

Guidepost begins drafting final sex abuse study report

March 16, 2022

NASHVILLE (BP)—Guidepost Solutions is drafting its final report based on an investigation of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee's handling of sexual abuse complaints.

"Of note, Guidepost has begun drafting its final report, including its independent recommendations, in preparation for the publication of the full report and recommendations prior to the SBC Convention in Anaheim in June 2022," the Sexual Abuse Task Force said in the March 11 update.

Guidepost investigators have met with Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission leaders and are reviewing archived ERLC documents, the task force said.

The ERLC interviews and document reviews were "within the scope of the EC investigation process," Task Force Chairman Bruce Frank, pastor of Asheville, N.C.-area Biltmore Church, told Baptist Press.

An additional 12 interviews are scheduled with Executive Committee current or former trustees, and Guidepost is in the process of contacting 22 additional trustees, according to the update. The research will add to information received in 133 interviews already conducted with trustees.

Guidepost already interviewed about 170 current and former Executive Committee trustees and employees.

"These interviews are essential in conducting a full, fair, and comprehensive investigation and assessment," the task force said. "The interviews also provide an opportunity for interviewees to offer

recommendations and provide feedback as to how the SBC EC can create a safer community going forward.”

With more than five terabytes of data collected, Guidepost has continued to meet with survivors who contacted Guidepost to provide information, has received remaining documents requested from former Executive Committee external legal counsel Guenther, Jordan & Price law firm and has reviewed Executive Committee presidential papers and ERLC documents on file at the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, the task force reported.

Guidepost had received approximately 4,230 documents from Guenther, Jordan & Price as of its Feb. 8 update. The law firm, which held a long-term role as legal counsel for the SBC EC, severed its relationship with Southern Baptists shortly after the EC voted to waive attorney-client privilege in the investigation.

“Additional updates will be forthcoming as the investigation proceeds,” the task force said in its update.

As messengers to the 2021 SBC annual meeting voted, Guidepost must submit its report to the task force at least a month before the 2022 SBC annual meeting. The task force will review it and release it publicly in advance of the 2022 meeting in June.