

Megachurch pastor Kirbyjon H. Caldwell sentenced to prison

by [Juan A. Lozano](#) in the [February 10, 2021](#) issue



(AP Photo / David J. Phillip)

Kirbyjon H. Caldwell, a Texas megachurch pastor and former spiritual adviser to two US presidents, has been sentenced to six years in prison for bilking investors out of millions of dollars.

Caldwell, who in March 2020 pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud, was the senior pastor of Houston's Windsor Village United Methodist Church, which has about 14,000 members. He's been a spiritual adviser to Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama.

According to federal prosecutors, Caldwell and Gregory A. Smith, a Shreveport-based investment adviser, used their clout and influence to persuade people to invest about \$3.5 million in historical Chinese bonds. The bonds were reportedly

issued by the former Republic of China which lost power to the Communist government in 1949. The bonds aren't recognized by China's current government and have no investment value.

Caldwell used about \$900,000 he received from the scheme to maintain his lifestyle and pay down credit cards and mortgages, according to the Justice Department. Caldwell has a master's degree from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and had worked in the financial industry.

In November, Smith was also sentenced to six years in prison.

In a video posted on Facebook, Floyd LeBlanc, chairman of the Windsor Village Church Family Personnel Committee, said Caldwell has taken full responsibility and paid full restitution to all the victims.

LeBlanc also described Caldwell as a victim for choosing the wrong business partners.

"We're very disappointed that Mr. Caldwell's contributions to society and his extraordinary efforts to make every victim whole resulted in a sentence that is disappointing," LeBlanc said.

Caldwell is set to report to federal prison on June 22. —Associated Press