

# Conclave NextGen returns to San Antonio in October

September 11, 2024

Conclave NextGen conference will return to First Baptist Church in San Antonio Oct. 7-8 for two days of worship, breakout sessions, training and networking with NextGen, family ministers and church leaders.

Cory Liebrum, youth and family ministry specialist at Texas Baptists, said Conclave is a gathering for ministry leaders to feel fed and ministered to without interruption.

“We want Conclave to be a place where they can come, and they can worship. They can fellowship. They can find community with other people, and they don’t have to worry about [anything],” Liebrum said.

“It’s their time to be fed because they feed people in their churches all year round. So, for two days, if we can give them that, then that’s the goal.”

Jennifer Howington, childhood ministry specialist at Texas Baptists, said the desire for Conclave is for NextGen ministers to come together to learn and grow in their ministry area.

“We’ve heard of silos in ministry, and we tend to, as children’s ministers, work with just children and student ministers ... But we’re seeing the value of integrating those ministries together, and we’re trying to model that on the convention level.

“That happens through Conclave to say, ‘Come together as a team, we’re learning and growing together as a team,’” Howington said. “It just creates that synergy that they can take home with them and implement in their churches.”

Howington advised first-time attendees to “come expecting to find community, because you will.”

## **Connecting with others in ministry**

Attendees will have the opportunity to attend four main worship sessions and four breakout sessions.

These sessions will include content and resources for preschool, children, students and college ministers—sponsored by the Texas Baptist Student Ministry. Attendees can treat their sessions as a track within each of these areas or go to whichever breakout interests them.

There also will be a “Pastor’s Track” for senior church leaders to learn from and form community with others who are dealing with matters unique to their role.

“We’re very intentional about the keynotes and the breakout session topics because we want full representation of all age-graded ministries, and we want there to be something for everybody, but also generalized topics that apply to everybody as well,” Howington said.

“We put a lot of thought into who we invite to be those leaders, and so far, it’s gone well, and we’ve had such a great response.”

## **Diverse keynote speakers**

The four main sessions feature keynote messages from Ed Newton, lead pastor of Community Bible Church in San Antonio; Mike Satterfield, founder of Field of Grace Ministries in Arlington; and Justin Whitmel Earley, writer and speaker from Richmond, Va.

Liebrum said the diversity of keynotes is the “secret sauce” of the conference as they try to match the unique needs of attendees. He said he

especially is excited to have Earley address one of the primary motivations behind the conference—community and the importance of connecting with others in ministry.

“Right now, what we see across the state is a lot of ministers and pastors that feel really isolated and don’t feel connected,” Liebrum said.

“For us, [Conclave is] two days where you can get connected, and you don’t have to be youth minister those two days. You don’t have to be children’s pastor those two days. You can just be you and connect with other people. So, I’m excited about Justin coming to be a part of that.”

To fit the needs of individual attendees, Conclave provides an “On Your Own” group for the conference. The “On Your Own” group is designed for attendees who didn’t come with a church group to have an opportunity to connect and build relationships.

Conclave also is hosting approximately 80 exhibitors, showcasing their ministries and what resources they have to offer.

## **Building momentum**

In addition to breakout sessions, Conclave will hold luncheons on Monday for youth ministers and Tuesday for children’s ministers to advance those connections. Luncheon attendees will share a meal and hear from a speaker in their ministry area.

Howington said she was encouraged by the increased attendance of preschool and children’s ministers at last year’s Conclave and looks forward to building on that momentum this year.

“We had a lot of momentum coming out of last year,” she continued. “Last year was the year we really pushed to have preschool and children’s ministers come with their student ministers and pastors, and we saw the

fruit of that.”

[Register here](#) for the 2024 Conclave NextGen conference.