

Baptist Briefs: Conferences take opposing views on homosexual behavior

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Two upcoming conferences focusing on homosexuality involve Baptists, but they take drastically different approaches to the subject. The Southern Baptist Convention's [Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission](#) is sponsoring a national conference Oct. 27-29 at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn., to equip church leaders to address issues such as same-sex marriage and ministry to Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender individuals with "convictional kindness" without compromising belief the Bible teaches all sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and woman is sinful. The speaker lineup includes presidents of three SBC seminaries, heads of the International and North American mission boards, ERLC President Russell Moore and other senior-level staff at the convention entity entrusted with moral, ethical and religious-liberty concerns. The other conference, Nov.



6-8 at [National City Christian Church](#) in Washington, D.C., features David Gushee, a Mercer University ethics professor, and Allyson Robinson, a transgender Baptist minister

currently serving as transitions pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. [The Reformation Project](#), a nonprofit organized last year by Matthew Vines, author of *God and the Gay Christian*, is the event sponsor. Scheduled guest speakers include Amy Butler, senior pastor of Riverside Church in New York City, and Danny Cortez, pastor of the small New Heart Community Church in La Mirada, Calif., recently kicked out of the Southern Baptist Convention for violating the denomination's ban on

churches which “act to affirm, approve or endorse homosexual behavior.” Organizer Vines described the conference as “primarily a Bible-based training event for Christians who are LGBT-affirming or at least sympathetic but who want and need the biblical tools” to defend their position.

Kentucky Baptist Convention poised to dismiss gay-affirming church. A [Kentucky Baptist Convention](#) committee voted Oct. 9 to sever ties with [Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.](#), over the congregation’s welcoming and affirming stance toward gays. The decision by a credentials committee will come as a recommendation at the state convention’s annual meeting Nov. 11 in Bowling Green, Ky. The action is in response to a statement on the church’s website describing a decision reached in 2013 “to be open to grant ordination, hire or perform wedding ceremonies for LGBTQ individuals.” Kevin Smith, chairman of the credentials committee, said after a series of private discussions between leaders of the state convention and Crescent Hill, the committee determined the congregation is no longer “in friendly cooperation” with the convention.