

Beth Moore the top 2019 newsmaker in the Baptist Standard

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Bible teacher Beth Moore and a Corpus Christi layman who testified to God's sustaining grace through personal tragedy were among the *Baptist Standard's* top newsmakers in 2019.

Others included a Waco church that declared itself open to same-sex weddings, Baylor University supporters who took opposing views on changing the school's policy toward LGBTQ student organizations, the newly elected president of a Fort Worth seminary and an East Texas minister who was killed in a mowing accident.

Controversy surrounded Beth Moore

The three most-accessed news articles on the *Baptist Standard's* website focused on controversy surrounding Moore, founder of Living Proof Ministries in Houston. Within the last three years, she publicly has addressed her personal history as a sexual abuse survivor and criticized "sexism and misogyny" within the Southern Baptist Convention.

The most-read news story, "[Beth Moore reignites debate over whether women can preach](#)," reported a controversy sparked by her social media post noting she would speak at a church on Mother's Day. Critics took aim at her for addressing a crowd that included both men and women—and at the SBC for inviting her to participate in a panel discussion at the convention's annual meeting.



Beth Moore preaching at the inaugural National Preaching Conference hosted by Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary (Photo by Eric Black)

The second most-accessed story in 2019, "[Beth Moore doesn't 'have an axe to grind,'](#)" reported on the message she delivered at the inaugural National Preaching Conference, hosted by Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary.

In her sermon, Moore cited Acts 2:17-18, in which the Apostle Peter quoted the Old Testament promise that God would pour out his Spirit on all his servants—"both men and women"—and they would prophesy.

"I got no agenda here. I got no axe to grind. I got Acts to teach," [Moore told](#) the conference.

The third most-accessed story, "[MacArthur blasts Beth Moore, accuses SBC of rejecting biblical authority,](#)" reported on a quip by John MacArthur, a conservative Reformed pastor, made during a panel discussion at a conference marking his 50th anniversary in the ministry.

During the Truth Matters Conference in California, a moderator asked MacArthur to respond briefly to one- or two-word phrases. When the moderator said, "Beth Moore," MacArthur said, "Go home."

MacArthur is an outspoken proponent of "complementarianism," the belief

that women and men have distinct roles to play in the church.

When asked if the Southern Baptists are moving toward “soft complementarianism,” MacArthur replied: “I don’t know about terms. I just know women are not allowed to preach.”

Testimony by a Corpus Christi layman



Jonathan McComb’s wife Laura was killed on their 10th wedding anniversary, along with 4-year-old Leighton and 6-year-old Andrew. Of the 11 people in the house at that time, only Jonathan McComb survived.

The fourth most-accessed story at baptiststandard.com in 2019 was [“Floodwaters robbed McComb of his family but not his faith.”](#)

It reported the testimony Jonathan McComb presented at his home church, First Baptist in Corpus Christi, on the Sunday morning before

Thanksgiving. On Memorial Day weekend four and a half years ago, McComb and his family were vacationing in Central Texas when the Blanco River rapidly overflowed its banks, sweeping away the house in which they were staying.

His wife Laura was killed on their 10th wedding anniversary, along with 4-year-old Leighton and 6-year-old Andrew. Of the 11 people in the house at that time, only Jonathan McComb survived.

“I don’t know where anybody is in their life right now, or what people are going through, or what challenges will be ahead,” he told his church. “But the closer you get to God, your problems aren’t going to go away, but coping with them will be easier.”

Policies related to LGBTQ couples and student groups

The fifth and sixth most-accessed *Baptist Standard* articles—[“Waco church to allow same-sex weddings”](#) and [“Waco church voluntarily cuts ties with BGCT”](#)—reported actions by leaders of University Baptist Church in Waco.

In mid-May, the church announced it will allow its building to be used for same-sex weddings and grant its ministerial staff freedom to choose whether to perform marriages for LGBTQ couples.

At its annual meeting in 2016, the Baptist General Convention of Texas established affirmation of same-sex marriage as grounds for declaring a church out of cooperation with the convention.

So, rather than force the BGCT to take action, Pastor Josh Carney wrote in a May 30 email that University Baptist decided “it was in both parties’ best interests to end the formal relationship peacefully.”

The seventh most-accessed article likewise focused on a Waco-based institution's policy regarding LGBTQ individuals—"[Online petitioners square off on Baylor LGBT policy.](#)"

It reported on an open letter signed by more than 2,700 members of the "Baylor Family"—including students, alumni, major donors and former regents—asking Baylor University to recognize LGBTQ student organizations. It also noted an opposing online petition called "Save Baylor Traditions" that urged the university to "stand strong" for policies reflecting "traditional Christian values."

Changes at Southwestern Seminary



Adam Greenway is the first alumnus in a quarter-century to serve as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. (Photo / Eric Black)

Ranking No. 8 and No. 9 among most-accessed articles in 2019 were two stories reporting on Adam Greenway, newly elected president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary—"[Seminary president seeks to build bridges](#)" and "[Climate change at Southwestern Seminary?](#)"

The former article, based on an interview with Greenway, reported his stated desire to rebuild broken relationships with Texas Baptists, and the latter noted several actions taken.

Rounding out the Top 10 most-accessed news articles was “[Longview pastor/former soccer star killed in mowing accident](#).” It reported on the life and death of Fabio Giménez, who went from being an internationally renowned soccer player in Latin America to serving God as pastor of Puertas Abiertas, the Spanish-language congregation of First Baptist Church in Longview.

Challenging people to live like Jesus

The mission of the *Baptist Standard* is to “inform, inspire and challenge people to live like Jesus.” Based on that criteria, several other stories published in 2019 stand out among most-accessed articles:

- “[For Baylor students, 72 hours of prayer just not enough](#)” described how a scheduled event at Baylor University grew into a spontaneous 10-day revival, as students continued to meet for prayer.
- “[Church feeds hard-hit neighborhood from family’s lawn](#)” reported Amanda Pritchard and other members of First Baptist Church in Richardson grilled food in her front yard and delivered it to families in her neighborhood whose homes were hit by a tornado.
- “[Texas Baptist delivers 180 tons of soybeans to North Korea](#)” documented how Paul Hinton said the prayers of Texas Baptist Men opened doors enabling him to deliver food to orphanages, schools and hospitals in North Korea.
- “[Mansfield church provides affordable senior housing](#)” reported on Bethlehem Baptist Church opening an affordable housing complex for senior adults across the street from the church campus.
- “[Waco women offer Light in the Gap to female ex-offenders](#)” described how women from Waco-area churches meet ex-offenders at a bus station every weekday to offer them home-baked cookies, a hand-crafted tote bag filled with helpful items and prayers of

blessing.