

November 20, 1960

**Kennedy Secures
Arkansas Pledge**

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark.--(BP)--A resolution pledging prayerful support of the new President has passed the Arkansas Baptist State Convention here.

It said:

"Whereas the people of the United States have chosen for President the Hon. John F. Kennedy, be it resolved the Arkansas Baptist State Convention go on record pledging him our prayers and support toward improving the total well-being of our nation and maintaining peace throughtout the world.

"We especially pledge our efforts in the interest of maintaining our cherished American heritage of religious liberty."

The state Baptists were meeting in Fayetteville for the first time since 1908. Because of its size and central location, most conventions gather in Little Rock such as the 1961 one will do Nov. 7-9.

Messengers to the convention adopted a statewide budget of \$1-3/4 million for the coming year. The Southern Baptist Convention portion of it will be 36 per cent.

The largest single budget allocation went to Ouachita Baptist College at Arkadelphia, Ark., the convention's only senior college. It got \$285,797. A resolution approved an executive board survey of Ouachita's financial needs.

The convention created a new agency--the Arkansas Baptist history commission. The new commission succeeds the Arkansas Baptist historical society. It reelected convention President Bernes K. Selph of Benton, Ark.

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**Missionary Council
Reelects Helen Falls**

(11-20-60)

MEMPHIS, Tenn.--(BP)--Miss Helen Falls, associate professor of missions at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, has been re-elected chairman of the Southern Baptist Missionary Education Council here.

Re-elected vice-chariman was Edward Hurt, Jr., Memphis, associate secretary of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. The new secretary is Miss Laurella Owens, Birmingham, an editorial associate of the Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Auxiliary.

The council members voted to meet in 1961 at New Orleans Seminary. The dates are Nov. 1-3.

The council is composed of about 50 representatives from 14 Southern Baptist Convention agencies who devote a three-day period annually as consultants for the preparation of missionary education materials.

The mission books are prepared under the supervision of the Convention's Foreign and Home Mission Boards. The books on foreign missions are normally taught in November and the books on home missions in February.

The foreign mission emphasis next year is on Europe, while the home mission theme is "Our Baptist Heritage in Missions."

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Florida Election
Sets Precedents

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.--(BP)--Florida Baptist Convention here elected a full slate of lay officers to serve during the coming year. Included is the first woman ever chosen for convention office.

J. Ollie Edmunds of DeLand, president of Florida Baptists' Stetson University, is the new convention president. William K. Simmons, educational director of the host First Baptist Church here, is first vice-president.

It marked the first time a church staff officer other than the pastor has been elected to office in the state.

The second vice-president is Mrs. J. H. Lockhart of Tampa, She is current president of the state's Woman's Missionary Union.

It is the first time in convention history laymen have filled the top three elective positions.

In other action, Florida convention gave "prayerful support" to John F. Kennedy, accepted a new Baptist student center, and conditionally received a site for a new Baptist college.

The resolution also pledged the Nation's President-elect backing in carrying out campaign promises to preserve church-state separation in America.

First Baptist Church of Jacksonville made an outright gift of a new student center at Jacksonville University. The church spent about \$105,000 for the building and furniture. The convention will operate the center in the future.

A survey being made of Florida Baptist higher education will also consider the use of 80 acres of land near Clearwater, Fla., offered by W. C. Overcash of Dunedin, Fla.

Florida Convention adopted a budget of \$2½ million with "preferred deductions" of \$482,455. The balance after deductions will be shared equally between state Baptist work and that of the Southern Baptist Convention.

To give more state Baptists an opportunity to serve the convention, the body set up four service committees of 44 persons each---one representative from each local association of Baptist churches.

The four committees are publicity, public affairs, fellowship, and vocational guidance.

Thus in each association will be a committee member to publicize work of Florida Baptists, to inform local Baptists on public affairs, to promote attendance at the annual state conventions, and to guide youth interested in church-related vocations.

It was believed no committee member will have a dual assignment, meaning 176 more Florida Baptists will be used in committee service.

The convention voted to hold its 1961 session Nov. 14-16 in Orlando.

