945. By action of the CSP, prior year count is reflected here.

GRADUATES

	2015– 2016	2016– 2017	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2019– 2020	2020– 2021	2021– 2022	2022– 2023
Undergraduate and Certificate Programs								
A.A.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
B.A.	20	16	21	21	35	34	31	29
B.S.	51	62	58	52	35	40	0	2
B.M.	1	0	1	3	7	7	3	5
Certificate	20	2	20	13	30	14	79	96
Diploma	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Basic Degree Programs								
M.A.A.B.S.	5	1	2	10	1	1	0	0
M.A.C.C.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.C.E.	34	41	49	42	38	40	24	25
M.A.C.M.	2	2	1	0	0	2	1	0
M.A.C.S.E.	3	3	2	3	5	3	0	0
M.A.I.S.	2	3	4	2	4	1	0	0
M.A.L.M.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.M.	9	9	6	5	7	3	1	0
M.A.M.F.C.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M.A.Th.	9	10	11	10	11	7	5	5
M.A.W.	0	6	2	4	6	4	2	7
M.Div.	143	112	137	123	117	111	94	74
M.M.	25	20	12	10	10	11	9	7
M.A.B.C.	17	13	25	24	18	25	12	15
M.T.S.	103	165	191	208	203	231	194	170
M.A.C.A.	1	0	4	3	3	3	1	1
M.A.Ph	N/A	N/A	1	2	1	2	3	2
Advanced Degree Programs								
D.Ed.Min.	2	4	7	3	1	9	9	11
D.Min.	10	26	17	17	24	28	16	33
Ed.D	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8
Ph.D./D.M.A.	18	26	33	22	44	34	33	27
Th.M.	6	17	22	17	20	35	24	25
Total Graduates	481	539	626	594	620	645	541	543

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13–14, 2023, the Convention referred no items to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for consideration, action, or report.

SEMINARY COMPARATIVE DATA

I. Enrollment:

a. Total SBC Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) both funded and unfunded.

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>3 Yr. Rolling Average</u>
SWBTS	801	793	1,126	907
SBTS	1,979	2,102	2,762	2,281
NOBTS	1,374	1,160	1,241	1,258
SEBTS	1,768	1,921	2,068	1,919
GS	626	634	650	637
MBTS	1,733	1,674	1,615	1,674
Total	8,281	8,284	9,462	8,676

b. Actual FTEs approved by the Council of Seminary Presidents for Cooperative Program (CP) Seminary Funding Formula:

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>	<u>3 Yr. Rolling Average</u>
SWBTS	801	793	1,126	907
SBTS	1,979	2,102	2,762	2,281
NOBTS	894	867	1,145	969
SEBTS	707	763	1,268	913
GS	242	298	296	279
MBTS	1,733	1,674	1,615	1,674
Total	6,356	6,497	8,212	7,023

* 312 is the actual average, but 400 is the minimum number of FTEs funded for CP purposes

c. CP Allocation per SBC student.

	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>2022-2023</u>
	<u>Total SBC Students</u>	<u>CP Allocation</u>	<u>CP Allocation Per Student</u>
SWBTS	801	\$ 6,546,389	\$ 8,173
SBTS	1,979	\$ 10,322,404	\$ 5,216
NOBTS	1,374	\$ 6,686,689	\$ 4,867
SEBTS	1,768	\$ 7,026,292	\$ 3,974
GS	626	\$ 3,496,258	\$ 5,585
MBTS	1,733	\$ 7,841,001	\$ 4,525
Total	8,281	\$ 41,919,033	\$ 5,062

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>Total</u>
SWBTS	761	2,887	3,648
SBTS	1,415	4,209	5,624
NOBTS	306	2,540	2,846
SEBTS	1,470	3,014	4,484
GS	472	1,787	2,259
MBTS	1,527	3,617	5,144
Total	5,951	18,054	24,005

e. Basic Degrees awarded for the 2022-2023 academic year

	MDiv (3 year)	ThM	MA & other 2-year
SWBTS	78	28	307
SBTS	271	66	148
NOBTS	92	17	133
SEBTS	143	18	174
GS	42	6	117
MBTS	153	69	225
Total	779	204	1,104

f. Total Tuition Revenue

	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021
SWBTS	\$ 11,869,367	\$ 10,644,367	\$ 11,322,983
SBTS	\$ 22,655,417	\$ 22,347,817	\$ 22,816,633
NOBTS	\$ 10,271,914	\$ 9,583,147	\$ 9,781,776
SEBTS	\$ 15,937,349	\$ 16,465,712	\$ 16,441,322
GS	\$ 4,652,342	\$ 4,491,150	\$ 4,556,707
MBTS	\$ 17,759,240	\$ 17,329,857	\$ 17,325,473
Total	\$ 83,145,629	\$ 80,862,050	\$ 82,244,894

g. Credit Hour Costs: 2022-2023

	Non SBC Students	SBC Student
SWBTS	\$634	\$317
SBTS	\$494	\$286
NOBTS	\$499	\$299
SEBTS	\$609	\$304
GS	\$530	\$295
MBTS	\$485	\$295

h. Annual Cost per Student (For a married student on campus, tuition, fees, book, & housing)

	2022-2023 Non SBC	2022-2023 SBC
SWBTS	\$ 28,226	\$ 22,277
SBTS	\$ 20,500	\$ 15,244
NOBTS	\$ 19,502	\$ 15,902
SEBTS	\$ 22,282	\$ 16,882
GS	\$ 25,580	\$ 20,410
MBTS	\$ 19,480	\$ 16,060

i. Percent of total budget that relates to personnel expenses based on each seminary's E&G budget (salaries and benefits):

	2022-2023 Low	2022-2023 Median	2022-2023 High
SWBTS		54%	
SBTS			48%
NOBTS	65%	65%	65%
SEBTS			70%
GS	71.8%	73.1%	72.0%
MBTS	69%	69%	69%

j. Statement of Income for 2022-2023:

	SWBTS	SBTS	NOBTS	SEBTS	GS*	MBTS
Operating Income	48,650,948				404,782	
Tuition and Fees	13,719,857	22,655,417	10,271,914	15,937,349	3,877,404	17,759,240 NET of student aid
Auxiliary						1,258,635
Enterprises	6,586,674	7,950,926	3,262,860	5,481,568	570,911	2,545,962
Cooperative Program	6,546,389	10,322,404	6,645,463	7,106,929	3,551,196	7,841,001
Private Gifts	6,955,017	4,523,031	10,490,660	8,584,891	196,874	823,460
Endowment Income	9,079,581	3,094,221	2,443,691	275,007	1,824,786	977,177
Investments		4,502,558	1,137,123		113,781	305,858
Return on Beneficial Interest Trusts		69,865			2,274,832	
Other Income	464,047	486,774	6,239,507	545,389	136,157	427,665
Total Income	43,351,565	53,595,194	40,491,218	37,931,311	12,545,941	30,680,363
% of CP to Total Income	15.10%	19.26%	16.41%	18.74%	28.3%	25.6%

*For Operating Fund Without Donor Restrictions

*Included in Endowment Income



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. Our students can learn from anywhere. Students are not required to enter into a program in order to take classes. In fact, most students simply take individual courses for personal spiritual development. For students that want to enroll into a program they will be required to take 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. So Seminary Extension was created to make sure that an opportunity was available even if seminary was not an option. Lee Gallman was asked to be its first director. Through each successive director, Seminary Extension has remained true to its call. We want to make biblical, theological, and ministry training available to anyone who want to develop spiritually for service in the local church. 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 its members where they live and serve.

Seminary Extension is not a formally accredited institution. Nevertheless, many college and seminary under-graduate programs still recognize the value of its courses and some accept them for credit. Acceptance is generally based on the following criteria. First, Seminary Extension courses are of excellent academic quality. Courses are written by Southern Baptist, most of which teach in our SBC seminaries. Second, Seminary Extension uses proven evaluation methods to insure the integrity of the work done by students. Third, student records are permanent, accessible, and accurate. 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.

Seminary Extension is licensed by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

PROGRAM REPORT

The statistical data below shows the number of course enrollments and the total number of students enrolled during the 2022-2023 academic year.

Course Enrollments	541
Total Number of Students	283



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 2022 – July 2023

Yearly Highlights

- Acquired 1 document box of the George Alexander Jones Collection, 1945-1970
- Acquired 2 scrapbooks of Georgia Baptist Young People's Conferences Collection, 1932-1937
- Acquired 2 document boxes of the Philippines Baptist Mission Minutes Collection, 1950-1990
- Acquired 1 records center box of the Muriel Ramsay Lawton Collection, 1920s-1940
- Acquired 1 records center box of the William Fred Hinseley, Sr. Sermon Collection, 1930s-1950s
- Accessioned 1 document box of the Metro Association of Religious Education Directors Collection, 1970s-1995
- Accessioned the 2022 SBC Ministers' Wives Luncheon Notebook
- Acquired 1 document box and 6 dvd training videos of the Bi-vocational and Small Church Leadership Network Collection, 2019-2023
- Acquired 1 document box of the Biblical Archaeology Slide Collection
- Completed microfilming the 2021-2022 state Baptist convention newspapers and one set of Baptist church records, years 1827-1958
- Completed processing 3 archive collections: the Alfred Carl Hart Collection, Edith Martin Collection, and Albert W. Wardin, Jr. Baptists Around the World Collection
- Completed a new historical display in the Library and Archives honoring Baptist historian Dr. Albert Wardin, Jr.
- Completed digitization and online accessibility of 25 new digital resource projects
- Added membership lists for years 1750-1899 from the SBHLA's microfilm collection of Baptist church records to Ancestry.com, resulting in 121,171 record entries for the project
- Completed an inventory of the Rare Book Room collection, identifying around 1,300 titles in need of stabilization and conservation repair
- Added a new feature to the SBHLA website titled, "Recent Books by Our Researchers"
- Received the John H. Thweatt Archival Advancement Award from the Society of Tennessee Archivists
- Added 195 annuals, 17 archive collections, 13 church and associational history files, 636 audio-visuals/kits, 335 books, 458 electronic resources, 15 informational files, 14 microfilm reels, 87 pamphlets, 1,556 periodicals, and 14 photograph files

Research Use

The collection continues to attract scholars and students from a wide range of colleges and universities. Researchers from 28 different institutions including 2 international researchers conducted research in the collection during the past year. The collection was visited by 111 registered researchers including members of the Korean Council of Churches and staff provided 974 patron contacts.

