

Unify Project weeks from launch, Litton says

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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)—The Unify Project, a national collaborative with noted pastor Tony Evans to engage Southern Baptist pastors in racial reconciliation, is weeks from launching, former Southern Baptist Convention President Ed Litton announced Oct. 20.

“It is no secret that America bears serious racial scars from our past and recent present, and many of these wounds remain unhealed today,” said Litton, senior pastor of Redemption Church in Saraland, Ala.. “The Unify Project is committed to the belief that the local church is the very best solution to address America’s racial problem.

“And it’s our goal to help pastors and churches bring hope to their communities through the healing power of the gospel.”

He invited pastors to pray for and join the work, and to sign up for updates via email at TheUnifyProject.org.



Pastor Tony Evans preached at the National African American Fellowship’s June 12, 2022, worship service at Friendship Baptist

Church in Yorba Linda, Calif. (BP
Photo by Sonya Singh)

Evans, senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas and a noted author, theologian and radio host, will help lead the Unify Project in concert with The Urban Alternative ministry he also leads.

Fred Luter, senior pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans and the lone African American to have served as SBC president, joins Litton and Evans in leading the work.

The three announced plans for the initiative at the 2022 SBC annual meeting. The work flows from The Pledge Group, which Litton helped launch with an ecumenical Christian group of pastors and leaders in the Mobile area after the murder of George Floyd.

The group has seen progress in confessing hidden racism and building gospel-unified cross-cultural relationships, Litton said in a video shared in the annual meeting.

As described in June, the program will include an annual one-day solemn assembly when congregations will fast and collectively re-invite God into the well-being of their community, without compromising any elements of the faith; pastors and leaders addressing with one voice, in love and with biblical clarity, proclaiming God's perspective on issues facing their communities including identity, race, marriage and life; and collectively performing acts of kindness throughout their communities.

"The political, the social, the racial, the class distress that we are facing, that has helped to be caused by the church, can only be properly dissolved by the church," Evans said. "If God can't get the church right, the culture can never become right."



Fred Luter

Luter has described Unify as an opportunity for the SBC to lead in unity at a particularly divisive time in the nation.

“This is one that every one of us who are real true believers in Jesus Christ can come together and support. It would be great that the Southern Baptist Convention would be known for a convention that comes together to unify people, and not to divide people,” Luter has said. “That’s what I hope would happen. Because this racial issue is something that’s happening across the country.”

An ethnically diverse cross-section of Southern Baptist leaders compose a steering committee.

The vision for the work flows from The Pledge Group, which Litton helped launch with an ecumenical Christian group of pastors and leaders in Mobile, Ala., after the murder of George Floyd.