

Hebron Baptist Church

Grand Compromise

With the election of Adrian Rogers as president of the SBC, in 1979, many believed his election amounted to little more than a nod to the denomination's conservative wing. But it would become one of the most significant religious events of the 20th century – the *conservative resurgence*.

Because of the theological diversity of the denomination, moderate SBC officials tried to stave off theological controversy while uniting all factions around missions and evangelism. Conservatives convinced a growing number of people that the SBC's moderate leaders were out of touch with the denomination's grass roots.

As polarized Southern Baptists converged for their annual convention, in 1990, church historian and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Bill J. Leonard, said that the *Grand Compromise* that had held the denomination together for 145 years was falling apart.

“It's amazing that the denomination has lasted as long as it did intact, considering its heritage of individualism and diversity. Denominationalists have been masters at maintaining the balance” despite repeated attempts through the years to upset it ever since the SBC was founded in 1845.

“Since then, the broad compact that affirmed classic Christian beliefs while allowing varied interpretations has held together. But now with the diffusion of Southern culture and steps by the controlling fundamentalist wing to ‘draw narrower lines of thought,’ the old inclusive coalition is crumbling.”

“In the past, occasional doctrinal disputes passed because a prevailing Southern culture held diverse views together.” That unity was “grounded in the *Grand Compromise* in which ideologues on the right or left were not allowed to control the center. The denomination became a means of uniting those of various regional theological and liturgical traditions and holding at bay those who sought to impose a narrower doctrinal or ecclesiastical norms on the entire body.”

Sources: *New Orleans Herald-Journal* Staff Writer, June 10, 1990; Bill J. Leonard, *God's Last & Only Hope: The Fragmentation of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1990

Thomas S. Kidd & Barry Hankins, *Baptists in America, A History*



Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, was originally set as a US legal holiday to honor the end of World War I, which officially took place on November 11, 1918.

In 1954, after having been through both World War II and the Korean War, the US Congress – at the urging of veterans service organizations – replaced the word “Armistice” with “Veterans.” Thus, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

We thank our veterans for their service.





“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” Psalm 122:6

“Jerusalem is the central hotspot of a spiritual battle. It is the most contested and sought after city in all of history – many nations and peoples have come against it...Geographically, it was always located off the main trade routes and has no strategic importance to a conquering army.

“However, the heart of the battle is spiritual. God declared that He will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem (Zechariah 8:3). How much do you think the enemy hates the place where God dwells?” [OneForIsrael.org]

“The Jews are the chosen people of God. Israel is the land God gave to His chosen people. God scattered them among the nations for their rebellion and He gathered them back into the land for His name’s sake and glory (Ezekiel 36:22). He will fight for them. He will get the victory and, thus, He will get the glory. And the world will know He is the Lord. It is coming, and current events could be leading up to it.”

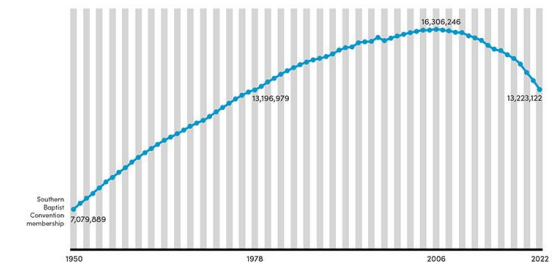
“The Bible makes it clear that the last days began when Jesus walked the earth (Hebrews 1:2), and if they began 2000 years ago we are certainly in the last seconds of the last days as we watch the world unravel as Jerusalem takes center stage on a global scale.” [Amir Tsarfati, BeholdIsrael.org]



Southern Baptists in the 2000s

SBC membership falls to lowest number since late 1970s

Prepared by Lifeway Research in conjunction with Baptist state conventions



Lifeway research

The Southern Baptist Convention was founded in May 1845 in Augusta, Georgia with 293 delegates in attendance. It represented about 300 churches in the South.

Membership in the SBC grew steadily over the decades since 1950, until peaking in 2006 with 16.3 million members. The SBC has declined by 1.5 million since 2018, and by more than 3 million since 2006. Membership was down by nearly half a million in 2022, according to Lifeway’s Annual Church Profile.

The denomination has been affected by a constant state of crises in recent years, including a major sex abuse scandal, controversies over race, and an ongoing feud over SBC’s leadership and future direction.

“Much of the downward movement we are seeing in membership reflects people who stopped participating in an individual congregation years ago and the record keeping is finally catching up,” said Scott McConnell, executive director of Lifeway Research.