

SBC Sexual Abuse Survivors Joint Statement 2022

We come now collectively, as SBC sexual abuse survivors, urging transformative action toward addressing sexual abuse and cover-ups within the Southern Baptist Convention.

While we respect the necessity of extensive recommendations as brought forth in the Guidepost Report and by the Sexual Abuse Task Force, together we urge that the following actions be taken immediately.

1. Create an Independent Commission, authorized to operate in perpetuity, with initial members appointed by the SBC president elected at the 2022 Convention, staffed with trauma-trained professionals, which are licensed and/or credentialed by an accredited educational entity, who will receive reports about clergy sex abuse directly from survivors, whistle-blowers and others, and who will commission independent inquiries to determine those having been credibly accused or having substantiated allegations of sexual abuse, or of having aided and abetted in the cover-up of sexual abuse.

2. Create an independently administered and publicly accessible “Ministry Check” database of clergy who are determined by independent inquiries to be credibly accused, or to have substantiated allegations, or who are criminally convicted of sexual abuse. Independent inquiries may be those commissioned by the Independent Commission, as described under #1, or may be those commissioned by a church or Southern Baptist entity.

3. Create a survivor restoration fund to be administered by an independent master for making restitution to those who have been sexually abused by clergy of Southern Baptist churches and entities. ALL SBC clergy sex abuse survivors shall be eligible to receive payments from the fund regardless of whether they have any continuing connection to any Southern Baptist church or entity, and no one within the SBC shall have any control over how the survivor chooses to use the money or over what therapist a survivor chooses. (See Guidepost recommendation 7(b) for criteria to be used by the independent master in determining payments.)

4. Establish outside SBC headquarters in Nashville a permanent memorial, dedicated to all survivors of SBC clergy sex abuse and named in honor of Christa Brown. The memorial/monument shall be legally restricted not to be removed or modified for 100 years unless in conjunction with the relocation of SBC headquarters. Christa Brown shall also have full veto/approval rights on the execution of the monument from inception to completion, with full funding provided by the SBC Executive Committee, and she shall have even the right to demolish it in subsequent years for whatever reason she chooses, including if the SBC uses her name as a PR prop.

Subsequent Work

In addition (but not as a substitute for immediate actions), we support the creation of an independent **Abuse Reform Implementation Task Force** to devise a strategic plan and

timeline for implementation of other Guidepost and SATF recommendations within the next three years, specifically to include a) the creation of an ethical **Code of Conduct** and b) revision of the submission, evaluation, and appeal process used by the **Credentials Committee**, and also to oversee comprehensive long term reforms.

Thank you to all members of the Guidepost team and to the Sexual Abuse Task Force.

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