

Bio of Dr. C. Ray Gentry
President/CEO
Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders
Hoschton, GA

On May 4, 2015, Ray was elected by the Executive Team of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders (SBCAL) to be their next leader. He has served as President & CEO since July 1, 2015. His role became full-time July 1, 2023. He is also the Editor of the SBCAL book, "The Baptist Association: Assisting Churches, Advancing the Gospel," published by Rainer Publishing in 2020.

Founded in 1960, the SBCAL is the oldest and largest associational network in Southern Baptist life, with over 550 members. It stands ready to serve the approximately 1100 associations in North America, whether they have a fulltime, part-time, or volunteer Associational Mission Strategist (AMS). The mission of SBCAL is to equip, encourage, and network associational leaders, providing resources, coaching, fellowship, and professional development.

Ray is a native Georgian. He began his service as an associational leader in 1993. He has had the unique privilege of serving as a Pastor of two churches, an Associate Pastor of three churches, and as an associational leader of five associations. He was the founding associational leader of the Southside Baptist Network, Georgia Baptists' newest association, established March 1, 2013 from the former South Metro and Henry Baptist Associations. He retired from that role June 30, 2023. Prior to serving the Southside Baptist Network, he was called to revitalize the Henry Baptist Association in McDonough, GA in 2011. The Lord blessed the Southside Baptist Network (SBN) with 80+ congregations – including 23 ethnic congregations – in seven counties of metro Atlanta.

Ray was raised in the Air Force town of Warner Robins, GA. His father was a successful farmer in Middle Georgia. He is a graduate of Middle Georgia College, Cochran, GA (ABA); the University of Georgia, Athens, GA (BBA); Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX (MDIV); and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, NC (DMIN).

He and his wife, Debra have been blessed with daughters April (who was married to Rev. Peter Witkowski when the Lord called her home to be with Jesus on June 25, 2022), and Allison, Director of Communications for SBCAL. They also have three adorable grandchildren. Ray enjoys assisting associations and AMSs, as well as spending time with his family, reading, and eating just about any dessert. He can be reached at rgentry@sbc.org. He blogs at www.drraygentry.com.