

May 28, 1960

Messengers Report Action To Home Folks

MIAMI BEACH, Fla.--(BP)--The record number of messengers to the 103rd annual Southern Baptist Convention have reached home. They are telling their neighbors and fellow church members that the Convention:

- 1) Devoted more time to inspiration periods;
- 2) Took a sober view of world affairs when the Summit failed at Paris;
- 3) Concerned itself over the man who will next serve as President of the United States;
- 4) Expressed confidence in its leaders;
- 5) Made plans for future church extension and contributions.

Pressroom consensus of the major developments at the new exhibition hall here, one of the best auditorium accommodations, showed these items:

--Sober reflections on the Summit failure. A resolution from the Convention's Christian Life Commission said, "We believe that this crisis emphasizes the need for Christian patience in negotiating for peace."

Evangelist Billy Graham felt Russian Premier Khrushchev's actions "plunged the world into the greatest crisis since the crucifixion of Christ."

--President Ramsey Pollard, re-elected to his second term by the convention, declared in his president's address that he would not keep quiet on the religion-and-presidency issue.

Pollard, of Memphis, Tenn., urged Roman Catholics to assure others "from the very highest heights of their hierarchy that they believe in complete and absolute religious liberty."

Graham, at a press conference, refused to name his presidential preference other than to say the nation, in his opinion, needs a man of "experience."

A resolution adopted by the Convention did not name a candidate or a religious group but stated that "when a public official is inescapably bound by the dogma and demands of his church, he can not consistently separate himself from these." It went on to describe a church which "maintains a position in open conflict with our established and constituted American pattern of life" relating to religious liberty, church-state separation, marriage and the family, public schools, and use of public funds for sectarian purposes.

--The failure of the race issue to be debated. Always a possibility in recent times because of tensions in America, this question could have come. The convention accepted its Christian Life Commission annual report without comment, a report including this statement:

"In the light of recent efforts on the part of Negro citizens in many areas in securing equal rights, especially the right to vote, the Commission urges our Southern Baptist people to make use of every opportunity to help Negro citizens to secure these rights through peaceful and legal means and to thoughtfully oppose any customs which may tend to humiliate them in any way."

--Confidence expressed in leadership. A Houston, Tex., minister told reporters he would introduce a resolution asking the Sunday School Board to "sever all relations and connections" with the National Council of Churches in preparing Sunday school lessons.

Before he could introduce the resolution, James L. Sullivan of Nashville, executive secretary of the board, declared there was as much connection with the National Council of Churches as with the Atomic Energy Commission.

He said all lessons are written by Baptists, even though before writing them the board works with several other denominations, some in the Council, some not.

When Sullivan indirectly asked for a vote of confidence in the board's policies, or selection of new board leadership, the messengers responded with heavy applause as indication of their confidence in the board.

---Closing each period with inspirational messages or programs. Sermons closed each meeting period except for the Foreign Mission Board report which annually provides an inspirational peak.

---Approving the \$20 million-plus Cooperative Program budget to support Convention agency work next year and electing members of a Stewardship Commission to promote this financial plan of the Convention.

---Continuing with the Baptist Jubilee Advance and the convention's effort to establish 30,000 new churches or missions by 1964, with the reminder that at the present pace the 30,000 goal will not be attained.

---Assurance by President Pollard and a former Convention vice-president that they know of no seminary specifically where unorthodox teachings prevail. A newspaper report had named one of the Convention's six seminaries as target of study, but former Vice-President John H. Haldeman of Miami denied making the reference attributed to him.

The fear of the American Association of Theological Schools crept into this picture, after lying dormant since 12 professors lost their positions at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary more than a year ago.

---Failure to relocate some Baptist offices now housed in Nashville. This had been expected to be one of the main items of business. Although a subcommittee of the Convention's Executive Committee recommended a move to Memphis, the full committee did not approve it. It will be studied again in September. Any vote will probably come at the St. Louis Convention next year.

Several small Convention agencies, also located in Nashville, are expected to move with the Executive Committee, if a move occurs.

---Picking Billy Graham to deliver the convention sermon in 1961. Graham spoke once to the convention, twice to associated groups at Miami Beach.

Registration secretary Joe W. Burton of Nashville, making a recount of cards, declared that 13,612 messengers registered. This set a new record, surpassing the 12,976 enrolled at Houston, Tex., for 1953 Convention.

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Western Carolina Man
Rural Pastor Of Year

(5-28-60)

PINEVILLE, Ky.--(BP)--M. D. Smith, pastor, Hominy Baptist Church, Candler, N. C., was chosen as the mountain minister of the year by Clear Creek Baptist School here.