Acquisitions

Several collections documenting various aspects of SBC denominational life were acquired this year. Two scrapbooks of the Georgia Baptist Young People's Conference Collection include newspaper clippings, photographs, and programs documenting various BYPU conferences in Georgia in the 1930s. The George Alexander Jones Collection details Jones' career as a Baptist chaplain and denominational worker from 1945-1970. Jones served as an Army chaplain during World War II and pastored several churches in Kentucky and North and South Carolina and also held leadership positions in the Kentucky and South Carolina Baptist Conventions. The Metro Religious Education Directors (MARED) Collection includes programs, clippings, membership lists, and photographs from the 1970s-1995. MARED provided professional development, resources, and opportunities for voicing to SBC boards and agencies concerns and needs of metro Baptist associations. The Bi-vocational and Small Church Leadership Network Collection, 2019-2023, includes informational and promotional materials and six dvd training videos for bi-vocational SBC pastors. The 2022 SBC Ministers' Wives Luncheon notebook documents the planning and activities of the ministers' wives luncheon held at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Other archive collections acquired this year document the work of Southern Baptists on a global scale. The Philippines Baptist Mission Minutes Collection includes minutes of the Philippine Mission of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention for years 1950-1990. The Mission was comprised of all missionaries to the Philippines of the SBC FMB. The purposes of the mission were to discuss, plan, and project the work of furthering the gospel in the Philippines, and the mutual encouragement and inspiration of its members through fellowship with God and with one another. The Muriel Ramsay Lawton Collection includes letters to family members, diaries, and newspaper clippings from the 1920s-1940. Muriel Lawton served as a missionary to China for the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

One sermon collection, the William Fred Hinseley, Sr. Collection, was acquired. Hinseley served as a Southern Baptist pastor in Georgia. The Hinseley collection includes mostly sermons from the 1930s-1950s but also contains newspaper clippings and bulletins and flyers of his preaching events.

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. Preservation work was completed on 10 photograph files of Christian Life Commission / Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission photographs including photographs of hunger ministry and the For Faith and Family Radio program. Microfilming of the 2021-2022 state Baptist convention newspapers was completed resulting in the addition of 13 reels of microfilm to the collection. Microfilming was also completed on one set of Baptist church records including church minutes for years 1827-1958.

Access to the Collection

Processing was completed on three archive collections: the Alfred Carl Hart Collection, Edith Martin Collection, and the Albert Wardin Baptists Around the World Collection. Alfred Carl Hart was born in 1928 on a farm near Collierville, Tennessee. He served in the U. S. Navy, then worked as a bookkeeper at the Chevrolet dealership in his hometown before answering the call to ministry in 1950. He attended Union University and Bethel College and received his M.Div. degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1962, he was appointed the first staff chaplain at the Shelby County Penal Farm in Memphis, Tennessee. Three years later he went to Brushy Mountain State Prison to serve as its first staff chaplain. Three years

later he was appointed by the Governor of Tennessee to serve as the first Director of Chaplaincy for the Tennessee Department of Corrections. In 1970, he was appointed Associate Director of Correctional / Institutional Chaplaincy for the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and in 1977, he was named Director of the Division of Chaplaincy for the HMB which included all chaplaincy ministries at home and abroad. He served as interim pastor for 42 churches in Georgia and Tennessee. The Hart Collection includes material related to the chaplaincy program of the Home Mission Board, as well as information on chaplain programs in the military, business and industry, fire departments, prisons, police units, race track ministries, and truck stops. The second processed collection documents the life of Edith Martin, wife of Robert Martin and mother of evangelist Eddie Martin. Edith's primary location was in Pennsylvania. After becoming a Christian, she became very active in evangelistic work. Her influence led her son, Eddie, to become a notable evangelist who held meetings in tents, churches, and auditoriums across the United States and foreign countries. She and her husband were directors of the "Know Your Bible" organization, which operated out of Hilton Village, Virginia. Material in the Edith Martin Collection focuses on her prayer life and evangelistic efforts. The bulk of the collection includes diaries that bear witness to people she encountered who made spiritual decisions. Martin sometimes included comments and prayers related to her remarks about these individuals' spiritual conditions.

The Albert W. Wardin, Jr. Baptists Around the World Collection (60 document boxes, 24 linear ft.) was also processed. The collection includes material and information on Baptist groups, conventions, and associations around the world, including Wardin's notes, copies of articles, copies of sections of books, clippings, pamphlets, brochures, maps, statistical data, biographical information on Baptists, information on Wardin's visits to Baptists outside the United States, references to source material in Baptist archives, and correspondence with other Baptists around the world. The collection is divided into two sub-series: country files and publication / general files. Most of the collection is country files. These items were collected by Dr. Wardin for use in his *Baptists Around the World* book published in 1995. He continued to add material to the files beyond the book's publication, perhaps with the intention of updating the book.

The SBHLA awarded 10 individuals with Lynn E. May Study Gants for the year 2021-2022, ranging from \$200-\$750 per person.

Twenty-five new projects of any word searchable pdf files and audio visual content were added to the Digital Resources page of the SBHLA website. These projects include:

- R. H. Boyd / J. M. Frost and T. P. Bell Correspondence, 1895-1916
- James Garvin Chastain Papers, 1887-1930
- R. B. C. Howell Memorial to First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, 1820-1863
- R. B. C. Howell Sermons, 1838-1867
- John Rowan Claypool Sermon Collection, 1962-1981
- Southern Baptist Convention Video Recordings, 1975-1999
- Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting Audio Recordings, 1958-1974
- Woman's Missionary Union Programs and Addresses, 1958-1974
- WMU Centennial Celebration Collection (News Stories, Video Recordings, Program Guide), 1988
- Jimmy Carter Oral History Interview, 1991 (Transcript and Video Recording)
- Christian Home Series Audio Recordings, 1943, 1946, 1948, 1956
- Southern Baptist Evangelistic Hour Audio Recordings, 1944-1946
- Hawaii Baptist Convention Annuals, 1945-2000
- Nebraska Baptist Association Newsletters, 1971-1973

- Bulletin Seminary Extension Department, 1952-1962
- Research Studies including: Calling the Family Baptist Together, 1993; Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations Findings Report, 1978 (including Audio Recordings); Transition Plan for Covenant for a New Century, 1996; and Southern Baptist Student Work, A History, 1961
- Selected Bibliographies including: Bibliography of Baptist Writings on Baptism, 1967; Guide to Selected Baptist Bibliographies, 1992; Selected Bibliography of Hispanic Baptist History, 1981; and Selected Bibliography of Metropolitan Missions, 1982

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

KEVIN SMITH, Chair
BRENT LEATHERWOOD, President

INTRODUCTION

It is my privilege to present this report, once again, on behalf of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Our mission is 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 historic and ongoing concern for Southern Baptists: life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity. In our efforts, we see our work as that of missionaries, striving to bring hope to a chaotic public square as we apply the moral and ethical demands of the gospel to the challenges of our current age.

In last year's letter, I lauded the "downfall of the *Roe* abortion regime with the *Dobbs* Supreme Court decision" but also pointed out that this monumental decision would reemphasize pro-life work at the state and local level. That assessment has proven true, making our partnership with state conventions and the work of our Psalm 139 Project even more important, not less.

Thankfully, we have seen substantial achievements in both arenas.

In North Carolina, we were able to partner with the state convention to see the overriding of the governor's veto of a 12-week abortion ban, saving countless lives. In 2023, we were also able to place 12 more life-saving ultrasound machines in local communities. Most of these placements were in partnership with state conventions, and one—our second international placement—involved a partnership with the IMB. In every case, preborn lives are being saved and vulnerable mothers ministered to because of the generous gifts of Southern Baptists and others.

Further, in Washington, D.C., we have been diligent to push back against the current administration's efforts to expand abortion through the work of several federal agencies. We have also vigorously opposed any tax dollars going to support abortion during the various funding processes.

Turning to religious liberty, thankfully, the legal landscape remains promising—at least at the federal level. Time and time again, when the Supreme Court issues an opinion, religious free exercise and conscience protections are buttressed. For instance, this past year, in *303 Creative v. Elenis*, the court ruled that creative professional Lorie Smith could not be forced to design a website with messages contrary to her deeply held religious beliefs.

Further, in *Groff v. DeJoy*, a case in which we joined a brief, the court unanimously ruled that employers must meet a very high burden before denying religious accommodation. Both cases were wins for those like Southern Baptists, who support the tenets of religious liberty.

We have watched both the federal bureaucracy and the lower-level courts closely. And we have taken action when agencies have attempted to make changes to rules that would strip away the rights of those guided by their faith or when courts have not supported the rights of religious people to live according to their convictions.

In the arena of marriage and family, challenges related to the radical gender ideology that we have seen in our culture continue to present themselves. As a result, we have focused the most recent series of our relaunched ERLC Podcast and the Winter 2023 issue of *Light* magazine on this issue in order to serve our churches well.

