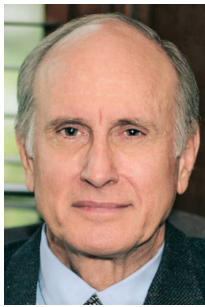


Who's Who in Guidepost Solutions sexual abuse report

NASHVILLE (BP) – The names of numerous Southern Baptist leaders appeared throughout the lengthy report made available May 22 by Guidepost Solutions on the subject of sexual abuse allegations and the SBC Executive Committee.

Although at differing levels of involvement today, each factored into the investigation's scope of Jan. 1, 2000, through June 14, 2021. Below are the names of some key leaders mentioned as well as the context in which the report places them and their responses to the report.



Boto

– **D. August “Augie” Boto.** Served the Executive Committee from 1995-2019 as vice president for convention policy, executive vice president, and general counsel. He also served for just over a year as interim Executive Committee president following the departure of Frank Page in 2018.

Boto was prominent among senior Executive Committee staff members whose “main concern was avoiding any potential liability for the SBC,” the Guidepost Solutions report said.

Boto did not respond to BP’s request for a statement.



Oldham

– **Roger “Sing” Oldham.** Executive Committee vice president for convention communications and relations, 2007-2019. In a May 2019 email, Oldham told then-new Executive Committee President Ronnie Floyd that he had been sending regular updates for the “the past decade” to Boto of news reports of Baptist ministers arrested for sexual abuse. By August 2018, the list contained the names of 585 possible abusers.

“From time to time we considered whether hosting a web page with published news stories about ministers or church volunteers arrested for a variety of matters, including sexual misconduct, would be a helpful resource to assist churches in their hiring processes,” Oldham told Baptist Press (BP).

A determination was eventually made that the National Sex Offender Registry through the U.S. Department of Justice was a better option, as it was “much more extensive than anything we could create, and was already posted on our website,” he said.



Guenther

– **Jim Guenther.** Legal counsel for the Executive Committee with Guenther, Jordan & Price. The firm announced the end of its 56-year professional relationship with the Executive Committee on Oct. 11, 2021, shortly after the Committee voted to waive

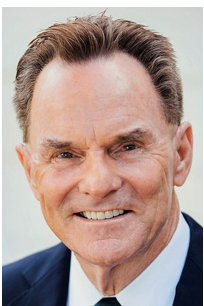
attorney-client privilege for the Guidepost investigation.

Guenther advised Boto and other Executive Committee leaders on matters the report deemed to be “in a manner that involved the mistreatment of survivors,” and for the Boto and the leaders to avoid eliciting further details about reports of abuse in order to deflect liability.

In 2007, Gunther proposed a plan whereby the SBC website would link to a database listing those believed to have been engaged in sexual misconduct, but ultimately no action was taken.

While expressing appreciation for Guidepost’s efforts to cover 20 years in a single report, a statement from Guenther and Jaime Jorden of Guenther, Jordan and Price, PC, said the document “contains misstatements of fact and quotations from us which are misleading because they are reported out of context.”

Specifically, the statement expressed sharp disagreement “with many of the characterizations in the report and its assignment of ill will and bad motives to men and women of the Executive Committee who struggled year after year with complex issues,” as well as “the lack of understanding the report shows for the role and responsibility of legal counsel.”



Floyd

– **Ronnie Floyd.** Elected Executive Committee president and CEO in April 2019, Floyd stepped down effective Oct. 31, 2021. Floyd, longtime pastor of Cross Church in Springfield, Ark., was elected SBC president in 2014 and 2015. Floyd maintained in a series of Executive Committee meetings last fall that

waiving attorney-client privilege went against the group's fiduciary duty and offered his resignation shortly after Executive Committee members voted for the waiver.

"People reading the report may not realize that I supported the independent investigation," Floyd told Baptist Press in a statement. "I also hired Guidepost to do it even before the 2021 Convention.

"Our fiduciary duties also required due diligence to understand the implications of 'waiving attorney-client privilege.' This was never an effort to resist or obstruct the investigation, but responsible governance.

"...From the beginning of my term as executive committee president, I helped guide the Convention to establishing the credentials committee and leading the effort to pass the amendment to the SBC Constitution focused on sexual abuse. May God lead the 2022 Convention to take the appropriate actions including the implementation of reforms."



Paige

– **Frank Page**. After serving two terms as SBC president in 2006 and 2007, Page was appointed Executive Committee president in 2010. He resigned in March 2018 after a "morally inappropriate relationship" with a woman in a church where he was serving as interim pastor. BP attempted without success to contact Page for comment.



Hunt

– **Johnny Hunt.** Elected as SBC president in 2008 and 2009, Hunt was the longtime pastor of First Church, Woodstock, Ga., before accepting a senior vice president position with the SBC North American Mission Board.

In the Guidepost report, a pastor and his wife accused Hunt of sexually assaulting the wife in Panama City a month after he finished his second term as SBC president. Guidepost investigators found that the survivor, a counselor who spoke with the parties involved, and three other corroborating witnesses were credible.

Hunt's testimony, investigators said, was not credible. He resigned his NAMB post on May 13. In a Twitter post May 22, Hunt "vigorously [denied] the circumstances and characterizations set forth in the Guidepost report. I have never abused anybody."



Gaines

– **Steve Gaines.** The report stated that the election of Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Church near Memphis, to the SBC presidency in 2016 "conveyed the message that a clergy sex abuse cover-up was considered 'no big deal' in the SBC."

