

**2025 Annual Conference
President's Annual Report
June 8-9, 2025, Dallas, TX**

At this conference we had a record attendance of over 450 and celebrated our 65th anniversary as an organization! Allison and I celebrated our 10th anniversary serving you on staff. I want to thank Allison Gentry, our Director of Communications & Event Planner, and my wife, Debra Gentry, our Membership Coordinator and Financial Assistant, for their efforts in serving you this year and in preparing for this annual conference.

Priorities: Leadership Development, Associational Advocacy, Succession Planning, Development Pathways

There has been another year of God's blessing and favor:

- Membership is the highest ever - over 750, a 7.7% increase over last year. Praise the Lord!
- Our first SBCAL Retreat in Pigeon Forge, TN, March 3-5 was a great success with almost 250 total participants. Since our annual conference is in the southwest this year, we wanted to offer another leadership development opportunity in the southeast.
- I appreciate the privilege to participate in state AMS gatherings in TX, OK, CA, MO, GA, TN, and NC this past year. I would love to connect with AMSs in your state at one of your state AMS gatherings by joining you virtually or in person – especially if I have not been in the last couple of years.
- Over 80 AMSs from around the nation were involved in 13 Cohorts September - May for equipping, encouragement, prayer, and times of iron-sharpening-iron. Will you join one this September?
- SBCAL hosted webinars on Raising Finances & Vision with Ron Blankenship, Q and A with the ERLC's Brent Leatherwood, the State of the Church 2025 with Ed Stetzer, and Introduction to Biblical Counseling for AMSs with Stuart Scott. Members access these among 200+ resources on our website.
- We are grateful that 18 state conventions are partnering with SBCAL. They pay the membership dues for their associational leaders to receive leadership development resources from SBCAL.
- We helped over 25 AMSs through the AMS Encouragement Fund affected by hurricanes, floods, etc.
- Associational Advocacy - I had in person meetings with the leadership of our six seminaries. I asked them to include an associational emphasis in a required course. I am especially grateful that SEBTS, MBTS, and NOBTS videoed interviews with me with plans to show the recordings in a required class.
- We produced a 2025 AMS Compensation Study to help you see how your association compares with other associations of similar size in terms of salaries, benefits, etc.
- I hear positive comments about the weekly *SBCAL Podcast with Ray Gentry* and my weekly blog at www.drraygentry.com. These are additional ways SBCAL seeks to serve you throughout the year.
- Our Three Development Pathway Teams are providing specialized Breakout Tracks in 2025:
Steve Laughman, GA: Normative-size Associations – Under 40 churches (Est. 57% of associations)
Steve Doyle, TX: Mid-size Associations – 40-89 churches (Est. 33% of associations)
James Risner, OH: Large-size Associations – 90+ churches (Est. 10% of associations)

Conference theme: "The Fruitful Mission Strategist," based on Titus 3:14, "Our people must also learn to engage in deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful" (NASB).

Your servant in Christ,

Ray Gentry