Further, in early 2024, we will be releasing a resource which aims to help churches navigate both the legal and ethical scenarios associated with doing ministry in an age of gender chaos.

Legally, the landscape has changed significantly since the *Obergefell* (2015) decision with many challenges arising related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI). A significant victory was achieved in this area with the defeat of the “transgender mandate” which would have compelled medical professionals to provide gender-transition care, conflicting with their religious beliefs and medical judgment. We have actively opposed this policy since its inception.

In addition, we collaborated with both the Iowa Baptists and Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptists to file amicus briefs in state-level cases that supported the rights of parents to teach their children regarding matters of gender and sexuality without interference from school officials.

Guided by our convention’s commitment to the inherent value of every person made in the image of God (*imago Dei*), the ERLC remains a vocal advocate for policies that recognize that value. Sadly, this past year, our work in promoting human dignity faced challenges due to a divided Congress. Even so, we have worked for the passage of helpful legislation such as sensible immigration and criminal justice reforms.

Following our convention’s lead, we continued our advocacy for improvements in border security, a permanent solution for “Dreamers,” and a secure legal status pathway for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. Unfortunately, none of these efforts were successful due to government gridlock. Regardless, our work in these areas will continue.

The last quarter of 2023 brought a particularly disturbing development in the international arena. On Oct. 7, the terrorist organization Hamas launched a horrendous attack against the nation of Israel. Subsequently, the ERLC led in crafting an “Evangelical Statement in Support of Israel,” which was issued on Oct. 11, 2023.

Advocating for Israel’s right to exist and defend itself, the statement garnered thousands of signatures from Southern Baptists and other evangelicals and received wide press coverage. As we move forward into 2024, Southern Baptists should know that their ERLC will be diligently monitoring and actively engaging the issues that matter to them—issues of life, religious liberty, marriage and family, and human dignity. But beyond that, even in the midst

of these challenging times, we will be about the business of bringing hope to the public square, representing our Savior, Jesus Christ, in word and in deed.

I want to close with a word of personal gratitude. 2023 was the most difficult year in the life of our family as all three of our children survived the worst school shooting in Tennessee history. You can imagine the trauma and tears that come from such a moment of terror.

That experience placed stress not only on our home but also our entity. I am thankful to my teammates for their continued excellent work throughout this season, as well as the incredible outpouring of prayer and support from all across the SBC. All of that has been a kindness from the Lord as we have walked this path, ensuring that we do not do so alone.

Brent Leatherwood
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 2024 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 our churches as they live out the Christian life in our contemporary culture. Many of these resources are written, but our podcast and social media posts also provide good insight regarding the topics of most concern to Southern Baptists. Here are some representative examples of the kind of resources we provide to help churches apply the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life. They are organized according to the four major categories of our work: life, religious liberty, marriage & family, and human dignity.

- Life: January 22, 2023 marked the 39th annual Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. We created a short video to remind Southern Baptist churches to pray for the future of the pro-life movement as we seek to cultivate a culture of life.
 - June 2023 marked the one-year anniversary of the remarkable *Dobbs* decision. We recognized the occasion by exploring how ministry at pregnancy resource centers has changed since *Roe* was overturned, the ruling's positive impact on abortion rates, and a look at what happened on the federal level. Furthermore, we dedicated our December 2022 issue (which hit mailboxes in January 2023) of *Light* magazine to life. "Pursuing a Culture of Life: The Pro-Life Movement After the Demise of *Roe v. Wade*" is an issue that features timely articles that will help Christians uphold the value of all of life.
 - In addition, the ERLC has continued to update our *Dobbs* resource page which features articles on how to continue pro-life work, answers to common post-*Dobbs* questions, and a prayer guide that centers on life issues. It can be found at erlc.com/dobbs.

- **Religious Liberty:** Defending religious liberty is central to our mission at the ERLC. In order to do so effectively, it is necessary to help every generation of Southern Baptists understand what religious liberty is and why it is a Baptist distinctive worth defending. To that end, we produced a one-page resource outlining the theological foundations of religious liberty. We also produced explainers to help our audience understand the significance of this year's two major Supreme Court victories regarding religious liberty and free speech. In addition, our June 2023 issue of *Light* magazine, "Your ERLC: Assisting Churches. Speaking to the Public Square," which focuses on the work of the ERLC, featured articles about our past, current, and future religious liberty advocacy and its challenges.
 - Alongside our bulletin insert for Citizenship & Religious Liberty Sunday, we also produced a video for churches to show on July 2 in commemoration of Religious Liberty Sunday, reminding members that defending religious liberty is part of our Baptist identity.
- **Marriage & Family:** Few things are as misunderstood in today's society than God's design for marriage, family, and sexuality. To help our churches as they engage this reality, we created articles to help clarify myths about marriage and language surrounding gender identity confusion. We also explained the three-parent IVF technique that poses serious ethical questions Christians should consider. In order to better equip leaders, we put together a one-page biblical resource for pastors on gender and sexuality that can be shared widely. Moreover, we called attention to the work SEND Relief is doing to strengthen families by helping churches care for orphans and get involved with foster care. Furthermore, our most recent pro-life issue of *Light* magazine contained an article exploring how we can foster a more pro-family world through legislation.
 - In order to assist churches in addressing the gender chaos that characterizes our contemporary culture, we are in the process of releasing two large resources. First, the newest issue of *Light* magazine (Winter 2023) is entirely focused on the gender chaos of our contemporary era, providing helpful information and down-to-earth insight. Second, in early 2024 we will be releasing a resource which aims to help churches navigate the legal and ethical scenarios associated with doing ministry in the age of gender confusion.
- **Human Dignity:** The inherent dignity of every individual undergirds a biblical ethic. As a result, it is a major component in the work we do and resources we provide. This year, we've covered topics like race relations and the theology undergirding a church committed to racial reconciliation, why Christians should care about predatory payday lending, and the insidious nature of pornography addiction. In addition, we focused on prison ministry by highlighting the inspiring work of one of our seminaries, wrote about how Christians should prevent the exploitation of migrant children, and covered the launching of a private refugee sponsorship program in the U.S. We also took initial steps to engage policies that will reduce the epidemic of gun violence and mass shootings.
 - Further, our partnership with the Unify Project and the resulting SBC Annual Meeting event, Simple Steps to Unity, have provided stories that inspire churches to act in their local communities. Leading up to the annual meeting, we also released "A

Conversation with Jon Nelson,” past president of the Missouri Baptist Convention. In the video, Jon and Brent discuss racial unity in the SBC in a way that is helpful for churches. A resource page on racial unity can be found at erlc.com/racialunity.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

The ERLC brings a mission-oriented mindset to the work we do in the public square. So, as we communicate and advocate for the moral and ethical concerns of the churches, we also carry the good news of the gospel into the public square. Just as our Southern Baptist missionaries are sent to chaotic nations and Southern Baptist church planters establish churches in chaotic contexts in America, the ERLC sees it as both a responsibility and privilege to be a voice of hope in our chaotic public square. Below are just some of the ways we assisted churches by communicating our moral and ethical concerns in the public arena. They are organized according to the four major categories of our work: life, religious liberty, marriage & family, and human dignity.

- Life: At the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, messengers unanimously approved a resolution condemning efforts to strip Hyde from any federal appropriations bills and called upon Congress to uphold all pro-life riders. With this guidance from our messengers, the ERLC is once again advocating for the ongoing inclusion of several longstanding pro-life and conscience-protection riders such as the Hyde Amendment and “Hyde-family” of riders as well as new protections for life in fiscal year 2024 appropriations which are still being negotiated.
- The ERLC did a thorough review of all of the originally proposed appropriations bills and communicated both areas of concern and areas of support to lawmakers. We did the same during the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) process, urging lawmakers to exclude any funding for abortion or abortion-oriented travel in the NDAA for 2024.
- Further, in the post-*Dobbs* era, the Biden administration has utilized all levers of its power to promote abortion access. Through the National Rulemaking Process, federal agencies have pressed forward pro-abortion policies that have, among other things, expanded access to the abortion pill, paid for abortion travel, and used taxpayer resources to fund “education” efforts around how to access abortion.
- For example, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced an Interim Final Rule expanding access to abortion by amending current regulations and removing an exclusion on abortion counseling and abortions in the medical benefits package for veterans and eligible family members. This change in rules creates taxpayer-funded abortions by the VA. Similarly, the Department of Defense changed its policies to cover time off and travel expenses for service members seeking abortions.
- In another example, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has adapted HIPAA to limit sharing of personal “reproductive health” information. This new rule establishes that healthcare providers and other related entities may violate HIPAA if they comply with investigations into illegal abortion and gender-transition procedures. The rule compromises important protections for those who have been abused in order to expand abortion access.

