



2017 GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Relative to the listed Ministry Assignment, please describe accomplishments in the past year that creates "value added" to the Cooperative Program dollars that ERLC receives.

I. Assist churches in applying the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life.

Throughout the year, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has sought to provide an array of resources to churches to help them apply the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life. Each day, the ERLC website publishes new content directly related to the issues of human dignity, family stability, civil society, and religious liberty—and these in a variety of formats ranging from popular-level to academic, from articles to videos to podcasts. In the 2016 ministry year, the ERLC set record numbers in terms of downloads, reach, and followers, in some cases more than doubling the previous year's record highs.

Additionally, the ERLC strives to respond quickly to events in the news important to Southern Baptists so as to help train churches and assist Southern Baptists in thinking through the issues. Beyond this, the ERLC has been intentional in launching events—ranging from area pastor lunches, leadership summits, and large-scale annual conferences, designed to equip men and women to think through these issues from a kingdom-focused, gospel framework. In partnership with LifeWay, these events are uploaded online after the fact so that all Southern Baptists, not just those who were able to attend our national events, are able to benefit from the conference content. In partnership with the National Religious Broadcasters, much of this same content is broadcast on NRB TV, airing on DirecTV to millions of viewers around the country.

As a few examples of church-minded resources created in the past year, the ERLC has produced bulletin inserts for SBC churches for each of the respective emphasis Sundays as well as downloadable "Issue Analysis Briefs" for pastors and church leaders. These give leaders an in-depth analysis on individual issues. The ERLC has provided numerous resources free of charge to SBC churches and state conventions around the country for various events. Additionally, in partnership with LifeWay, the ERLC has developed and is continuing to develop new print and curriculum resources designed to equip Christians and churches on issues of life, adoption,

religious liberty, parenting, racial reconciliation, marriage, and many other issues. Our president has led the way to in equipping churches through his own writings. At the present time, he is working on a book designed to equip parents to think through the challenges of gospel-focused family life in the twenty-first century that our parents and grandparents never had to deal with. His most recent book, *Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel* similarly sought to equip churches, laid out a vision for what gospel-focused cultural engagement ought to look like in the midst of present-day challenges.

The ERLC continued to innovate along several different multi-media initiatives, including Signposts, a weekly podcast featuring Dr. Moore addressing pressing issues and difficult ethical questions, interviewing prominent authors and thought leaders, and offering cultural commentary on pressing Christian issues. The ERLC continued the expansion of both Canon and Culture, a long-form policy website featuring leading Southern Baptist and conservative scholars as well as the ERLC video channel featuring hundreds of hours of interviews, discussions, and video productions on a variety of issues. Beyond this, the ERLC also partnered with LifeWay's Ministry Grid to produce a sexual ethics training track for pastors and church leaders, and with B&H to create a long-term strategy to produce ministry-minded guidebooks on key issues pastors and church leaders face. In addition to this, the ERLC partnered with the Alliance Defending Freedom at a major, annual religious liberty summit, spearheading the pastor-track of this event designed to connect pastors with major resources and thought leaders in the area of religious liberty and equip them on the issues facing their congregations.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

As the SBC entity charged not only to serve as a moral and ethical voice to Southern Baptist churches, but also to be a gospel witness in the public square, the ERLC engaged the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government on multiple fronts, from meeting with lawmakers and advocacy partners to issuing public comments to the administration to filing amicus briefs in the Supreme Court.

The ERLC labored in the public square on a range of issues, from religious liberty to the sanctity of human life to marriage to human trafficking to racial reconciliation and many areas in between, seeking to apply the gospel to public policy for the sake of religious liberty and human flourishing. Among the many specific policies engaged, the ERLC voiced continued objection to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services mandate on abortifacients and contraceptives in violation of the consciences of millions of Southern Baptists and others and labored tirelessly through the year to ensure the passage of the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act.

Throughout the year, the ERLC focused its legislative attention on issues of life, family, and religious liberty, about which Southern Baptists have been insistent and consistent for decades. Some of the key pieces of legislation the ERLC promoted included:

- Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (S. 1553/H.R. 36)
- No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act of 2015
- Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act (S. 51/H.R. 217)
- Bill to Prohibit Federal Funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (S. 1881)
- Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act (S. 404/H.R. 803)
- Health Care Conscience Rights Act (H.R. 940)
- Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (S. 50)
- Prenatal Nondiscrimination Act (PRENDA) (S. 48/H.R. 4924)
- Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (S. 2066/H.R. 3504)
- Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2015 (S. 1836/H.R. 3134)
- Women's Public Health and Safety Act (S. 2159/H.R. 3495)
- Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2015 (S. 2878/H.R. 1150)
- First Amendment Defense Act (S. 1598/H.R. 2802)
- Conscience Protection Act of 2016 (S. 2927/H.R. 4828)
- State Marriage Defense Act of 2015 (S. 435/H.R. 824)
- Child Welfare Provider Inclusion Act (S. 667/H.R. 1299)
- Protecting Adoption Act (S. 1637/H.R. 2818)
- Justice for Human Trafficking Act of 2015 (S. 178/H.R. 296)
- Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (S. 1513/H.R. 3406)
- North Korea Sanctions Enforcement Act of 2016 (S. 1747/H.R. 757)