In 2006, Gaines went months before reporting a staff

minister's prior sexual assault of a child, the report says. The staff member approached Gaines in 2006 to confess to the abuse he had committed 17 years prior. Gaines admitted to Guidepost investigators that he delayed action out of "heartfelt concern and compassion" for the minister.

"I am grateful for [the Task Force's] diligence and depend on their expertise as we move forward. We grieve and lament the findings," Gaines said. "When I was informed, I believed that it was being properly taken care of and did not know my obligation to report it to the authorities.

"I now know that I did not handle the situation properly. A thorough investigation was done at the time and there were no other incidents of abuse reported. My desire is to lead and shepherd our congregation with grace and biblical integrity. We do not and will not tolerate abuse of any kind and desire complete transparency and accountability."

Bellevue Church has since implemented annual training related to identifying and reporting suspected abuse.



Graham

– **Jack Graham.** Served as SBC president from 2002-2004. The report states that Graham, as pastor of Prestonwood Church, Plano, Texas, where he still serves, allowed a staff member to be dismissed quietly after sexual abuse allegations were made.

That staff member, John Langworthy, was eventually charged with molesting several boys at his former church in Mississippi. Graham declined to speak to Guidepost investigators directly but referred them to the public

archives from his presidency.

“Prestonwood categorically denies the way the report characterizes the incident 33 years ago,” said Mike Buster, Prestonwood executive pastor. “Prestonwood has never protected or supported abusers, in 1989 or since.”



Patterson

– **Paige Patterson.** Alongside Paul Pressler, Patterson is considered the architect of the SBC’s Conservative Resurgence. Patterson later served as president of SBC seminaries Southeastern in Wake Forest, N.C., and Southwestern in Ft. Worth, Texas.

While he was SBC president in June 2000, he advised a pastor seeking information on sexual abuse programs to adopt a position of avoiding lawsuits, not preventing abuse. Patterson’s stance of protecting the institution would reappear, the report stated, through his mishandling of rape accusations in 2003 at Southeastern and in 2015 at Southwestern.

Patterson was fired by Southwestern trustees in 2018, after internal e-mails revealed Patterson wanted to meet with one of the alleged rape victims to “break her down.” BP’s attempts to reach Patterson were unsuccessful.



Pressler

– **Paul Pressler.** A Texas judge, former SBC vice president, and co-architect of the Conservative Resurgence along with Patterson, Pressler is currently the defendant in a lawsuit alleging he repeatedly sexually abused the male plaintiff in the lawsuit from the time the plaintiff was 14 years old.

Two other men submitted affidavits accusing Pressler of sexual misconduct. Attempts to reach Pressler for comment were unsuccessful.



Stone

– **Mike Stone.** The Guidepost report states that in 2019, when Stone was Executive Committee chairman, he helped draft the apology for a fellow pastor and former college classmate who had an inappropriate relationship with a single mother in the pastor's south Georgia congregation.

Witnesses said the apology was inaccurate and they felt intimidated by Stone for their bringing the pastor's behavior to the attention of the church.

"As an abuse survivor, I grieve with all Southern Baptists over every incident of sexual abuse," Stone said. "At the same time, it is disappointing to see real concerns mingled with false accusations. Further, it is sad these erroneous charges

warrant clarification at a time when Southern Baptists should have been allowed time to prayerfully consider the weighty matters before us.”



Moore

– **Russell Moore.** Moore corresponded via letters with SBC President J.D. Greear during Moore’s tenure as president of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) about his frustrations with the failure of sexual abuse reform in the SBC. At times, Moore told Greear, his opponents wanted him “to live in psychological terror.”

In 2017 and 2020, the Executive Committee formed task forces to study the impact on Cooperative Program giving due to controversy connected to the ERLC. Moore contended those studies were the consequences of riling those opposed to his advocacy on the part of sexual abuse survivors.

Moore resigned from his ERLC position shortly before the 2021 SBC Annual Meeting. “Indeed, the very ones who rebuked me and others for using the word *crisis* in reference to Southern Baptist sexual abuse not only knew that there was such a crisis but were quietly documenting it, even as they told those fighting for reform that such crimes rarely happened among ‘people like us’,” Moore wrote in a column for Christianity Today magazine.



Greear

– **J.D. Greear.** As SBC president, Greear responded to the Houston (Texas) Chronicle’s report of abuse in Southern Baptist churches by calling out 10 churches named in the report. The announcement, made in Greear’s address to Executive Committee trustees in February 2019, drew fire from Southern Baptist leaders and led to Boto calling one Greear-named pastor to apologize.

Sexual abuse reform remained a consistent topic during Greear’s tenure as SBC president, which received a third year due to the COVID-19 pandemic-related cancellation of the 2020 annual meeting.

“The report from Guidepost Solutions is heartbreaking, and parts are horrifying,” Greear said. “It should not have been this way. Southern Baptists rightfully expected more, and deserved more, from their leaders.

“Our failures put survivors in a position where they were forced to fight for themselves when we should have been fighting for them. The church should be a place where people know they are safe and where leaders are who they say they are.

“Jesus’ Gospel declares that God is a refuge for all who run to Him, and the posture of our leaders toward abuse victims should reflect that. Protecting the vulnerable is not a *distraction* from the mission, it *is our mission*. We have no choice but to learn from our past and change the future.”