- The ERLC has pushed back through public comments in the federal rulemaking process to each of these changes, expressing our firm opposition to these moves that will lead to more lives lost and more consciences compromised.
- Additional moves from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) over the last year have also made chemical abortion drugs more accessible than ever before. Despite the fact that 1 in 5 women who take these drugs experience a complication requiring further medical treatment, the FDA has now permanently moved to allow the abortion pill to be obtained through the mail or at local pharmacies.
- We have closely followed the *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA* case, which challenges the FDA's initial approval of the chemical abortion drug, mifepristone, and the agency's subsequent removal of important safety precautions from the drug's regimen. Now headed to the U.S. Supreme Court, the ERLC will be seeking an appropriate amicus brief to join to effectively convey Southern Baptists' position on this critical life issue.
- State-level advocacy: While most of our advocacy efforts focus on the federal level, intentional cooperation with our state Baptist conventions remains an important priority for the ERLC. The ERLC has intentionally fostered such collaborative efforts, coming along our state conventions when requested to push forward pro-life and pro-human dignity laws. This year, we were able to partner with the North Carolina Baptists in urging the North Carolina legislature to override the governor's veto and adopt a 12-week limit on abortions in the state. Relatedly, we partnered with the Nevada Baptists in urging the Nevada governor to veto legislation that would have made Nevada a destination for those seeking assisted suicide. The ERLC will always seek to work with our state conventions to protect life from conception until natural death.
- Religious Liberty: In our efforts regarding religious liberty, the ERLC works hard to communicate and advocate for the positions of Southern Baptists primarily at the Supreme Court and at the federal level (U.S. Congress and federal agencies). We also strive to effectively communicate ongoing developments to Southern Baptists and work collaboratively with our Baptist state conventions on various efforts related to religious liberty.
 - The Supreme Court: In its 2023, the Supreme Court handed down its decision in *Groff v. Dejoy*, unanimously ruling that its previous standard for religious accommodations in the workplace established in 1977 in *Trans World Airlines v. Hardison* had been wrongly interpreted. The court used this case as an opportunity to provide clarification that employers must meet a higher burden before denying religious accommodations in the workplace. The ERLC previously filed an amicus brief urging the court to recognize that reality and rule in favor of expanding accommodations.
 - In another important case, *303 Creative v. Elenis*, the court ruled in favor of Lorie Smith, a web designer who did not wish to use her creative talents to design websites celebrating same-sex marriages, and against a Colorado public accommodation law that had also been used to target cake designer, Jack Phillips. The decision was an important victory for free speech as the court recognized creative expression as constitutionally protected speech and affirmed our nation's robust history of protecting

speech, even when it is culturally unpopular. Though this case focused on freedom of speech, it has significant implications for people of faith who wish to express their beliefs in the public square, and the ERLC worked hard to keep its constituents informed of its progress.

- Federal level: At a federal level, much of our work has centered on pushing back against harmful attempts by Congress and the administration to restrict religious liberty protections. In Congress, we advocated tirelessly against the misnamed Respect for Marriage Act and have continued our advocacy efforts against the incredibly harmful Equality Act. Further, the current administration has ruthlessly utilized the federal rulemaking process to push forward regulations expanding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) protections and abortion access, often at the expense of religious liberty. The ERLC has recently pushed back through public comments against such changes at the Departments of Education, HHS, Labor, Justice, Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Such public comments both slow the process down and establish a basis for future First Amendment litigation. Combined with comments filed against the administration’s efforts to expand abortion (see above), the ERLC filed 19 public comments in 2023—the most in our history.
 - A significant win in the arena of religious liberty that also relates to marriage and family came with the final defeat of the “transgender mandate.” The mandate implemented under the Affordable Care Act through HHS would have required medical professionals to provide gender-transition care to patients against the medical providers’ deeply held religious convictions and medical expertise. Advocating against this policy has been a top priority for the ERLC since the mandate’s inception. The ERLC submitted public comments to HHS in early 2022, once again condemning these policies that pave over the consciences of many Americans. Two cases were being litigated in federal courts challenging the mandate, and both struck it down as unconstitutional. The Biden administration could have appealed the decisions but declined to do so, ending the challenge and leaving religious liberty and conscience protections intact. This harmful gender ideology goes directly against God’s design for family and human flourishing. We will continue our advocacy against any future policies that threaten that flourishing and steamroll religious and conscience protections.
- At the state level: At the state level, we joined with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention in an amicus brief at the Supreme Court of Wisconsin in a religious liberty case, supporting a Catholic charity’s claim that the state had no right to determine whether or not its activities were sufficiently “religious” to qualify for tax-exempt status. Further, we also partnered with the California Southern Baptist Convention to support an amicus request for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to an en banc rehearing in *Huntsman v. Corporation of the President*, arguing that the government has no right to adjudicate internal doctrinal disputes of religious groups.
- Marriage & Family
 - Supporting parents: As a part of our work to push back on harmful gender ideology and affirm God’s design of the family, we partnered with the Iowa Baptist and Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Conventions in filing amicus briefs in two state-level

cases. Each brief affirmed the important role of parents and opposed any attempts for schools to come between a child and his or her parents, particularly on such sensitive and important issues as gender and sexuality.

- Family-strengthening policies: In Congress, we have continued to advocate for policies that would bolster family formation and lead to flourishing. Particularly in the post-*Dobbs* environment, there has been renewed energy on Capitol Hill to do more in support of vulnerable women and families, cultivating an environment that supports women and families who choose life. The ERLC will advocate for policy changes that strengthen families and marriages, promote the well-being of children, recognize the dignity of work, and wisely steward financial resources.
- Human Dignity: Some of the ERLC's work in the area of human dignity was affected by a divided Congress, which made it difficult to find bipartisan support and spur on needed congressional action.
 - Immigration: The ERLC continued its advocacy for both needed border security improvements as well as a permanent solution for "Dreamers" in 2023 as Congress remained in gridlock over the issue. With unprecedented numbers of arrivals at the border and the end of Title 42, we worked with SEND Relief to prepare border states to respond and urged Congressional leaders to take necessary action.
 - As negotiations are underway for a border security deal, the ERLC has advocated for lawmakers to uphold their God-given responsibility to protect our citizens while simultaneously maintaining the dignity of those arriving and working toward "robust avenues for valid asylum claimants seeking refuge," as stated in the SBC's 2023 resolution "On Wisely Engaging Immigration."
 - We also advocated for a secure pathway to legal status for Afghan and Ukrainian evacuees who were brought to the United States using "humanitarian parole." Though these vulnerable individuals are essentially refugees, they lack the pathway to permanent status given to those formally designated as refugees. Unfortunately, despite broad bipartisan support for the Afghan Adjustment Act, it has continued to stall in Congress.
 - Artificial intelligence: The ERLC has also engaged policymakers in regard to the need to monitor developments in artificial intelligence so that human dignity is respected. To that end, we created a landing page (found at erlc.com/ai) where they are able to review our Artificial Intelligence: An Evangelical Statement of Principles and the SBC Resolution on Artificial Intelligence as well as access other resources.
- Looking Ahead:
 - The beginning of 2024 is likely to be a busy season as Congress enters its last legislative push before the election cycle gets fully underway. Similarly, the Biden administration will be working to accomplish as much as possible before the end of his term. Though the realities of a divided Congress make progress difficult, there are areas where we are hopeful compromise can be reached and steps forward can be taken.

- After successfully defending all Hyde-family riders under a fully Democratically controlled government in fiscal years 2022 and 2023, we are hopeful that some marginal gains can be made this year for the causes of life and religious liberty as Congress completes the appropriations process for fiscal years 2024 and 2025. Additionally, we are pleased that proposals around supporting families, protecting children, and regulating new technologies are slowly gaining momentum.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

The conclusion of 2023 wraps up the first full year of a new administration at the ERLC. Deepening our engagement and collaboration with our Baptist partners remained a strategic priority for the ERLC, representing the sort of collaborative work that characterizes healthy Baptist cooperation and typifies our renewed approach. Over the course of the year, we have worked to build relationships with convention executives, engaged state ethics leaders, and had a presence at 32 state conventions, the largest number in years. Further, we have deepened our relationships with associational leaders both through our partnership with the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders (SBCAL) and through President Leatherwood's keynote addresses at NAMB's AMS Summit in September. In addition, Brent has intentionally made a habit of calling pastors of various size churches to speak with them about how the ERLC can best serve them. All of these intentional efforts help provide the sort of information that allows us to best serve our churches in the local witness.

- **State-Level Work:** Working with our state-level partners has also allowed us to assist churches in their moral witness in their states. As mentioned above, we have been able to partner with our state conventions on several efforts. For instance, we were able to press several pro-life initiatives forward. This year, we were able to partner with the North Carolina Baptists in urging the North Carolina legislature to override the governor's veto and adopt a 12-week limit on abortions in the state. Relatedly, we partnered with the Nevada Baptists in urging the Nevada governor to veto legislation that would have made Nevada a destination for those seeking assisted suicide. The ERLC will always aim to work with our state conventions to protect life from the earliest moment of conception until natural death.
- Once again this year, we also hosted a State Ethics Leaders (SEL) meeting in late November and 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 is the third year we have convened this meeting, which 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.
- **Select Specific Resources:** Although most of the items mentioned in Section I 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 at erlc.com/churchresources. Further, our work with the Unify Project (see above) is specifically "designed to equip and inspire pastors and churches to bring hope and healing to their communities through the transformative power of the gospel." Early in 2024, we will be releasing two resources that were developed in 2023: a practical guide to help churches navigate both the legal and ethical scenarios associated with doing ministry in this age of gender confusion and a Christian guide to politics.

- Psalm 139 Project: Finally, 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 (PRCs) around the country. 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.
 - 2023 saw the placement of 12 additional machines, bringing the total number of machines placed in the history of the program to 85. Dedication services for these placements allow the ERLC to connect with local churches that support the pregnancy center. Many of the machines this year were placed in cooperation with state Baptist Conventions. And one machine—the project’s second international placement—was placed internationally in cooperation with the IMB.

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. Below are some examples of ways we have done so in 2023.

Although, legally, religious liberty may be in its best position in decades, the ERLC continued to diligently monitor developments in constitutional cases related to the First Amendment. We signed onto briefs in several cases including *Groff vs. DeJoy* at the Supreme Court, two cases revolving around the right of parents to have public schools respect their deeply-held religious beliefs as they raise their children, and, alongside the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention in a case supporting a Catholic charity’s claim that the state had no right to determine whether or not its activities were sufficiently “religious” to qualify for tax-exempt status.

At the federal level, we were a leading voice in the legislative and regulatory processes, actively countering efforts by Congress and the administration that threaten religious liberty.

For example, we opposed the Respect for Marriage Act and the Equality Act, both of which are detrimental to religious freedom.