One of the means by which the ERLC engaged the public square was through one-on-one meetings and other communication with elected officials and their staff. Through regular interaction with congressional offices, the ERLC sought to ensure that social and religious liberty issues were neither steamrolled nor relegated to back burner status by lawmakers hostile to a biblical worldview. A second means by which the ERLC engaged the public square was through coalition work. ERLC staff participated in numerous coalitions, both formal and informal, among religious, life, family, and other public policy groups on issues of common agreement in an effort to find unified approaches to advance sound policy in the public square. In every instance, the ERLC brought a decidedly Baptist and gospel-focused perspective to the issue at hand. In many cases, the ERLC helped to reshape thinking and action among coalition partners by consistently voicing its positions through the lens of the gospel, in a winsome manner.

Throughout the year, the ERLC continued to host events in Washington designed to promote

relationships between Southern Baptists and elected officials. In some cases, this took the form of continuing our Capitol Conversations series, in which the ERLC hosts events for Washington-area pastors, leaders, and Capitol Hill staffers to come and hear ERLC-led forums and discussions addressing timely issues from a Christian perspective. In some cases, this took the form of day-long summits organizing meetings between pastors and their respective representatives and introducing them in small-group meetings with some of the key Washington leaders in the country. One of these day-long summits included meetings with Majority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), Sen. Ben Sasse (R-Neb.), Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), Rep. Bill Flores (R-Texas), and Rep. Mark Walker (R-N.C.).

Additionally, much work over the course of the last ministry year was devoted to a Religious Freedom Summit, hosted in Washington, D.C., and led by the ERLC, which joined the preeminent legal, legislative, pastoral, and political minds across the country for a two-day summit designed specifically to identify areas of opportunity and agree on strategy for the upcoming year in order to achieve the broadest possible legislative victories when it comes to promoting and advancing religious liberty across the country.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

Over the course of the ministry year, the ERLC has offered an array of resources designed to assist churches in their moral witness in local churches. The ERLC provides new resources daily—from books, to blog posts, articles, essays, podcasts, videos, bulletin inserts, and sermon outlines—for Christians and churches to help think through moral and ethical issues. Additionally, the ERLC has enhanced a rapid response strategy for news-related items that churches may want to address. The ERLC has worked to develop protocols that allow for rapid production of content that are produced quickly following consequential news.

Throughout the year, ERLC staff and leadership traveled the country speaking at churches and church events throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, in addition to our Southern Baptist seminaries. This ranged from state convention gatherings to Sunday morning worship to church-sponsored events and forums designed to address key cultural issues.

Over the course of our joint Global Hunger Relief efforts this ministry year, food was distributed over six million times over the last ministry year. From the school children of rural Appalachia to Syrian refugee families living in makeshift camps across Europe, many of the over 970 projects were directly connected to the work of local churches. In North America, GHR projects were associated with 3,053 baptisms and mobilized 151,325 volunteers.

In an effort to further support the work of those on state convention staffs who are assigned the

responsibility of addressing moral, ethical, and public policy matters, the ERLC continued to develop gatherings in which experts on selected social and cultural issues speak. Recent years have seen this expanded within the context of the work of the ERLC Research Institute so as to best encourage and support those in leadership positions across Southern Baptist life. In addition, on an ongoing basis, ERLC staff interacts with and supports those on the state level who address moral and ethical issues.

In tandem with our denominational calendar, the ERLC produced bulletin inserts, videos, and content designed to address areas of denominational emphasis within the life of local churches, including the sanctity of human life, racial reconciliation, and important social issues. Throughout the year, the ERLC also partnered with individual churches, associations, and state conventions via video conference to help answer questions and equip churches on the issues alive in their respective congregations.

IV. Assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting religious liberty.

Beyond the concrete legislative efforts listed in sections above, ERLC staff regularly published articles in Baptist Press and on the ERLC websites. From the latest developments pertaining to religious liberty and persecution around the world, as well as many other important topics including adoption, marriage, human trafficking, race, and others, the ERLC addressed a wide array of concerns. On our website, entire channels are devoted specifically to these important issues as part of our “Issues at a Glance” pages and will be undergoing continued improvements and updates. These pages feature brief explanations of the various topics, informational videos, links to news stories and applicable Scripture references. Additionally, on our “Canon and Culture” channel, members of the ERLC Research Institute and others contribute academic articles and essays designed to engage the culture and promote religious liberty in the academy.

