

May 1, 1960

Convention To Complete
Work Of Reorganization

MIAMI BEACH, Fla.--(BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention moves into Miami Beach's new exhibition hall May 17-20 without expecting lengthy discussion on questions known to be coming before it.

But since any messenger to the Convention may bring up matters--even without advance notice--the possibility is always there that an unexpected issue may be debated.

The Convention's survey committee has made its report. This report, presented at Houston, Tex., in 1958 and at Louisville, Ky., last year, occupied attention of messengers at those sessions.

The 1960 Convention will be asked to implement the details following the broad action taken during the past two years. Some follow-through includes constitution and bylaw changes to activate the survey recommendations.

It also includes electing members of the Stewardship Commission. A new agency, the Stewardship Commission was created by successive votes at Houston and at Louisville. After the new commission is elected, it will provide a staff to handle the work of the new agency.

The Convention's Executive Committee will present the suggested program under which the new commission will work. It is to encourage increased giving by Southern Baptists and to urge Baptists to remember Christian causes in their wills and annuities.

The Relief and Annuity Board of the Convention was to have had a change in name voted on at Louisville. Due to an oversight, it could not be handled at this session. Messengers at Miami Beach will vote on the proposal that the term "Relief" be dropped and that it be known as the Annuity Board.

The Executive Committee also will present the 1961 Convention Cooperative Program budget for adoption. This budget, which supports the operations and capital needs of the agencies, slightly exceeds \$20 million.

Because of the need to reserve hotel space and a suitable auditorium, the Convention selects meeting sites well in advance. The Miami Beach Convention will vote on the 1965 site. Dallas has been recommended to the Committee on Time, Place, and Preacher.

Standing in the background are many possible questions. Only Convention time will tell if any actually develops. Any of the 10,000 to 15,000 messengers could propose a resolution or other action.

About eight Baptist state annual conventions took some type of stand on the religion-and-presidency issue last fall. Because of this, it is possible some messenger could ask the Convention also to take a stand.

Supporters of admitting messengers from Baptist churches in Canada could re-introduce their amendment to seat these messengers, presently barred by the constitution. Such an amendment was introduced once, but withdrawn because of a flaw in wording.

Taxation of church property is another potential business matter. The city of Nashville has asked the Sunday School Board of the Convention there to pay taxes on properties for the first time. The board objects, saying that property in religious use is legally exempt.

The Convention's Executive Committee looked into the matter of taxation during the past year. It reported the matter will be explored further in the

fall when Baptist leaders gather in Washington, D. C., for a conference on religious liberty and church-state affairs.

The taxation has had an important side effect. The Sunday School Board planned to extensively remodel one of its buildings in Nashville as an office building for the Executive Committee and other Baptist agencies also located in Nashville.

This is one of the properties on which taxes are asked. This has caused the Executive Committee to reconsider moving into the building. The Executive Committee has considered sites other than Nashville for relocation.

A Baptist editor in Washington recommended the nation's capital as the site for relocation. A midwestern editor, however, suggests moving in that direction.

If any move away from Nashville is made, it probably will be voted on at Miami Beach.

The Convention is expected to follow custom and to re-elect W. Ramsey Polard of Memphis, Tenn., as president. He is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis.

The Convention will hear reports that its Sunday school enrolment in churches--7,276,502--is largest among non-Catholic denominations; that the churches baptized a record 429,000 converts last year, and that church membership totals 9,485,276, second only to The Methodist Church. Giving too reached a record of more than \$453 million to local church, state convention, and Southern Baptist Convention activities.

Each church in the Convention is entitled to a messenger to the Convention. Depending on membership and contributions by the church, it may have more messengers with a maximum of 10 from any one church.

Messengers do not bind the church from which they come to any action of the Convention, hence the word messenger rather than delegate.

The annual reports of all the agencies will be printed in the Book of Reports, which will be available to each messenger for \$1.

Many Ways To Promote
30,000 Churches, Missions

ATLANTA, Ga.--(BP)--Almost as many ways of promoting Southern Baptists' 30,000 Movement are turning up as there are groups participating, according to C. C. Warren, Charlotte, N. C., director of the Movement.