The administration’s push to expand regulations on sexual orientation, gender identity, and abortion access through the consequential federal rule-making process often undermines

religious liberty. We've responded through public comments pushing back against these changes across various federal departments including Education, HHS, Labor, Justice, Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, and USAID.

As we work to advocate for religious liberty, we produce resources that promote religious liberty as they explain the latest developments. At times, we create individual pages on our website that provide our audience with a one-stop shop where they can find multiple resources on a specific topic, event, or issue. Several are related to religious liberty, such as erlc.com/scotus and erlc.com/equalityact.

As we do every year, we also produced a video and a bulletin insert for churches to use to promote religious liberty on Religious Liberty Sunday.

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.

Due to the chaotic nature of our contemporary culture, there are many challenges on the horizon for Southern Baptists, in general, and the ERLC, specifically, since we are the one SBC entity directly tasked with engaging the culture.

Fully committed to our charge to assist the churches, the ERLC will be successful insofar as we understand the cultural and public policy concerns of our churches and effectively serve them well by providing resources and representation. It will also depend on how well we have communicated the unique institutional role we play within the convention and the distinct voice we have in the public square. Both of these things grow out of good relationships with the churches and intermediary organizations like state conventions and associations because it is from the experience of working alongside and assisting our churches that we are able to more effectively speak into the public square. Moreover, it helps us understand the issues facing our churches. Thus, in 2023, in the first full year of a new administration, we continued our emphasis on building relationships at all levels of the SBC, especially with our state conventions. This approach, although not new, has been given a renewed emphasis.

In applying the “moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life,” there are several items that will necessarily have an outsized effect on our work going forward.

1. First, the overturning of *Roe* (1973) in the *Dobbs* (2022) Supreme Court decision has done two things. One, by elevating the role of the states on the question of abortion, it has made pro-life efforts more complex, nearly necessitating 50 separate strategies. Two, it has revealed the extent to which we live in a culture of death which must be addressed in an effort to win over the hearts and minds of Americans even as we press forward legal efforts to protect the preborn.
2. Second, the fallout of the *Bostock* (2020) decision has brought questions of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) more fully to the forefront of the cultural and employment arenas, and legal challenges to the free exercise rights of those who hold to an orthodox Christian understanding of sex, gender, marriage, and family—like Southern Baptists. As a result, the main challenges to religious liberty have come around these

issues and will be for the foreseeable future. As a result, the work of the ERLC will necessarily focus here as we assist the churches.

3. Third, developments in technology—especially as it relates to artificial intelligence—continue to accelerate. And, as we have over the past several years, the ERLC will carefully monitor those developments, providing helpful resources for churches and advocating for good policy surrounding those developments.
4. Fourth, the sexual abuse crisis in the SBC continues to be a source of concern for all Southern Baptists, and the ERLC is no exception. Although the Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force (ARITF) has been charged by the messengers with advancing initiatives sexual abuse reform, the ERLC will, as it has been from the beginning, continue to assist in this arena in whatever ways possible.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

As indicated in the answer to Question I in this section, the same cultural challenges will confront the ERLC’s work in “communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena” in the near future.

1. First, the Supreme Court’s overturning of *Roe* in *Dobbs*, a role in abortion policy shifted back to the states. Though the ERLC continues to push for protection of the preborn at the federal level, including pro-life riders in the federal budget as well as pro-life legislation, it is clear that state policy will be ever more important. This patchwork of state level policy means that the pro-life movement must adapt to the new landscape and implement a strategy which is focused on the local realities. In states where abortion is prohibited, this means ensuring that every mother is supported to such a degree that she would never consider abortion. Efforts to bolster foster care, adoption, and wrap-around care will help move us further along in growing a true culture of life. For those states where it is limited or permitted, it means working to bring about the end of abortion, taking whatever steps we can to save as many lives as we can along the way. Worthy of special consideration is the challenge of chemical abortions. Representing Southern Baptists, the ERLC will do everything it can to push back against these medical abortions, including engaging in the courts.
2. Second, the fight to preserve religious liberty and conscience protections will circle around SOGI. The ERLC’s work in this arena will require continued watchfulness and diligence, not only in regard to court cases, but also in relation to the federal regulations (and the corresponding rule-making process) wherein government agencies determine how such laws will be interpreted and enforced.
3. Third, continuing developments in technology—which also touch on issues related to free speech and religious liberty—will mean that the ERLC will continue to monitor developments in this area and advocate for good policy and regulation in it as we engage lawmakers.

Other areas of emphasis for the organization will align with previous emphases on the sanctity of human life, religious liberty, marriage & family, and human dignity. As always, the ERLC is also working to encourage policies that are in line with Southern Baptist commitments, especially as reflected in our confession of faith and our yearly resolutions.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

The same challenges indicated above also affect this aspect of our ministry assignment going forward. The changing landscape of the pro-life movement will make state and local efforts more critical, elevating the importance of our partnerships with local PRCs. Our Psalm 139 Project is even more important in this next stage of the pro-life movement. PRCs will be critical outposts in the effort to gain ground in establishing a robust culture of life. In states where legislative and ballot measures to protect life will have no chance of success, they will be especially strategic in our work to save lives and change minds regarding life.

The challenges of gender ideology will mean changes to local ministries as churches and members 1) attempt to care for those trapped in the lies of that movement, 2) push back against attempts to erode their ability to proclaim the truth, and 3) help advocate for religious parents' right to raise their children according to their deeply held beliefs. The current administration's efforts to press forward a radical ideology in regards to SOGI will persist at the federal level, requiring continued diligence. Analogous efforts will happen at the state level.

Alongside the dangers they present to a biblical view of marriage & family, they also threaten to curtail religious liberty.

As we press forward with these things in view, the ERLC is committed to be more and more connected to our churchers. We have intentionally worked to deepen our relationship with our various Baptist partners, including our state conventions, associations, and local churches. Through such efforts, we have gained a better understanding of the issues confronting Southern Baptist congregations and will continue to orient our efforts toward providing the best and most helpful resources to assist them. To that end, we are hopeful that in the coming year we will be able to employ a director of Church Engagement who will lead our efforts to make sure we remain firmly connected to our churches, understanding their needs and concerns.

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 them and defend them both in the United States and abroad. Thankfully, at the federal level, religious liberty is at a judicial high-water mark. Supreme Court rulings over the last several years have been overwhelmingly in favor of protecting religious liberty. At the circuit court and state levels, things have been more mixed and will merit vigilance. Many of these cases have emerged due to the efforts of those who advocate for a radical gender ideology and SOGI developments. As a result, the ERLC has been monitoring and engaging more at those levels than in the past. We expect that we will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

Another challenge on the horizon is the growing dissatisfaction with religious liberty amongst a segment of Americans, including some Southern Baptists. This group is diverse but includes those who favor some sort of religious establishment. Despite its messiness, 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. Thus, in keeping with our historic Baptist convictions and commitments and in alignment with our confession of faith and numerous resolutions on the topic, the ERLC will continue to vigorously advocate for and defend religious liberty in the public square.

As we do so, the ERLC will continue to provide resources for churches such as the bulletin inserts and videos for Religious Liberty Sunday, numerous articles and documents on our website, and online events for more focused teaching.

MATTERS REFERRED BY THE CONVENTION

During the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 13-14, 2023, the Convention referred the following motions to the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission for consideration, action, and report back to the next annual meeting.

1. SBC Referral: To amend the SBC Organization Manual to ask ERLC to assist churches and entities in responding to abuse (Items 14 and 68, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, p. 56, 80)

Motion: Keith Myer, Maryland

"I move that the Organization Manual of the Southern Baptist Convention be amended to add the ministry assignment for the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission to assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting awareness of and resourcing the prevention of and response to abuse."

Response: The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission is committed to working to ensure that every church is a place that is safe from abuse and that cares well for survivors of abuse. The ERLC has worked continuously to carry out the will of the messengers, affirmed through resolutions and the appointment of special task forces, toward this end. The ERLC has worked toward providing a number of resources, whether through the Caring Well Challenge for churches or the Church Cares curriculum produced in conjunction with Lifeway Christian Resources, with the goal of informing churches of the need for action, providing concrete steps that can be taken, and offering guidance when requested for ending the scourge of sexual abuse and predation within the Southern Baptist Convention. In light of the report from the Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force (ARITF) and their planned actions to combat abuse, the ERLC affirms their work and will cooperate with them in the effort to combat sexual abuse. The ERLC believes that doing so is in keeping with our current work and ministry assignment as laid out by the convention through "provid[ing] information resources that inform and equip churches for active moral witness in their communities" on the subject of sexual abuse.

2. SBC Referral: To request the ERLC to expand their focus on the sanctity of human life to include adoption (Items 76 and 112, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, p. 81, 86)

Motion: David Hobson Alabama

"I move that the messengers of the 2023 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, request the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission to expand its annual focus on the sanctity of human life to include an emphasis on Christian family adoption."

Response: The ERLC is committed to the work of advocating for orphans and widows in their distress, as this is the mark of true religion (James 1:27). We applaud the work of many Baptist state conventions and children's homes working on the front lines of adoption ministry in their states. Knowing the picture of adoption is a reminder of how each of us entered the family of God through the adopting work of God the Father on our behalf (Romans 8:15), the ERLC will continue in its efforts to highlight the need for and importance of adoption because of the

intrinsic worth of each child as an image bearer and in accordance with pro-life convictions that recognize the value and dignity of each individual from conception to natural death. This is why the ERLC regularly platforms and provides resources on adoption and orphan care, most particularly around the Orphans and Widows Sunday in November each year. Recognizing the unique circumstances which surround the annual Sanctity of Life Sunday in January—namely its close proximity to the anniversary of the disastrous 1973 *Roe v Wade* decision which wrongly granted a right to abortion—the ERLC will continue the work of opposing abortion and a culture of death at every level. The same worldview that would discard the preborn as an inconvenience would also have us dismiss the orphan as a burden and problem to be solved. By contrast, the ERLC will advocate for both the orphan and the preborn as full image bearers with intrinsic value and dignity.

