

Wayne Bray 2027 Pastors' Conference president nominee

March 3, 2026

ORLANDO, FL. (BP)—Florida pastor Ted Traylor announced March 3 his intention to nominate South Carolina pastor Wayne Bray to serve as president of the 2027 Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference in Indianapolis.

"It is with great joy I announce my intention to nominate Wayne Bray for the president's role of the SBC Pastors' Conference in June," Traylor told Baptist Press.

"Wayne has pastored First Baptist Church of Simpsonville/Upstate Church in South Carolina since 2015. He is a man who preaches the word, develops young pastors, and is heart-deep in commitment to his state convention and the SBC."

Bray has served as lead pastor of First Baptist Simpsonville/Upstate Church since 2015.

In that time, the church has grown from 1,700 to nearly 5,000 in worship.

Bray has also become known for mentoring and developing younger pastors and has built a pipeline of dozens of preachers and teaching pastors who rotate preaching at 23 different services across 10 Upstate Church locations each week.

"Wayne is a pastor with a dedication to training the next generation of pastors," Traylor said.

"He is both a teacher and a practitioner when it comes to training younger pastors. He would serve us well in leading the Pastors' Conference."

According to church profile data, Upstate Church saw around 4,600 average attendees last year.

In 2024, the church took in \$10,417,535 in undesignated receipts and forwarded \$305,000 (2.93 percent) through the Cooperative Program.

Upstate Church gave \$40,100 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and \$33,795 to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in 2024.

Bray has long been active in Southern Baptist life, serving as president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention in 2021-2022 as well as president of the Georgia Baptist Pastors' Conference in 2011, and as first vice president of the Georgia Baptist Convention in 2007-2008.

He is also an adjunct professor at Anderson University in South Carolina and at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Bray earned a Doctor of Ministry degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, master's degrees at both Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and Columbia International University, and a bachelor's degree at Leavell College.

He has been married to his wife Amy for 30 years, and they have five children and one grandchild.

The 2026 SBC Pastors' Conference will be June 7-8 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

If elected, Bray would serve as president for the following year's conference.