

Feinstein to be nominated for SBC 2nd vice president

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ELKTON, Tenn. (BP)—Stephen Feinstein, pastor of Sovereign Way Christian Church in Hesperia, Calif., will be nominated for second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the SBC annual meeting in June 2020 in Orlando.

Chris Bolt, pastor of Elkton Baptist Church in Elkton, Tenn., announced on Dec. 31 his intention to nominate Feinstein, saying he is a representative of the SBC's future: "a future which likely includes more bivocational pastors serving smaller and more diverse churches in increasingly hostile ministry contexts."

Feinstein said his main goal with the position is to be an example of a small-church pastor who gets a seat at the SBC table.

"The vast majority of SBC churches are small," he said. "Yet our convention celebrates large churches and the pastors of large churches. It would be nice for other pastors of small churches to know that the convention values us, too."

Feinstein said one way the SBC can communicate its belief in the importance of all faithful churches—not just the large ones—is by including on the annual meeting platform more small-church pastors who are faithful to the Scriptures.

"This will communicate that pastors don't have to buy their way into office with large (Cooperative Program) donations from their megachurches," Feinstein said. "If my election in even a small way can communicate this, then that is my main goal."

According to Annual Church Profile records, Sovereign Way Christian Church has reported no Cooperative Program giving, no Lottie Moon Christmas Offering giving, and no Annie Armstrong Giving in any of the past three years.

However, the church did report Great Commission giving of \$7,857 in 2019 with a budget of \$235,226.22 (3.3 percent Great Commission giving). The church also reported a membership of 95 and average worship attendance of 123 in 2019.

Experience as a bivocational minister

Feinstein said the nature of his ministry and outside work has prepared him for the future landscape of the SBC.

“Being a bivocational pastor for as long as I was certainly taught me how to maintain faithful ministry to the people of God, and yet have a strong reputation with those outside of the church,” he said.

Feinstein was raised in a secular Jewish family but became a Christian when he was 17, according to Bolt. He began his teaching ministry at age 20 and began serving as pastor 10 years later.

In addition to his pastoral ministry, Feinstein is a major in the U.S. Army Reserve and has served as a chaplain through the North American Mission Board since 2009.

He holds a master of arts from Liberty University and a master of divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Feinstein and his wife Bonny have two children.