

NRB spokesman fired after pro-vaccine statements

August 30, 2021

WASHINGTON (RNS)—The spokesman for a major evangelical nonprofit was fired for promoting vaccines on the MSNBC “Morning Joe” cable news show.

Daniel Darling, senior vice president of communications for the National Religious Broadcasters, was fired Aug. 27 after refusing to admit his pro-vaccine statements were mistaken, according to a source authorized to speak for Darling.



Daniel Darling, senior vice president of communications for the National Religious Broadcasters, was fired for promoting vaccines on the MSNBC “Morning Joe” cable news show. (Screen Capture Image)

His firing comes at a time when Americans face a new surge of COVID-19 infections due to the highly contagious Delta variant even as protesters and politicians resist mask mandates or other preventive measures.

During a broadcast on Aug. 2, Darling, an evangelical pastor and author,

told host Joe Scarborough about how his faith motivated him to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Darling described the vaccines as an amazing feat of discovery by scientists, some of whom share his Christian faith.

Darling said he was proud to be vaccinated.

“I believe in this vaccine, because I don’t want to see anyone else die of COVID. Our family has lost too many close friends and relatives to COVID, including an uncle, a beloved church member and our piano teacher,” Darling told Scarborough.

He expressed similar views in a recent *USA Today* opinion piece.

Fired without severance

Earlier this week, leaders at NRB, an international association of Christian communicators with 1,100 member organizations, told Darling his statements violated the organization’s policy of remaining neutral about COVID-19 vaccines. According to the source, Darling was given two options—sign a statement admitting he had been insubordinate or be fired.

When he refused to sign a statement, Darling was fired and given no severance, the source told RNS.

Troy Miller, CEO of NRB, confirmed Darling no longer was with the organization. He did not respond to a question about the role Darling’s statements about vaccines played in his departure.

“Dan is an excellent communicator and a great friend. I wish him God’s best in all his future endeavors,” Miller told RNS in an email.

In a statement reported by Ruth Graham of the *New York Times*, Darling said he was “sad and disappointed that my time at NRB has come to a close.”

“I am grieved that the issues that divide our country are dividing Christians,” he said, adding that he intended to devote himself to “unifying believers around the truth of the gospel.”