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Ohio Supports Kennedy,
Commends Its Newspaper

(11-20-60)

CINCINNATI, Ohio--(BP)--John F. Kennedy "clearly stated" his position for church-state separation and should have the support of Baptists as he serves as United States President.

This was contained in a resolution adopted here by the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio. The convention adopted another resolution commending its Baptist newspaper for informing people about violations of religious liberty by the Roman Catholic Church.

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The Baptist Messenger, state denominational journal, reported these violations in editorials before the recent National election.

The first resolution said that Kennedy's statements for religious liberty are "in keeping with the historic Baptist position on separation of church and state."

Ohio Southern Baptists adopted a budget of \$440,847 for next year. Of the anticipated \$289,247 Cooperative Program funds from its 216 affiliated churches, 23 per cent will be forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1960, the S B C share has been 21 per cent of Cooperative Program state receipts.

Messengers elected C. Hoge Hockensmith, Columbus, Ohio, minister, as their new convention president. The Ohio convention also includes Baptists in western New York and western Pennsylvania and in northern West Virginia.

It selected Columbus--its state office city--as site for the 1961 meeting Nov. 14-16.

It approved an extensive remodeling of the present state office building. The offices are located in a residence-type building, which will be converted to a normal office structure. It also will be enlarged. The total cost is estimated to be \$82,000.

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Kentucky Hospitals
To Eliminate Race Bar

(11-20-60)

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--Kentucky Baptists have instructed their three hospitals and school of nursing to eliminate racial barriers.

Henry Beach, Jr., pastor of Ninth and O Baptist Church here, moved that the hospitals in Louisville, Lexington, and Paducah "fully integrate" their facilities. He moved further that the school of nursing at the local hospital accept all qualified students without regard to race.

The General Association of Baptists in Kentucky here approved Beach's motion and referred the instructions to its hospital commission. The commission supervises operation of the hospitals.

Western Baptist Hospital at Paducah and Central Baptist Hospital, Lexington, already practice partial integration.

Beach was voted down on a companion effort to ask Louisville business places--including hotels, motels, and cafeterias--to practice integration. The general association said it was not its business to interfere in private enterprise.

The motion on Louisville businesses may have been brought as a result of a recent national denominational meeting in Louisville. The Disciples of Christ, criticized some local businesses for segregation policies.

Kentucky association completed action on its survey committee report. Action at the 1960 session will open the way for a change in name from general association to convention.

Messengers deleted the word "congratulate" from a message to President-elect John F. Kennedy. They rejected another clause that might be interpreted as giving him unqualified support.

They substituted instead support of his "every effort to preserve our national heritage." This was believed to mean his pledge to keep church and state separate.

Education was a major topic. The general association, after debate, approved a new formula for sharing financial support among Kentucky Baptist schools. It will be based on enrolment, and on whether the school is a junior or a senior college.

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Supporters of Bethel College, junior college at Hopkinsville, Ky., complained the new formula would cut its funds severely. This might mean, they said, closing the school.

Verlin C. Kruschwitz, Elizabethtown, Ky., minister, was chosen moderator (president) for the coming year. The next convention will meet Nov. 14-16 at Danville, Ky.

The 1961 general association budget is \$2½ million with the Southern Baptist Convention getting 35 per cent of it.

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South Carolina Lets
Fraternities Stay

(11-20-60)

CHARLESTON, S. C.--(BP)--It was a tense, close decision but Furman University won't have to abolish its social fraternities.

The 140th session of the South Carolina Baptist Convention here allowed the Baptist four-year college at Greenville, S. C., to retain its fraternity life. Only 33 votes of 1325 cast gave the majority to those supporting the social groups.

The fraternity issue has lived with South Carolina Baptists for decades. Debate was long and bitter. An unsuccessful effort was made to overturn the vote result by charging irregularities in enrolment of messengers.

The hotly-fought issue dominated a number of far-reaching moves taken during the session in this coastal city where the convention organized in 1821 with nine members.

