

April 13, 1958

Rapid Growth Marks Union Association

HOUSTON--(BP)--Seventy-one new churches and 77 new missions in 10 years is the growth record for Union Baptist Association, which includes Houston and surrounding cities. The association has 156 churches and 27 missions, with a total 135,000 members.

Association churches have reported from 6,000 to 7,000 baptisms annually during the past five years. This is 10 per cent of the Southern Baptist Convention baptisms in Texas.

Ross Dillon became the association's executive secretary in 1948. At that time the annual budget was \$15,000 and Houston's population was increasing at the rate of 5,000 new residents a month.

One of Dillon's first jobs was to establish a program of securing building sites for new churches and missions. Older churches were asked to buy from four to 10 acres in areas which would be developed at a future date into residential sections.

This year, the association's budget is \$157,000. A loan fund for purchasing church property has been set up and the association has a one-year-old foundation to provide funds for church construction.

The association's "30,000 movement" goals include 50 new churches and 100 new missions by 1964.

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Houston Baptist School Potential Said Great

HOUSTON--(BP)--A \$3 million building and operating fund during 1959 and on-campus students by 1961 are goals for a new Baptist college in Houston, Tex.

Because of Baptist growth and the number of potential college students, Houston Baptists expect the college to have the largest enrolment of any Southern Baptist college by 1975.

A Houston college committee is now completing arrangements for a 200-acre campus site with no cost to Baptists. A 380-acre tract located on a freeway 13 miles from the city is being purchased by Union Baptist Association.

180 acres of this amount will be sold for development. Profit from the sale is expected to pay for the remaining 200 acres for the college campus, Union Association leaders said.

The proposed Houston college began with the 1953 survey of student potential and needs for a college in the area. Other new Texas Baptist colleges are being planned for Dallas and San Antonio.

Freeman Beets, then with Southern Baptist Education Commission, was employed to make the needs survey.

Meanwhile, the Baptist General Convention of Texas set minimum requirements of a \$1-1/2 million campus and a \$1-1/2 million endowment fund for new educational institutions to be owned and operated by the convention.

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Church At 5:30 P.M.?
9 In Texas Trying It

DALLAS--(BP)--Visitors to the evening worship service at a church here arrived promptly at 7:30 p.m., only to learn to their amazement that the service had been over for more than an hour.

What they didn't know was that the church is one of nine in Texas Baptist circles that has started holding its Sunday evening worship at an earlier hour.

Churches begin their services at 5, 5:30, or 6 p.m., attempting to solve a perennial attendance problem at night services. Some of the churches hold Training Union after the service instead of before.

For most the new starting time is an experiment, and already one church has gone back to the former starting time. But comments by pastors in a feature in the Baptist Standard, Texas Baptist weekly newspaper, indicate there are advantages to the earlier hour.

Belmont Baptist Church, Odessa, Tex., reported as much as 50 per cent increases in Training Union attendance, and other churches as much as 15 or 20 per cent increases.

Sterling Price, pastor, University Baptist Church, Abilene, Tex., said "I go into the pulpit at 5:30 greatly refreshed and invigorated. Under the old plan of waiting around or worrying about Training Union promotional difficulties, I was oftentimes utterly fatigued of body and mind before entering my pulpit."

J. Conally Evans, pastor of the Odessa church, wrote "The early service offers better opportunity for radio and television time, and music is available from other churches without disturbing their services."

Among disadvantages of the new time were an early supper hour for worshippers, late arrivals at the service, reduction in choir attendance, and a conflict with rural families.

The church which dropped the experiment reported conflict with rural families in the church and youth choirs.

Pastor of another church, however, declared "Our people are not awakened by the crowing of the rooster nor do they plan to go to bed by the swish of milk in a bucket.

"They are shift workers, and their lives are determined by the blowing of a plant whistle more than anything else. For that reason, this change fits our situation very well."

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3 Sites In Chicago
Bought For Churches

CHICAGO--(BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has recently bought three "excellent sites" for church buildings in Chicago suburbs, according to E. H. Moore, Carbondale, associate executive secretary, Illinois Baptist State Association.

The Home Mission Board, as a part of its Big Cities project, has allocated \$200,000 for city mission work in the Chicago metropolitan area this year.

Moore said the new churches which occupy the three new sites will eventually repay the Home Mission Board the amount it cost the Board to buy the property.

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State Paper Features
\$1 Million Churches

ALEXANDRIA, La.--(BP)--Million-dollar churches were featured recently in the Baptist Message, publication of Louisiana Baptist Convention here.

Nine churches in the state have property and buildings valued at more than \$1 million. The feature included pictures of the churches, inside and out, the pastors' pictures, and a brief sketch written about the churches.

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1100 Churches In Great
Lakes Area; Goal 1700

RIVERDALE, Ill.--(BP)--The 1100th Southern Baptist church in the Great Lakes states came into being recently in this Chicago suburb.

