

CBN suffers setbacks prior to SBC annual meeting

June 14, 2022

On the eve of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, the Conservative Baptist Network—a group that claims one of the nation’s most conservative religious groups is too liberal—suffered major setbacks.

At the June 13 meeting of the SBC Executive Committee, three officer candidates with ties to the Conservative Baptist Network—Andrew Hunt of Indiana, Phil Robertson of Louisiana and Monte Shinkle of Missouri—were defeated.

Arlington advocate for independent investigation elected

Instead, the committee elected Jared Wellman, lead pastor of Tate Springs Baptist Church in Arlington, as chair; David Sons, pastor of Lake Murray Baptist Church in Lexington, S.C., as vice chair; and Pamela Reed, a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C., as secretary.

Wellman—who received 38 votes, compared to 26 for Hunt—emerged last year as a major advocate for a rigorous investigation into sexual abuse in the SBC.

Last fall, Wellman made the motion to waive attorney-client privilege in the investigation into how the SBC Executive Committee handled reports of sexual abuse over two decades. That motion ultimately passed.

At an earlier meeting last year, Wellman had introduced a motion—which the SBC Executive Committee rejected—that would have broadened the

scope of the investigation to include all paid, elected or appointed leaders or staff of the SBC and its entities.

At a news conference following his election as chair, Wellman emphasized his belief the SBC Executive Committee should follow the will of Southern Baptist churches, as determined by the course set by messengers to the annual meeting, not call attention to itself.

“It’s best whenever we are following the will of the messengers, and we are being faithful to whatever our marching orders from this week end up being—in a way that’s almost boring,” he said.

Pastors Conference rejects Voddie Baucham

At the SBC Pastors Conference, Daniel Dickard, pastor of Friendly Avenue Baptist Church in Greensboro, N.C., was elected president, defeating Voddie Baucham, a vocal opponent of critical race theory who was backed by the Conservative Baptist Network.



Daniel Dickard

An initial vote, in which pastors were asked to indicate their preference by

standing, was inconclusive. Instead, conference participants voted by paper ballots. Dickard received 690 votes, compared to 608 for Baucham.

In March, Baucham, the dean of theology at African Christian University in Lusaka, Zambia, confirmed he had been asked to accept the nomination for SBC president. However, since he is not currently a member of an SBC-affiliated church, his eligibility for that role came into question.

Instead, the Conservative Baptist Network endorsed Baucham for president of the SBC Pastors Conference and Tom Ascol, a Florida pastor and president of Founders Ministries, as SBC president.

Baucham is the author of *Fault Lines*, which asserts critical race theory and an emphasis on social justice are making dangerous inroads into evangelical churches.

Based in part on reports from Religion News Service and Baptist Press.