

Morning Rundown: Pastor Steven Furtick's Elevation Megachurch Severs Ties With SBC

Here's a quick rundown of the top stories on :

Pastor Steven Furtick's Elevation Megachurch Severs Ties With SBC

In a recent blow to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Elevation Church, one of its prominent congregations, has made the decision to withdraw its affiliation with the denomination. This development comes less than a month after the expulsion of Saddleback Church for having women pastors.

Elevation Church, known for its multiple campuses and influential role in contemporary Christian worship music, formally notified the SBC of its withdrawal on June 26.

The church's correspondence did not explicitly state the reason behind the decision. Notably, Elevation Pastor Steven Furtick's wife, Holly Furtick, delivers sermons to both men and women at the church and shares links to her messages on her website.

NBA Player Defends American Values Against WNBA Player Tirade

Enes Kanter Freedom, an outspoken advocate for freedom and human rights, responded to Natasha Cloud, a player in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), after her recent criticisms of the United States following key Supreme Court rulings last week.

In a tweet on Friday, Cloud expressed her dissatisfaction with the country, stating that "our country is trash in so many

ways” in response to the Supreme Court’s rulings on affirmative action and the case involving artist Lorie Smith. Kanter Freedom, hailing from Turkey, chimed in, emphasizing that people often fail to recognize the privileges and opportunities they have in the United States.

“Just ask your colleague Brittney Griner how ‘trash’ America is,” Kanter Freedom tweeted. “Calling America trash huh? Let me know when your season is over, I’ll buy your ticket and we can go together to countries like China, Russia, IRAN, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba & Turkey.

Confusion Nation: What Does the Supreme Court Decision Against Coercion Really Say?

Last week the Supreme Court issued its landmark decision that Lorie Smith, a Colorado-based Christian graphic artist and web designer, did not have to create content that violated her beliefs. In response, Clara Jeffery, editor-in-chief of Mother Jones, tweeted, “perhaps gay stylists, designers, caterers and planners should start withholding services from Christian conservatives and see where that goes.” After all, Jeffery reasoned, if a Christian can refuse to create content for a gay couple, surely gay professionals can decline services to Christian conservatives.

More extreme was the reaction of actor Michael Imperioli, who posted on Instagram, “I’ve decided to forbid bigots and homophobes from watching The Sopranos, The White Lotus, Goodfellas or any movie or TV show I’ve been in. Thank you Supreme Court for allowing me to discriminate and exclude those who I don’t agree with and am opposed to. USA! USA!”

In her strong dissenting opinion, Justice Sonia Sotomayor argued that, “Today, the Court, for the first time in its history, grants a business open to the public a constitutional right to refuse to serve members of a protected class.” And she claimed that the ruling comes amid a “backlash to the

movement for liberty and equality for gender and sexual minorities." {eoa}