The presentation said that Smith, "in 15 years of service as pastor of Hominy Baptist Church in Candler has been able through his faithfulness in the discharge of his ministerial calling and the exercise of special talents and gifts to lead his church to a well-deserved recognition, both state and southwide; having encouraged the Hominy Baptist Church to become a fully organized and functioning "four star" church, with a growth in membership, church plant and organization, and total giving so marked as to become a worthy pattern and example for the rural churches of North Carolina and of the Southern Baptist Convention . . . "

The presentation was made by D. M. Aldridge, president of Clear Creek School.

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Folks & facts.....

.....David E. Mason, former pastor, First Baptist Church, Jonesboro, La., has become pastor of First Baptist Church, Alice, Tex.

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Card-Counter Says Miami
Beach Had Record 13,612

NASHVILLE--(BP)--The card-counting machine took over here to determine if the 1960 Southern Baptist Convention had a record registration. When it finished the job, it showed 13,612 messengers--toppling the previous record of 12,976 set in 1953.

Convention Secretary Joe W. Burton of Nashville announced the record registration for sessions at Miami Beach, Fla., exhibition hall.

The 1953 session, where the record was set earlier, was held in Houston, Tex.

Observers attributed the record registration to good auditorium facilities, abundance of first class hotels renting rooms at reasonable prices, and good programming of convention sessions.

The 1955 registration in Miami--using a makeshift seaplane hangar of the mainland rather than the beach--was only 10,837.

Florida led the states in high attendance with 1671. North Carolina followed with 1588, then Georgia, 1330; South Carolina, 1120; Texas, 1100; Tennessee, 1075, and Alabama, 1036.

Further attendance breakdown showed:

Arizona, 23; Arkansas, 314; District of Columbia, 74; California, 73; Colorado, 34; Illinois, 181; Indiana, 51; Kansas, 50; Kentucky, 682; Louisiana, 460; Maryland, 179; Michigan, 25; Mississippi, 621; Missouri, 417; New Mexico, 62; Ohio, 97; Oklahoma, 307; Oregon and Washington, 4; Virginia, 982; Alaska, 2; Hawaii, 6, other, 48.

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James R. Staples Edits
Arizona State Paper

(5-28-60)

Pictures being sent Baptist editors

PHOENIX, Ariz.--(BP)--James R. Staples, pastor, North Phoenix Baptist Church here and former president of the Baptist General Convention of Arizona, will edit the convention's weekly newspaper.

He will succeed J. Kelly Simmons, now of Denver, Colo., as editor of the Baptist Beacon. Simmons resigned in the spring to become editor of the Rocky Mountain Baptist, published in Colorado.

The Baptist Beacon has one of the highest percentages of subscribers through the every family in the church plan of any Southern Baptist paper.

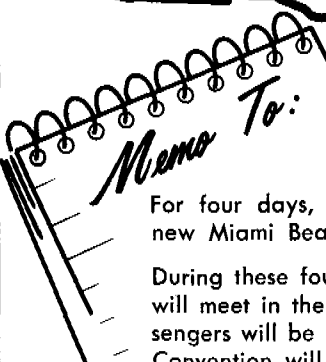
Staples attended the 1960 Southern Baptist Convention session at Miami Beach, Fla., in preparation for accepting the new assignment.

Staples, 40, is a native of Piggott, Ark., and received his education at Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He also attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex.

He was ordained to the ministry at Piggott in 1945. Pastorates in addition to the latest one have been at Harmony Baptist Church, Arkadelphia; First Baptist Church, Pearl River, La., and First Baptist Church, Joiner, Ark.

In Southern Baptist Convention life, Staples has been a member of the Foreign Mission Board and of the Committee on Boards.

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Memo To:

America's Publishers

For four days, May 17-20, an event of major religious significance will take place in the new Miami Beach Auditorium.

During these four days, 15,000 messengers, representing almost 9,500,000 Southern Baptists will meet in the 103rd Session of the Southern Baptist Convention. Among these 15,000 messengers will be members of Baptist churches in your city. What is said and done at this Convention will be of vital interest to hundreds of other people in your city.

In order to insure full coverage, may we suggest that you alert your wire services in Miami in advance? Better even, send your religion editor. You may rest assured of our complete cooperation and assistance. Full pressroom services provided.



J. P. Felt

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
127 9th Ave., No.

Nashville 3, Tennessee



MIAMI
May
17-20