

Josh Powell candidate for SBC president

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South Carolina pastor Josh Powell will be nominated for Southern Baptist Convention president at the 2026 SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Tennessee pastor Jay Hardwick told Baptist Press he intends to nominate Powell this summer.

“I’ve known Josh as a close friend for 30 years, and the word I use to describe his character and relationship with God over these 30 years is consistent,” Hardwick said.

Powell is the lead pastor of Taylors First Baptist Church in South Carolina. He has served the church since 2021.

“He is a man of integrity, he loves God’s word, and he is diligent in his personal pursuit of growth as a disciple of Jesus,” Hardwick said. “He is humble, approachable, and wise, all qualities that stem from his walk with the Lord.”

In 2025, Taylors First Baptist Church received \$5,794,403 in total receipts, according to the church. They gave \$438,259 [7.6 percent] through the Cooperative Program, \$273,673.79 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and \$52,414.49 to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. They reported 1,667 people in weekly worship attendance and 56 baptisms.

A pastoral legacy

Powell has a long legacy of pastors in his family as his father, grandfather, father-in-law, and grandfather-in-law have all served as Southern Baptist

pastors.

Hardwick says he has personally experienced the consistency of Powell's leadership as he was a part of a church in South Carolina Powell helped revitalize.

"I had a front row seat as Josh led that church through a wonderful season of revitalization that was centered on the word of God and focused on the mission of God. That church is thriving today in large part because of how God used Josh and his family," he said.

"Josh loves people, he loves preaching, and he loves being present and engaged in the community his church is serving. He is a consistent and effective preacher, and his ministry bears the fruit of his commitment to shepherd, disciple, and reach people with the gospel."

Powell previously served Lake Murray Baptist Church in Lexington, S.C., and First Baptist Church Fairdale in Fairdale, Ky.

Powell's personal story

Powell and his wife Allison have been married for 27 years and met at North Greenville University.

He holds a bachelor's degree from North Greenville University and a Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

They have four children: Wilds, Levi, Macy Grace, and Paton. Their three older children are pursuing a call to ministry, according to Powell.

He told Baptist Press he has been on dozens of mission trips across five continents and served as an independent missionary in South Asia from 2009-2014.

In 2023, he spent a night in jail for publicly preaching the gospel during a mission trip, as told in [a 2025 Baptist Courier story](#).

Powell has served as president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, a trustee at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, including serving as the trustee chair, and on the board of North Greenville University where he also served as chair.

Hardwick said Powell is a “product of and example of the great things God has done and is doing through the SBC.”

“I believe we need leaders who love Southern Baptists, who embody the best of who we are as Southern Baptists, who love and are personally invested in our SBC family and mission, and are leading their churches to be heavily invested in our cooperative efforts,” Hardwick said.

The [2026 SBC annual meeting](#) is set for June 9-10 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.