3. SBC Referral: To appoint a blue ribbon committee to review the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 to address gender identity (Items 81 and 112, Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 13-14, 2023, SBC Annual, p. 82, 86)

Motion: James Smith, Arizona

"I move that the Southern Baptist Convention appoint a blue-ribbon committee to review the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000 regarding gender identity, specifically to provide language addressing from Scripture what constitutes a man and a woman, and to provide language regarding the right of the church to deny individuals and couples who participate in non-traditional gender roles the ability to serve in the church. The blue-ribbon committee should be charged with the responsibility to report and bring recommendations to the SBC Convention meeting next June in Indianapolis."

Response: Southern Baptists have spoken consistently and clearly about the clear teaching of scripture that God has created two distinct and complementary sexes—male and female—and that this distinction is embedded in the biology of the human race. Additionally, Southern Baptists have spoken clearly in defense of the rights of religious organizations—whether churches, schools, or faith-based adoption providers, etc.—to hire individuals who adhere to their statement of beliefs. This doctrine of the “ministerial exception” has been protected in judicial rulings from the Supreme Court such as *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School v. E.E.O.C* (2012) and reaffirmed in *Our Lady Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru* (2020). The courts have consistently protected the rights of religious and faith-based organizations to hire staff in accordance with their beliefs. The ERLC will continue its advocacy on behalf of religious freedom, as it did in our 2020 amicus brief (*Our Lady of Guadalupe*) cited by the Supreme Court affirming the ministerial exception.

The ERLC has also endeavored to work alongside our partners to ensure protections for individuals related to their beliefs about biblical definitions regarding gender and sexuality. The ERLC has cooperated with our Baptist state partners in the Minnesota/Wisconsin and Iowa conventions to oppose the teaching of radical gender ideology in public schools and protect the rights of parents to be the primary teachers of sexuality to their children. Additionally, alongside pastors, seminary professors, public policy experts, and religious liberty lawyers, the ERLC created a practical guide for churches seeking to teach and disciple their members on gender within a biblical framework. *God’s Good Design: A Practical Guide for Answering Gender Confusion* provides a theological framework for the topic and guidance for addressing practical scenarios. The ERLC remains committed to strengthening families and protecting the biblical definition of marriage and gender, and resourcing our churches to do the same in their communities.

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

At WMU[®], we make disciples of Jesus who live on mission. Each and every day I am inspired by those in the WMU family who are intent on doing what God asks of them. Missional leaders are tenacious in their quest to accomplish significant things for His Kingdom. They feel great urgency with each passing hour. Here are just a few stories to give you an idea of what God is doing through the ministries of WMU.

Jessica was born into a non-Christian home. When she was in the ninth grade, her cousin attended a Baptist church and invited Jessica. Jessica started going to Acteens[®], a WMU missions discipleship group for girls in grades 7–12. With a biblical framework as the foundation, Jessica's Acteens leader led her to faith. This group awakened within Jessica a passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ and provided opportunities for her to live out her faith.

In college, Jessica lost almost all her vision. She is legally blind. At her church, they needed a children's church leader and Mission Friends[®] leader. Mission Friends is the WMU missions discipleship group for preschoolers. In Mission Friends, preschoolers develop a heart for missions as they learn to focus less on themselves and more on others. Preschoolers grow toward God as they become aware that God wants everyone to know of His love. Jessica has served in both those roles for a decade.

Jessica spends a great deal of time each week preparing lessons. To help her in her role, she uses an app in which a sighted person reads her teaching instructions for Mission Friends. Jessica says, "I have a great passion for sharing Christ. I am very thankful to the Lord for my disability because I can use it to tell others about Jesus and be an inspiration. I don't let the disability stop me."

Lauren serves in collegiate ministry with the North American Mission Board. She tells how her life was impacted by Girls in Action[®]. GA[®] is a missions discipleship group for girls in grades 1–6. GA leads girls to a lifelong commitment to Christ, His mission, and His church.

"The seed that was planted when I was a little girl in Girls in Action, grew within me to this passion for taking the gospel to the nations," Lauren said. "Now I serve in Vermont because there were women in my church that cared enough to teach me what it looked like to live out biblical missions."

Kate is a current member of Girls in Action. Both her mother and grandmother teach GAs. Kate approached her parents about raising money for missions. Her parents thought she wanted to buy a goat to help people in Haiti but Kate's true goal was to raise \$7,000 for a church. Over two weekends of selling hot cider, Kate raised \$28,000 and helped build four churches for

the people of Haiti. When asked why she wanted to raise the money for churches, she simply replied, "So the children can learn about Jesus."

D came to Christian Women's Job Corps®, a ministry of WMU, from Celebrate Recovery. She was working on her sixth month of sobriety. Struggling with addiction for four years, she had dropped out of high school, had spent time on the streets, and was now living in rehab. She developed an instant rapport with her mentor who worked in the crime scene investigation unit of the city police department. D soaked up her lessons like a thirsty sponge. She memorized Scripture and became proficient in computer usage and writing.

A high point was when she wrote letters to the policemen who had arrested her, thanking them for arresting her and telling them about God's miracle in saving her. At the end of the session, D's family was present to see her baptized and again when she graduated. She is now working on her G.E.D., has graduated from the Citizen's Police Academy, and is seeking acceptance to the State Police Academy. She has a new church family and takes every opportunity to tell others of God's work in her life.

Everything we do in WMU is for the sake of the gospel. There is a common thread throughout Scripture that reveals God's heart for all people to know Him. WMU relies on this biblical understanding of missions and uses it to help the church fulfill its mission. We believe the world needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, and we have a responsibility to take the gospel to the nations. It is His work, and we join Him. He guides. We follow. We must seek His will with all our hearts and then with courage go forward, dedicated to the God-given task of proclaiming the good news to all the world.

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 cultivate the characteristics of a missional person—one who learns about missions, prays for missions, supports missions, does missions and tells about Jesus. WMU's avenues for missions involvement include missions discipleship, leadership development, and compassion ministries; through these three areas collectively, WMU had ministry touchpoints this year in nearly 50 countries.

REPORT OF MINISTRIES

MISSIONS DISCIPLESHIP

Missions in the Church

Ongoing missions discipleship through WMU develops believers who understand God's mission in the world, leading to engaged Christians who are passionate about sharing the love of Christ with others. From preschoolers through adults, WMU helps inform, inspire, and involve members of WMU age-level groups in missions. In 2023, we created and distributed nine subscription items, including periodicals and resource kits. These resources are designed to teach people of all ages about the work of missionaries throughout the world and to develop disciples who take the gospel into their community and beyond. WMU published missional stories, inspiration, and prayer prompts through a variety of channels such as publications, products, resources, blog posts, social media, e-newsletters and more.

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 1–6;
- Children in ActionSM for boys and girls in grades 1–6;
- Acteens® for girls in grades 7–12;
- Challengers® for boys 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.

Mission Boards

In 2022*, WMU helped raise \$196 million—the second highest total in the offering's 134-year history—for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® for International Missions. Since initiating the first offering in 1888, WMU has helped raise more than \$5.4 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 2023, WMU helped raise \$70.2 million—an all-time record high—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 \$2.1 billion. All of the funds raised through this offering go directly to the North American Mission Board to support field personnel and supplies nearly half of their total annual revenue.

WMU also administers the ministry of missionary housing for Southern Baptist missionaries while they are on stateside assignment. We maintain a database of nearly 700 houses made available by churches, associations, and individuals and make this information available to missionaries on a secure website.

In 2023, approximately 50 missionary kids (MKs) traveled from various areas around the world to gather for the MK Re-Entry Retreat hosted by Mississippi WMU. This retreat is for children of international missionaries who are entering college in the United States for the first time. It provides a setting for MKs to process the transition to college and life in the US. National WMU provides a grant to host this annual retreat in partnership with a state WMU. Missouri WMU will host the event in August 2024. Additionally, national WMU and the WMU Foundation awarded nearly \$93,000 in scholarships to children of Southern Baptist missionaries.

**Final 2023 totals for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering were not available at time of printing.*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

From online, on-demand courses to print and web resources, to in-person training, WMU offers a variety of opportunities for discovering and expanding one's leadership skills and spiritual gifts. One of these approaches is leadership development through Christian Women's Leadership Center (CWLC). In 2023, we transitioned our CWLC courses from being facilitator-led and available only on a quarterly rotation to self-paced and on-demand all the time. Currently, there are nine courses available under the sub-categories of Leadership Foundations and Missional Foundations. WMU will also be releasing online courses on leading various age-level missions discipleship groups.

New courses launched this year include:

- **WMU: An Overview**, the first of several courses related to leading WMU in the church and WMU missions discipleship groups. Led by Sandy Wisdom-Martin, this course provides insight on the framework of Woman's Missionary Union and equips leaders with the tools needed to teach training conferences about the overall ministry of WMU.

- **Spiritual Formation for Students** designed to equip leaders with the tools needed to teach conferences for students which will help them develop the disciplines of Bible study, prayer, and sharing their faith.

In addition, WMU continues to offer minicourses related to WMU Compassion Ministries and a church's response to ministry needs such as mental health, refugees, human trafficking, and poverty, as well as courses related to Christian Women's Job Corps®/Christian Men's Job Corps® training. See ChristianLeaderLearning.com for the full catalog of courses.

