

# Cooperative Baptist Fellowship celebrates 25th anniversary

October 11, 2016

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is marking its 25th anniversary during “CBF Celebration Week,” Oct. 16-23.

CBF sprung out of controversy that divided the Southern Baptist Convention from the late 1970s into the '90s. After so-called moderates lost control of the SBC at the national level to so-called fundamentalists, they began considering how to continue to cooperate. A year later, they convened in Atlanta and formed CBF to engage in missions, train ministers, help start and strengthen churches, and operate other joint ventures.

CBF is what Executive Coordinator Suzii Paynter calls a “denominetwork”—not quite a denomination, but a network of individuals, congregations and organizations that cooperate to do what they cannot accomplish on their own.

“In thinking about cooperative Christianity as a 21st century ... endeavor, we think about the ways Christ is asking us to join, to open our doors, open our hearts to the needs of people and places all across the world,” said Paynter, former executive director of Texas Baptists’ Christian Life Commission.

“God has already given us 25 years to look back on and say: ‘Wow, look what happened when we came together. Look at these seminaries, look at these churches, look at these missions, look at these tremendous places in the world that have been touched because we worked together.’”

A key component of CBF’s collaboration is missions, stressed Steven Porter, its global missions coordinator.

“Mission was a rallying cry at the inception of CBF, and I believe to this day it’s still at our heart,” said Porter, a former missions professor at Baylor University’s Truett Theological Seminary. “We want to build on the foundation of all the good and incredible work that has come before us.”

“Christ’s Love Compels Us” is CBF’s 25th anniversary theme. It’s based upon 2 Corinthians 5:14: “Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all.”

The “CBF Celebration Week” emphasis includes resources to help affiliated congregations mark their participation in a quarter-century of CBF history. Those resources are available by [clicking here](#).

For more information about CBF, [click here](#).