Beyond this, the ERLC labored to promote religious freedom with like-minded groups and organizations and continued the work of its newly-established international office—designed to promote religious liberty for Southern Baptists around the globe, particularly calling attention to persecution of Christian minorities in the Middle East.

The ERLC also named leaders for their distinguished service awards on the basis of their contribution to the cause of promoting religious liberty—with Dr. O. S. Hawkins being awarded the John Leland Religious Liberty Award for his fight on behalf of conscience protections over against the Obamacare contraceptive mandate, and Dr. Barrett Duke being named the Distinguished Service Award for his faithfulness in being an advocate for Southern Baptists on issues of religious liberty for twenty years.

In one project designed to serve churches for many years to come, the ERLC partnered with LifeWay to create a state-of-the-art video curriculum on the issue of religious liberty. ERLC and LifeWay worked for over a year in creating and commissioning content for the video curriculum, traveled around the country interviewing the preeminent thought leaders and experts on the issue, and worked tirelessly to create a product that will be compelling for Sunday Schools and small groups to work through together and one that will provide tools to Christians and churches to address religious liberty issues with expertise and confidence.

Beyond these areas, the ERLC continued to participate in a number of regular gatherings with religious leaders and groups on issues of domestic and international religious liberty, along with other issues important to Southern Baptists. The ERLC also worked to continue to cultivate relationships with members of Congress and their staff by speaking at Capitol Hill events and meetings.

Based on the listed Ministry Assignment, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2016 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how you are accomplishing the above Ministry Assignment?

I. Assist churches in applying the moral and ethical teachings of the Bible to the Christian life.

With each new year comes new challenges and questions in our culture that affect the lives of Southern Baptists and Southern Baptist churches. Part of the ERLC's role is being attentive to those questions and applying the gospel to them for the benefit of our churches. One way the ERLC is able to be both attentive to and influential within the life of our churches is through the work of our Leadership Network. Through partnerships with pastors and churches active in the work of the ERLC, and through our active conversation with them about their churches and needs, the Commission is able to think through much more effectively how it can serve the SBC at large. This year, the ERLC will welcome a new cohort of pastors into our Leadership Council, which will also bring new voices and churches into intentional and strategic partnership with the ERLC so as to help equip churches to apply the gospel to the Christian life. More than that, the ERLC has a number of national events and digital strategies in the planning and production stage that we expect to be helpful and consequential to the mission of the ERLC in the 2017 year.

II. Assist churches through the communication and advocacy of moral and ethical concerns in the public arena.

A new Congress and a new administration carry with it many new opportunities for the ERLC to continue to make inroads in building coalitions, driving conversations, and being a voice of influence on Capitol Hill to represent Southern Baptists and their concerns well and to speak to

issues of religious liberty and Southern Baptist concerns around the country. As one example, in recent weeks the ERLC has released an entreaty to the incoming Congress and incoming administration to pursue the following pro-life opportunities in 2017, all of which are achievable:

- (1) Codify the Hyde Amendment
- (2) Appoint a pro-life replacement for Antonin Scalia
- (3) Repeal the HHS Mandate
- (4) Eliminate all funding for Planned Parenthood from the federal budget
- (5) Pass the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act
- (6) Pass the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act

A continued focus in the 2017 year will be Capitol Conversations, regular ERLC meetings with coalition partners, elected officials, and influencers to keep close contact and influence with those crucial to defending America's first freedom of religious liberty. Beyond this, additional work done over the last year along with key strategic partnerships have poised the ERLC to grow its media presence, and the finalization of our fully equipped television studio in the Southern Baptist Convention building in Nashville adds to that potential.

III. Assist churches in their moral witness in local communities.

In the year ahead, the ERLC has unique opportunities to use enhanced digital platforms and organization-led events to cultivate strategic relationships with churches to invest in local communities. Being the smallest SBC entity, it is an organizational challenge to be as involved in all of our states and associations as we aspire to be, but through digital platforms, events, podcasting, and video conferencing, the ERLC has the ability to extend its reach in unique and strategic ways even further into the life of local churches.

IV. Assist churches and other Southern Baptist entities by promoting religious liberty.

With new cultural flashpoints around every turn, increased attention to the issue of religious liberty provides the ERLC a unique opportunity to be a prophetic voice in the public square. Additionally, an increased attention to large-scale events provides the ERLC with the ability to speak to a broad audience on issues of concern to Southern Baptists. This year, several of our key events and publications will focus on what faithful Christian families should look like in the midst of an ever-changing and ever-challenging cultural landscape in which religious liberty is increasingly imperilled. The ERLC works to equip Christian families and at the same hopes the result will be evangelism— as faithful Christian families point to the gospel, serve others, love others, and invite them to repent and trust in Christ. Beyond that, through the work Research

Institute, the ERLC has an arsenal of strategically-gifted and committed Southern Baptist thinkers that can help drive the conversation in the public square on issues of importance to Southern Baptists and Southern Baptist churches.