WMU also offers free content on wmu.com for leaders of preschoolers, children, students, and adults, in addition to other audiences.

COMPASSION MINISTRIES

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. In 2022, we introduced resources to address the issue of mental health, including a book entitled *Joyful Sorrow*, an online course entitled Mental Health: The Church's Response, and training in Mental Health First Aid. In 2023, we trained 62 Mental Health First Aiders and we are making additional trainings available throughout 2024. We also continue to feature articles and blog posts on various aspects of this important topic to help Christians know how to better understand mental health challenges and minister effectively to others as they walk alongside them through difficult seasons. Learn more and discover resources at wmu.com/mentalhealth.

Pure Water, Pure Love

Pure Water, Pure LoveSM supplies missionaries with water filters and provides clean water for people who are served by missionaries and Baptist partners. In addition to providing more than 1,700 water filters and replacements to International Mission Board personnel and missions teams, WMU awarded 4 grants totaling \$52,185 to supply clean water resources in Southeast Asia, North Africa, Malawi, and Uganda.

Christian Women's Job Corps/Christian Men's Job Corps

Through this ministry, thousands of participants gained life and job skills in a Christian context through approximately 100 registered CWJC® and CMJCSM sites across the United States, as well as CWJC sites in South Africa and Uganda. CWJC/CMJC sites offer classes, resources, mentoring, Bible study, and more as participants gain self-confidence, purpose, direction, and hope for the future. We praise God for 168 professions of faith reported through Christian Women's and Men's Job Corps ministries in 2023.

WorldCrafts

Since 1996, WMU has worked to develop sustainable, fair-trade businesses among impoverished people around the world through WorldCraftsSM. This ministry now works with nearly 40 artisan groups in about 20 countries, and brings their products to market.

Our artisan groups seek to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of their workers. Many artisan groups assist women who have escaped human trafficking by providing a safe haven, counseling, and an opportunity to earn an income with dignity.

WorldCrafts has partnered with the Creative Access team of IMB to provide additional fair-trade items to our inventory. These items are a welcomed addition to our already beautifully handcrafted items from artisans around the world.

Baptist Nursing Fellowship

Baptist Nursing FellowshipSM (BNF[®]) celebrated 40 years of ministry this year. Though a separate 501(c)(3) organization, BNF is a compassion ministry of WMU that seeks to empower, educate, and encourage nurses and medical workers to use their skills on mission. With a primary focus on medical missions, members also enjoy fellowship with other Christian health-care professionals and opportunities for professional education and growth.

SUPPORTIVE OPERATIONS

Executive Board Meetings

The executive board of WMU, which is comprised of women who serve as WMU presidents in their state or multistate territory, gathered twice in 2023 to conduct the business of the organization. These meetings took place January 7 in Birmingham, Alabama; and June 3 via video conference call.

SBC and WMU Annual Meetings

In New Orleans prior to the SBC Annual Meeting, participants boarded buses on Sunday morning for worship at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, then traveled on to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for the WMU Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting. There they heard from missions speakers, participated in interactive missions opportunities, toured the campus and Museum of the Bible and Archaeology, and enjoyed a New Orleans-style lunch. During the meeting, Connie Dixon of First Baptist Church, Elida, New Mexico, was reelected to serve another year as national WMU president, and Shirley McDonald of Greens Creek Baptist Church in Dublin, Texas, was reelected as national WMU recording secretary.

On Monday, the WMU Missions Celebration continued aboard a paddlewheel riverboat where a retirement reception was hosted for David George who served 21 years as president of the WMU Foundation.

WMU also had a presence at multiple venues of the 2023 SBC Annual Meeting. In addition to a report to the SBC that focused on lives transformed by the gospel, WMU also coordinated the Youth on Mission experience, the missions component of the SBC day camp, and two panel discussions featured on the Cooperative Program stage in the SBC exhibit hall. Topics were Mental Health and Reaching Diaspora People.

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. Dorey, 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:

- (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' 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.
- 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 April 1st, but no later than twenty (20) days prior to the next SBC annual meeting; the initial report of the Committee on Resolutions shall be released no later than ten (10) 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 _____

- I. **Convention Budget:** Each entity of the Convention shall submit to the Executive Committee for its review:
 - A. an itemized estimate of its receipts for the next fiscal year, and
 - B. an itemized estimate of its expenditures for the next fiscal year according to the rule set forth below (See Section II-C) for making operating budgets.

The Executive Committee shall present to the Convention a budget, which budget shall consist of all the budgets of all the entities which have been submitted to the Executive Committee and reviewed by it, and recommend the amount of Convention funds to be allocated to each cause or entity.

II. Operating Budgets:

- A. *Convention Operating Budget* - The Executive Committee shall recommend to the Convention an operating budget which shall include all expenses of the Convention, committees, and other items included in the Convention Operating Budget. The Executive Committee shall also recommend to the Convention the source of these funds.
- B. *Entities Not Sharing in Table of Percentages* - The entities of the Convention not sharing in the table of percentages for distribution of funds shall be provided for as follows:
 - 1. Expenses of Standing Committees – The Executive Committee shall approve or recommend to the Convention, after a personal conference or correspondence with chairpersons of standing committees, a sum of money to be appropriated to each of them for the Convention year.
 - 2. Expenses of Special Committees –
 - a. The expenses incurred by special committees appointed by the Convention to perform duties connected with one or more entities of the Convention shall be borne by the entity or entities concerned on a basis pro rata to receipts unless the expenses are otherwise specifically provided.
 - b. The expenses incurred by special committees which do not directly concern any of the entities of the Convention shall be paid out of the Convention Operating Budget. Unless the amount of expenses is fixed by the Convention, the Executive Committee must agree to the amount to be expended before such expenditure is incurred.
 - c. Itemized accounts of expenses of members of such committees shall be required and approved by the chairperson before the same shall be paid.

C. *Entities Sharing in the Direct Allocation* - The entities of the Convention sharing in the direct allocation for the distribution of funds shall make their operating budgets in the following manner:

1. The current operating budget of the entities of the Convention shall be made on the basis of the current distributable operating allocation, plus any other anticipated receipts which can be substantiated by previous experience, not including wills, bequests, and special gifts for special purposes; and any debt incurred within the current year shall become a preferred item in the budget of the Convention year immediately following.
2. In making the annual appropriations on the basis set forth, a contingent item shall be set up in the budget according to the needs of the entity.
3. It is understood that an entity may borrow money for reasonable needs, provided, however, that such borrowing shall not exceed the amount of its budget allowance remaining at the time of borrowing, and provided further that if an emergency should arise, additional money may be borrowed on the approval of the Executive Committee of the Convention.

III. Convention Year: The financial affairs of the Convention and all its entities, except those of the theological seminaries and GuideStone Financial Resources, shall be operated on the fiscal year beginning October 1 and closing September 30. The seminaries owned and operated under the authority of the Convention shall use the fiscal year beginning August 1 and closing July 31. GuideStone Financial Resources shall use the fiscal year beginning January 1 and closing December 31.

IV. The Disbursing Entity: By agreement, all sums collected in the states for the causes fostered by this Convention will be forwarded at least monthly by each state office to the Executive Committee of this Convention, which shall act as the disbursing agent of this Convention. The Executive Committee shall remit at least weekly to each of the entities of the Convention the funds, distributable and designated, belonging to each entity. The first distribution in each month shall be on the seventh day of the month, or the nearest working day thereafter. The Executive Committee shall make monthly reports of receipts by states, and of disbursements by entities, and shall forward each month copies of these reports to the executives of the entities of the Convention, to the state offices, and to the denominational papers.

V. Distribution of Cooperative Program Receipts: In order that the financial plans and purposes of the Convention may operate successfully, the Convention appeals to its constituents to give to the whole Cooperative Program and to recognize the wisdom and right of the Convention to distribute its receipts from the Cooperative Program, thus assuring an equitable distribution among the entities of the Convention.

VI. Fund Raising Activities:

A. *Approval of Financial Activities* – No entity of the Southern Baptist Convention shall conduct any type of fund raising activity without the advance approval of the Convention, or its Executive Committee. No advance approval shall be required for the two Convention approved special offerings: Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

B. *Reporting Fund Raising Activities* – Each Convention entity shall report annually to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention on any type of fund raising activity conducted by the entity. The report shall include a summary of the activity, its title, financial goals, structure, cost, and the results of such fund raising during

the past year. No report shall be required for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

- C. *Cooperative Program Promotion* – Each Convention entity shall report on its efforts during the year in promoting Cooperative Program missions giving.
- D. *No Financial Appeals to Churches* – In no case shall any Convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its church budget or appeal for financial contributions.

VII. Designated Gifts: The Convention binds itself and its entities faithfully to apply and use such gifts as designated by the donor.

VIII. Trust Funds: Each entity of the Convention is hereby instructed and ordered to keep all trust funds and designated gifts (for they are trust funds) sacred to the trust and designation; that they be kept separate from all other funds of such entity; that they are not to be used even temporarily for any other purpose than the purpose specified; and that such funds shall not hereafter be invested in the securities of any denominational body or entity.

IX. Gift Annuity Agreements: All entities of this Convention writing gift annuity agreements in the future, and the Executive Committee when writing gift annuity agreements on behalf of the Southern Baptist Convention, are encouraged to place the annuity portion of each gift annuity on deposit with the Southern Baptist Foundation or GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention and enter into a contractual agreement with the Southern Baptist Foundation or GuideStone Financial Resources to pay the annuity payments required under the gift annuity agreement. This provision shall not apply to gifts of property, real or personal, the income of which is to go to the donor without further or additional obligation on the part of the entity accepting the gift. The Southern Baptist Foundation and GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention shall, when determining the amounts required to fund the annuity portion of any gift annuity agreement, use mortality, interest, and expense rates which are approved or recommended by any appropriate regulatory authority, if any, or which are based on sound actuarial statistics.

