

Ronnie Floyd elected SBC Executive Committee president

April 2, 2019

The Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee chose Ronnie Floyd, former SBC president and Arkansas megachurch pastor, as its new president.



Members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee gather around Ronnie Floyd and his wife, Jeana, after his election as the agency's president and chief executive officer. (Photo / Ken Camp)

During a called meeting at a hotel at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, the SBC Executive Committee voted 68-1 to elect Floyd, 63, as its seventh chief executive.

Floyd has been senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas for 33 years. During his time at the multi-campus church, which grew out of First Baptist Church in Springdale, Ark., it reported baptizing more than 22,000

people and starting 148 other churches.

Evangelical adviser to Trump

He has served on President Trump's informal council of evangelical advisers and was appointed president of the National Day of Prayer Task Force in 2017.

Asked at a news conference following his election whether he plans to continue to serve with the Trump evangelical advisory group, Floyd explained he never endorsed Trump for office. Rather, he agreed to serve on an advisory council during the presidential campaign to advise Trump about issues of concern to evangelical Christians, noting specifically sanctity of life, dignity of life and religious liberty, he said.

After Trump was elected, Floyd said, he has been part of "a few experiences—not very many" consulting with the president by phone along with other evangelical leaders. Floyd noted he was involved in one Oval Office visit, where he was one of two people invited to pray for Trump.

"That was the only time in my life I've been in the Oval Office. ... I want to make this really clear, if that had been Hillary Clinton elected, if she would have asked me to the Oval Office, I would have been glad to have gone," he said.

In his new role at the Executive Committee, Floyd emphasized he would be "glad to meet with any president" to pray, offer counsel and call attention to issues of concern to evangelical Christians.

'Ready to lead on Day One'

At his news conference, Floyd also stressed he will "continue to think like a pastor" as he leads the SBC Executive Committee.

“I will champion pastors,” he said. “I will champion local churches.”



Ronnie Floyd, newly elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee, is shown in this 2016 file photo holding a news conference as SBC president. (BP file photo)

Mike Stone, chair of the SBC Executive Committee, praised Floyd as “a trusted voice of experienced leadership” who “will be ready to lead on Day One” as the agency’s chief executive.

Floyd was chair of the SBC Executive Committee in 1995-97 when the convention adopted the Covenant for a New Century strategic plan that reduced the number of SBC entities from 19 to 12.

Later, he also chaired the SBC Great Commission Resurgence Task Force, which revised the ministry assignments of the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board.

Floyd succeeds Frank Page, who [stepped down](#) in March 2018 after acknowledging a “morally inappropriate relationship.” D. August “Augie”

Boto has served as interim president since April 2018, and Boto named Jimmy Draper as “Executive Committee ambassador”—essentially his liaison to churches.

Racial reconciliation

Steve Swofford, pastor of First Baptist Church in Rockwall and chair of the SBC Executive Committee’s presidential search committee, announced Floyd’s nomination in [a letter](#) emailed to Executive Committee members, calling him “no stranger to any of us.”



Ronnie Floyd, newly elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee, and his wife Jeana of 42 years have two sons and seven grandchildren. (BP file photo)

“He has been a leader in racial reconciliation and has a stellar record of bringing together brothers and sisters from all generations, all races and all walks of life to work in harmony for kingdom purposes,” Swofford wrote.

“We firmly believe he is the man God has uniquely prepared and gifted to lead our Executive Committee at this challenging time in our nation’s and our denomination’s history.”

Floyd was born in Gonzales, earned his undergraduate degree from Howard Payne University and received his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His Texas pastorates include First Baptist churches in Cherokee, Milford, Palacios and Nederland.

When he was SBC president, Floyd and Jerry Young, president of the historically black National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc., coordinated a November 2015 meeting of 10 Southern Baptist pastors and 10 National Baptist pastors to discuss ways to promote racial reconciliation.

Floyd also presided over the 2016 SBC annual meeting when messengers adopted a resolution renouncing the display of the Confederate battle flag.