Other top developments included:

1. The announced retirement plans after the 1961 session of convention Executive Secretary Charles F. Sims of Columbia, who has served in this post 14 years;
2. Convention approval of plans for the first Baptist college in lower South Carolina--a junior college to be built on 500 acres 15 miles from Charleston.
3. Appointment of a public affairs committee with a mandate to defend accepted Baptist principles from attack and to outline Baptist beliefs on specified legislative issues.
4. Final approval of a \$584,000 headquarters building to be erected in Columbia next year, and of a reorganization and enlargement of the headquarters staff.
5. Adoption of a \$3,350,000 budget goal for 1961, an increase of \$100,000 over the 1960 goal.
6. Setting up of a special committee to combat the use of profanity on television. It will be done by informing the churches of the increasing problem and by seeking a solution through protests and, if necessary, through demands for enforcement of existing laws.
7. Giving Anderson College, Anderson, S. C., a vote of confidence. It erased the probationary status imposed two years ago and granted permission for a \$250,000 federal loan for construction of a dormitory.
8. Elevation of one of the convention's vice-presidents, John Murdoch of Greenwood, to the presidency. This unusual move was interpreted as a tribute to Murdoch's skill and fairness in presiding in the absence of President M. C. Donnan, North Greenville, who is ill.

Murdoch is associated with the state Baptist home for children.

The fraternity battle was set last year when the convention directed Furman's trustees to report in detail at this session what they intended to do about the request, made in 1955, that the Greek letter societies be banned from the campus.

Dotson M. Nelson, Jr., of Greenville, chairman of Furman trustees, told the convention that all undesirable aspects of fraternity life had been eliminated. He proposed that fraternities remain on the campus under trustee control.

Cullen B. Crook, another Greenville pastor, made a substitute motion that the convention direct the trustees to eliminate fraternities by next September.

Crook's motion failed to carry by a vote of 646 to 679. Several dozen of the votes which defeated the motion were cast by Furman students who asked their churches to elect them messengers so they could take part in the decision.

Hours after the voting an attempt was made to contest the result on the ground of irregularities in the enrolling of voting messengers.

It was charged that there were more messengers enrolled from at least two churches than the constitution allows. In this connection some bitter, personal words were exchanged.

But the effort collapsed when leaders of the church singled out publicly said their congregation had named a number of alternate messengers who enrolled but did not vote.

In the aftermath, the convention voted to ask its general board to consider sending registration cards to the churches before next year's convention and issuing badges to the messengers.

The trustees defended the present fraternity life at Furman on the grounds that they have complied with all requests made of them, that members live in the dormitories under rules applying to all students, that there are no University-sponsored dances and that fraternity men are above average in scholarship and average in church attendance.

Next year's convention sessions will be held in Greenville Nov. 14-16 with at least one session being held in the new auditorium at Furman University.

The convention took no action on the race question but the messengers heard Roy McClain of Atlanta say that it would be unthinkable for South Carolina or Georgia to close the public schools.

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Alabama Approves New State Building

(11-20-60)

BIRMINGHAM--(BP)--The 138th annual session of Alabama Baptist State Convention here ok'd a new \$800,000 Baptist Building in Montgomery, Ala.

It also approved several other building programs---\$1.5 million to be borrowed by Howard College here and Judson College, Marion, Ala., for dormitories, and establishment of a Baptist college in Mobile, Ala.

It adopted a record budget of more than \$4 million for the year. This includes \$3,347,000 in Cooperative Program funds. According to the breakdown recommended by the state executive board, Southern Baptist Convention causes will receive approximately \$1,353,000 via the Cooperative Program.

Early in the convention, Leon Macon, Birmingham, editor of the Alabama Baptist, state denominational newspaper, submitted a resolution pledging full co-operation to President-elect John F. Kennedy.

At the same time, it reaffirmed belief in the principle of separation of church and state. On the closing day of the meeting, the resolutions committee did not report out the Macon resolution.

According to a spokesman for the resolutions committee, "It was felt best not to bring the matter up at this time." Earlier in the week, a newspaper in the convention city erroneously reported that "Baptists Endorse Kennedy." Although this mistake was later corrected, the feeling was that the resultant confusion on the resolution had nullified its effect.

