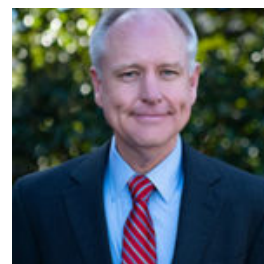


CBF transitions 2020 general assembly to virtual event

April 3, 2020

ATLANTA—In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and public health concerns, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s annual general assembly will be a virtual event rather than in-person gathering this summer, CBF Executive Coordinator Paul Baxley announced.



Paul Baxley

Baxley issued a statement April 2 saying the CBF Governing Board approved his recommendation that the June 24-26 event—originally scheduled at the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta, Ga.—transition to “a series of virtual experiences of worship, inspiration, education, fellowship and business.”

“These are highly unusual times,” Baxley stated. “The ministry of congregations and the pursuit of God’s mission in the world have never been more important than they are right now. But these moments require a faithful agility unlike any we have seen before.”

The CBF general assembly is the latest Baptist summer gathering affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Southern Baptist Convention announced March 24 it was canceling its annual meeting for the first time in 75 years. Two days later, the Baptist World Alliance announced it was postponing the

international Baptist World Congress until summer 2021.

Rather than cancel its general assembly outright, CBF leaders decided to pursue a virtual alternative, Baxley noted.

“The CBF general assembly is not a religious or political convention. Instead, from our inception, it has been imagined as a gathering for worship, inspiration, education, fellowship and business. While we cannot gather in the ways we have become accustomed this year, it is essential that our Fellowship do what each of your congregations is doing; namely find ways to carry out our ministry with faithful agility in the midst of this pandemic,” Baxley wrote to CBF-affiliated churches.

Individuals already registered for the general assembly will receive instructions about how to access the virtual event, and CBF also will accept new registrations, he noted.

“While we grieve that we will not have the opportunity to be together in person this year, we are seeking ways to invite many more Cooperative Baptists into our assembly experience, believing that in every season of challenge there are new opportunities for faithfulness not because of our creativity but rather the resurrecting character of the Triune God,” Baxley wrote.

“We believe God is calling us to find ways to come together for worship, hear the stories of our larger mission in the world, learn more about the calling we are receiving toward bold faithfulness, and create opportunities for us to support one another and learn from one another in this time of extraordinary need and challenge.”