From all over the Convention reports come of unique ways of getting churches to help reach the goal of 10,000 new churches and 20,000 new missions by 1964, says Warren, who challenged Southern Baptists to the task during his last term as Convention president in 1956.

Fifteen field secretaries for the Movement are at work in Florida; most of them hold other responsibilities directly related to the establishment of new preaching stations.

"Our men are swinging down the stretch and really getting the job done," says John Maguire, Jacksonville, executive secretary of Florida Baptist Convention. He reported 259 missions after the first three months of 1960. From 162 of these missions which have full-time pastors, buildings, and programs, churches are rapidly being organized, adds Maguire. Missions in institutions in Florida are expected to increase with the present emphasis, and Maguire anticipates 300 to 350 missions in the state by July.

Gaining momentum each year, the 30,000 Movement has seen 9500 new Southern Baptist churches and missions started, Warren reports.

Many of the churches are using signs identifying themselves as "one of the 30,000," he says, and "it would be fine if more of our churches would."

Church community surveys are being used by associations, cities, regions, and states to determine needs for new churches in terms of numbers and locations. Such a graphic picture of the need for churches moves many congregations to action, according to Warren and other leaders of church extension.

Churches of all denominations can accommodate only 20,000 of the 120,000 people in Johnson County, Kans., says Roger W. Knapton, pastor of Bethel, Kans., First Baptist Church, and chairman of the associational missions committee. "Our association will pay the expenses of a pastor to fly in and see a possible mission opportunity here," writes Knapton. Lack of leadership for new churches is given as the hold-back there, as in other areas.

Missouri's goal for 1960 is 106; 28 were reported during the first two months. The state paper of Missouri Baptists, Word and Way, has started a monthly honor roll of new churches and missions having received certificates of award for participating in the 30,000 Movement.

"I'd like to see such an honor roll in all the Baptist state papers," says Arthur Rutledge, Atlanta, director of the missions division of the denomination's Home Mission Board.

For some, the 30,000 Movement is just a continuation of what they were already doing. Seventeen churches were organized in 17 years in Baltimore Baptist Association, Maryland. Those 17 churches have a third of the resident members and give a third of the total offerings received by the association. During 1959, 10 new missions were started there.

Baptist History Gets Ally From Catalogue

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Seekers of Baptist historical material will soon have a valuable ally--a Union Catalogue of Baptist Materials.

Davis C. Woolley, Nashville, executive secretary, Southern Baptist Historical Commission, said such a catalogue is being prepared now. He predicts within a year 40,000 cards will be included in the new catalogue. Already 15,000 cards are on file in the Dargan-Carver Library here.

The Union Catalogue of Baptist Materials will list theses, books, manuscripts, and biographical material on file in Baptist seminaries, Baptist state historical collections, and at other locations.

All a researcher will have to do is to consult the union catalogue to find out where the material he needs is on file.

Woolley reported a portable microfilm unit has been taken to several Southern Baptist seminary libraries, and has copied their cards on Baptist materials. Other libraries will follow.

The Union Catalogue of Baptist Materials has been in the planning stage for at least four years. The catalogue, through microfilm, will be available to other libraries where research is conducted.

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Virginia Board Adopts Budget, Office Plans

RICHMOND, Va.--(BP)--The Virginia Baptist board of missions and education here approved preliminary plans for a new Baptist state office building costing more than half a million dollars.

The air-conditioned, two-story future Baptist state office building will house administrative offices of the board, the state Woman's Missionary Union, the state newspaper, Religious Herald, and other Baptist agencies.

Parking space for 100 cars will be provided. Site of the proposed new building is at the corner of Monument Ave. and Willow Lawn in Richmond. The \$527,000 cost estimate does not include furnishings.

The state board also adopted a 1961 budget for the Baptist General Association of Virginia. The \$3,350,000 budget will be presented to the association for approval at the annual session this fall.

The 1960 budget of the general association is \$3,125,000.

The 1961 budget will have a straight 65 - 35 per cent distribution between the amount for state Baptist work and the amount forwarded through the Cooperative Program to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Sixty-five per cent of receipts above \$3,350,000 would be used to pay for the Baptist office building.

Educational institutions and the general state mission program would receive the largest allocations in the budget for next year.

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