The new church adopted the name Calvary Baptist Church and called Clarence Liverett as pastor. The Riverdale church is a former mission of the church in Harvey, Ill., another Chicago suburb.

The 24 charter members of the new church include 17 former Alabamans, four Tennesseans, two North Carolinans, and one Illinois native.

Principal message at the church's organization was brought by Fred Hubbs, Detroit, executive secretary of Michigan Baptist Convention. Noel M. Taylor, Carbondale, executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist State Association, spoke on Southern Baptist growth in the eight Great Lakes states.

Taylor predicted by 1964 there will be 1700 Southern Baptist churches in these states. (The year 1964 is the date on which Southern Baptists hope to reach a six-year goal of establishing 30,000 new churches or missions.)

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BAPTIST FEATURES

Released by BAPTIST PRESS
127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn.

April 13, 1958

Chair Of Bible Meets
Higher Education Need

(Picture accompanies)

CARBONDALE, Ill.--(BP)--The building clearly marked Baptist Foundation stands in the center of a bustling and obviously rapidly-growing state university campus.

To its left, on the lot next door, is the home of the university president. To its right, on a large tract across the street, there is a modern demonstration school where teaching methods are observed by students taking education courses.

Dormitories and classroom buildings, some recently constructed, some a score of years or more old, are in sight in all directions.

The Baptist building was constructed before the G. I. Bill in post-war years began the ever-increasing trek of students to the nation's campuses.

The state university, like most all others, is having growing pains. It has 6000 students. Forecasters have said it will not level off until the 15,000 mark is reached.

This institution---Southern Illinois University at Carbondale---is the second largest state university in Illinois. The only one topping it is the 25,000-student University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

Southern Baptists in Illinois, who do not believe they can support a separate denominational college, launched the Baptist Foundation in the late 1930s.

The words "Baptist Foundation" have some local significance because at both University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University there have long been student religious foundations.

But the term in Baptist life has come to mean a financial agency handling trusts, wills, and annuities rather than ministering to students. So the name Baptist Foundation in big letters on the front of the building is going to come down.

The name of the Baptist institution has already been made Southern Illinois College of the Bible. It offers Bible and religious education for college credit and courses in music without college credit.

The College of the Bible provides some dormitory facilities for both men and women. It has a cafeteria and chapel in its classroom and office building.

The Baptist Student Union also has its offices there and works in close cooperation with the program of the College of the Bible.

George L. Johnson, president of the College of the Bible, says "The Southern Illinois University administration tells us frankly they like us because our program raises the moral tone of the campus and increases enrolment."

The courses offered at the College of the Bible are not duplicating any courses offered by the state university. However, the university has several other religious foundations of other denominations either offering Bible courses or qualified to offer them.

The university catalogue lists the courses offered in Bible and religious subjects for college credit.

By employing professors of academic standing equal to that of the university its lf, and by making its courses match the academic par of university courses, the College of the Bible is able to secure accreditation of its courses from SIU directly.

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Courses may be used as elective credit or in some cases even toward a minor.

Baptists own the property, employ and pay salaries of their own staff, and decide on courses to offer. The state university has no say-so over doctrinal and other religious teachings in the courses.

The College of the Bible in Carbondale is but one of a number within the family of Southern Baptist higher education. In general, this type of education is known as a "chair of Bible."

Not only is it operating in states having no Baptist college, but some states with Baptist colleges want a chair on the state university campus. The "chair of Bible" is designed for the state university campus.

Where state universities will not accept chair of Bible courses directly for credit, a means has been found for students to obtain credit without inconvenience. The chair of Bible arranges with a Baptist college to accredit its work. The state university is willing to accept the credits from the Baptist college as transfer credit.

In at least one case---at Eastern New Mexico University, Portales---the university not only accredits the work of the chair of Bible but allows credit toward the student's major field of study.

The College or chair of the Bible meets several educational needs:

(1) Baptist higher education in a state without a Baptist college; (2) Baptist higher education on a state university campus without infringing on church-state separation, and (3) Reaching with religious instruction those Baptist students who prefer to attend a state university.

Baptist educators point out that a chair of Bible should not be considered a substitute for a full-scale Baptist college.

It has certain limitations too, among them (1) It is by its very nature almost exclusively patterned for a state university campus; (2) The chair of Bible can not move into course areas where it would compete with the state university, and (3) Some state universities are reluctant to work with chairs of Bible on the close basis found at Carbondale and Portales.

Many Southern Baptist leaders have received part of their education at chairs of Bible. George W. Schroeder, Brotherhood Commission executive secretary, attended the one at Carbondale, and Hoyt Welch, president of Baptist Convention of New Mexico, the one at Portales. There are many other such cases.

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Baptist Press

Cutines to Picture:

BIBLE-TEACHING CENTER---The Baptist Foundation building at Southern Illinois University is a Bible-teaching center in a state university campus setting. Its courses in religious education and Bible reach over a hundred students a year. The words Baptist Foundation are from the past; the institution is formally Southern Illinois College of the Bible.--Baptist Press Photo.

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