X. Indebtedness/Liability: An entity or institution shall not create any liability or indebtedness, except such as can and will be repaid out of its anticipated receipts for current operations within a period of three (3) years, without the consent of the Convention or the Executive Committee. In order to obtain such approval, the entity must file a statement showing the source of such anticipated receipts.

Such consent must be likewise obtained for a purchase of properties (directly or indirectly or through ownership of controlling stock in other corporations or otherwise) subject to liens or encumbrances which cannot be repaid out of its anticipated receipts for current operations within a period of three (3) years.

XI. Capital Fund Allocations: Capital funds are allocated for the purpose of obtaining, expanding, improving, or maintaining properties owned by entities of the Southern Baptist Convention and essential to implementing entity program assignments.

Capital funds are used in projects which add to the long-range assets of the entity.

In making allocations for capital funds, priority shall be given to those projects which make the greatest contribution to advancing the overall objectives of the Southern Baptist Convention in bringing men to God through Jesus Christ.

Capital funds projects shall cost more than \$5,000 and have a projected life span of more than five (5) years.

Items such as office equipment, furniture replacement, or books shall not be acquired through the capital fund allocation process.

Repairs and maintenance of income-producing property shall be made from earned income. Major repairs to non income-producing property may be considered as being eligible for capital fund allocations.

XII. Contingent Reserves: Each entity of this Convention shall set up as soon as possible a reserve for contingencies to provide for deficits that may occur either through decreased receipts or through emergencies or both. The maximum amount of contingent reserve of any entity shall be determined by the entity, subject to the approval of the Convention. Entities shall state on the balance sheets of the annual audits the amounts in Contingent Reserve Funds.

XIII. Financial Report:

A. *Audit Reports* - The entities of the Convention and the Executive Committee shall close their books and accounts as of the close of business on September 30 of each year, or July 31 in the case of the seminaries, or December 31 in the case of GuideStone Financial Resources, and have them audited by an independent certified public accountant (the external auditor) in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America.

Each entity of the Convention shall forward a copy of its external auditor's audit report (or, if more than one, all such reports) to the Executive Committee, as soon as possible after the close of its fiscal year. Additionally, as a part of this annual submission process, each entity shall also submit a statement signed by its chief executive officer and the chief financial officer which affirms that the books and accounts are accurate and complete to the best of the officer's knowledge, and that the officer believes the corporation's internal controls are adequate.

Each entity and the Executive Committee shall appoint a committee of its own trustees to undertake and accomplish duties pertinent to audit reports. These committees shall be appointed, and the trustees serving on the committees shall operate, independent of influence by their corporation's management, and each such committee shall include at least one trustee who is competent by training and experience in fiscal matters. The duties these committees shall perform for their respective entities shall include:

- 1) recommending the appointment of the external auditor,
- 2) studying the external auditor's audit report upon its completion,
- 3) maintaining the independence of the entity's financial auditors,
- 4) reviewing the entity's critical accounting policies and decisions and the adequacy of its internal control systems,
- 5) preserving the integrity of the financial reporting process implemented by management, and
- 6) assuring that the business procedures listed in Article XVII are followed.

As a part of each external auditor's audit report, the external auditor shall prepare for the entity's audit committee a separate letter on the auditing firm's letterhead (the "management letter") in which the external auditor makes any recommendations concerning the entity's financial and accounting policies, processes, internal controls, or other matters. If the external auditor has no recommendations, he should so state in the management letter to the entity's audit committee. The entity's administration shall forward a copy of the management letter along with any comments that the administration might deem desirable to the Executive Committee simultaneously

with the external auditor's audit report, for review and response (if appropriate) by the Executive Committee. The process of submission and review of the external auditors' audit reports and management letters of the several entities by the Executive Committee shall be governed by the assigned responsibilities and limitations upon authority described in SBC Bylaw 18 E and its subparagraphs (6), (7), (9), and (12).

When securities are placed for holding with a trustee (i.e. bank, trust company, foundation, etc.), a certified statement from such trustee should be made to the external auditor and be made a part of the annual external auditor's audit report or submitted as a supplement to the report.

B. *Printing of Reports* - The financial report of each entity and of the Executive Committee shall be printed in the *Convention Book of Reports*, or the *Convention Annual*, and shall contain the following six items, the first five of which come from its latest annual audit report:

- 1) Statement of Financial Position
- 2) Statement of Activities (revenues, expenses, and other changes in net assets)
- 3) Statement of Cash Flows
- 4) Classified list of investments by fund and type of investment
- 5) Receipts by states of contributions. These should show:
 - a. Cooperative Program receipts received through the Executive Committee
 - b. Designated receipts received through the Executive Committee
 - c. Gifts not received through the Executive Committee
- 6) A statement executed by the chair of the entity's board attesting that the board's officers confirm the following fiscal conditions exist:
 - a. The expenses and perquisites of the president are not excessive and are in keeping with biblical stewardship, including every emolument and personal benefit of any kind (and specifically including housing, travel, automobile(s), and personal assistants) all valued at market rates.
 - b. All corporate expenses are reasonable and incurred to accomplish the entity's *Organization Manual* mission statement, *Organization Manual* ministry assignments, and any other responsibilities previously approved by the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention and still in force.
 - c. All corporate expenses are incurred by the administration in a manner that reflects integrity and avoids appearances of impropriety while upholding a positive Christian witness to the Convention and beyond.

Lifeway Christian Resources shall include in its annual report to the Convention information on the amount of funds transferred to state conventions during the preceding year.

At the end of the presentation of entity financial data in each SBC Book of Reports, a statement shall be inserted which discloses that the entities have all supplied (or naming which have and which have not, if some have not) the statement required by Article XIII B 6, above, and setting forth the elements thereof, in order that the messengers and the Convention's affiliated churches may be annually reassured that those fiscal conditions set forth are continuing to be maintained by the Convention's entities.

- XIV. Safeguarding of Funds:** All persons who transfer or safeguard funds or securities of the Convention or any entity of the Convention shall be bonded in an amount sufficient to protect against loss of the funds or securities involved. Such bonds may be reviewed and approved by the Convention or its Executive Committee.

Members of cooperating Southern Baptist churches shall have access to information from the records of Southern Baptist Convention entities regarding income, expenditures, debts, reserves, operating balances, and salary structures.

The securities of all Convention entities shall be held and maintained in a prudent manner, including under such internal controls as may be recommended in the entity's annual audit.

- XV. New Enterprises:** 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 any entity of the Convention concerning its own work. In the event any new hospital propositions are made, they must be considered as new enterprises of the Convention, whether money is involved at the time of the acquiring of such property or not, and must be presented to two (2) succeeding annual sessions of the Convention.

- XVI. Appropriations by the Entities:** No entity shall make any appropriation to any cause or for any purpose other than for the promotion of its own work except by the approval or upon the instruction of the Convention or of the Executive Committee.

Lifeway Christian Resources shall be required to transfer funds to the Southern Baptist Convention each year to be used as the Convention determines. Lifeway Christian Resources shall not be permitted or required to transfer funds to other Southern Baptist Convention entities or committees.

- XVII. Business Procedure:** Entity boards of trustees should oversee the operations of the entity in such a manner as will assure effective and ethical management. Disclosures of the entity's relationship with other entities, its activities, liabilities, commitments, and results of operations should be accurate and complete and include all material information. The entity should not make any loan from funds of the entity to a trustee. The entity should not make any loan from funds of the entity to an officer or employee without having first obtained the approval of its board (or its delegated subcommittee) after disclosure of all relevant details. Employees and trustees should not appropriate for personal advantage any corporate property or business opportunities which should be enjoyed by the entity.

As a normal operating policy, each entity of the Southern Baptist Convention shall refrain from entering any business transaction with a trustee or employee, or a business enterprise in which a trustee or employee has an interest. An exception to this policy may be made, at the discretion of the board of trustees, in any case wherein it appears that a commodity or service is unavailable on a more favorable basis from any other source, or a commodity or service, at the discretion of the board, is found to be in the best interest of the entity. Competitive bids should be taken if possible. In any case being considered for exception, the extent of the trustee's or employee's interest shall be disclosed to the entire board.

- XVIII. Professional Services:** The Executive Committee at its discretion may employ an auditor to study the audited report with the auditors of the entities in the light of Convention instructions.

The Executive Committee at its discretion may employ an engineer or architect to study proposed capital projects or maintenance of present capital assets.

- XIX. Publication and Merchandising Policy:** All entities of the Convention should give priority to using the services of Lifeway Christian Resources for editing, publishing, and distributing published materials that are to be sold. Entities may publish their own materials in print or digital form promoting their assigned ministries.
- No entity other than Lifeway Christian Resources should be authorized to operate physical book stores at any location other than its principal office.
- The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention may review the financial agreements entered into by Lifeway Christian Resources and other Convention entities and should, whenever appropriate, recommend changes in Convention policies and revisions of existing policies related to such agreements. At the request of any Convention entity, this committee should also suggest to Lifeway Christian Resources and other Convention entities steps they should take to resolve any disagreements that arise concerning financial agreements.
- No entity shall publish a printed or digital format periodical, for general distribution to the churches or to members of the churches, if the Convention or its Executive Committee votes to request the periodical not be published.
- XX. Publications:** The plans and methods herein set forth shall be published each year in the Convention *Annual*, following the Bylaws of the Convention.
- XXI. Amendments:** This 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 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

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

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126

Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention
3210 E Guasti Road, Ontario, CA 91761

The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc.
P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27587
120 South Wingate Street, Wake Forest, NC 27587

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc.
5001 North Oak Trafficway, Kansas City, MO 64118

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.