G. W. Riddle, of Gadsden, shocked the messengers by saying, "This country is no longer a Protestant Nation." Riddle, vice-president of the convention, and chairman of the state Christian life commission, said, "We must expect to live in a non-Protestant climate unlike the one we have been used to and unlike the one which has been our heritage."

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Riddle warned, "We can expect an anti-religious surge coming on a sophisticated level and quite a bit of cynicism about pastors as well."

President elected was Howard M. Reaves, pastor of First Baptist Church, Mobile.

The new Baptist office building is slated for completion within the next two years. It will be located on the Southern highway bypass in Montgomery. To date, \$500,000 for the new building is on hand, and "the building can be erected without debt from funds in hand, the sale of the present building, and funds that may be accumulated," said state leaders.

In the development of the Mobile college, the significant move was seen in authorization for the college steering committee to lease a site for the building of the college. It will be located in the Spring Hill area of Mobile.

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North Carolina Plans
Special School Meet

(11-20-60)

ASHEVILLE, N. C.--(BP)--North Carolina Baptists have agreed to hold a special session early in 1961 to consider a fund drive for their colleges.

Messengers to the 1960 regular session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina here set no specific date. They left it up to their convention's general board to appoint a time and place next spring.

Chief topic of the special session will be launching a campaign for \$45 million to meet the "minimum immediate needs" of the seven schools. Some state Baptists feel the figure is too high.

The Baptist state convention adopted a resolution offered by Wendell G. Davis of Charlotte pertaining to support for John F. Kennedy. (Davis had introduced a church-state resolution at the 1960 Southern Baptist Convention which, in modified form, was adopted at Miami Beach, Fla. It pertained to the then upcoming election.)

Davis presented the resolution here after the convention's resolution committee had declined to report out a similar statement. It said that North Carolina Baptists "assure President-elect Kennedy of our full co-operation in his efforts to keep our government true to its historic principles of religious liberty and complete separation of church and state . . ."

It also pledged "remembrance in prayers as we together seek to make our country an instrument for the promotion of peace and complete religious liberty among the nations of the earth."

Evangelist Billy Graham of Montreat, N. C., prefaced a sermon later by telling North Carolinians "You have done the right thing" in adopting this resolution. He was applauded as were the two messengers who had introduced resolutions on the subject.

Graham, referring to race trouble in New Orleans, asked, "Is it love in our hearts that causes us to throw rocks and stones and insults at other people simply because they have a different color or creed?"

Robert E. Seymour, Chapel Hill, N. C., pastor, proposed that North Carolina Baptist colleges "speed up" opening their doors to all races. The resolutions committee said--and the convention agreed--that a 1955 convention decision leaving it to college trustees should be upheld.

None of the schools is integrated now.

C. B. Deane, Rockingham, N. C., layman, was re-elected convention president. The convention will hold its regular '61 session in November at Greensboro.

Its budget will be \$4.4 million with the Southern Baptist Convention receiving 34 per cent for worldwide missions.

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Oklahomans Wrestle
With Word Problem

OKLAHOMA CITY--(BP)--Oklahoma Baptists wrestled with words as they tried to decide how to draft a resolution concerning John F. Kennedy's election.

After lengthy debate, they decided not to insert a phrase specifically emphasizing "separation of church and state." The messengers to the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma then resolved here:

"Regardless of one's personal position throughout the recent political campaign, we call upon our people to exercise fully their right and responsibility to pray for those in authority in national, state, and local government, and to lend our undivided support to their every effort toward righteous government and the promotion of freedom and peace for all men everywhere."

They voted to pray for the President-elect and to send a copy of this resolution to him.

The convention bogged down on a staff question about their \$5 million hospital in Oklahoma City. It ended with the issue referred to the directors of the general convention.

The convention will operate under a record \$2½ million budget next year, out of which it will send \$1 million through the Cooperative Program to the Southern Baptist Convention.

C. Murray Fuquay, pastor of First Baptist Church, Midwest City, Okla., was elected president of the Oklahomans. They voted to hold their 1961 convention Nov. 14-16 in Tulsa.