

November 12, 1961

**Michigan Sets Goal  
Of 114 New Missions**

GARDEN CITY, Mich. (BP)--Southern Baptists in Michigan have set a goal for 1962 of establishing 114 new missions. The size of the goal is shown by the report there are now 130 churches and missions in the state.

The goal was presented to the 1961 session of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan here.

The convention also adopted a total budget for the coming year of \$207,733. It hopes to forward to the Southern Baptist Convention \$34,118, which is 25 per cent of the Cooperative Program goal.

A report of 1961 budget receipts amplified an appeal by former SBC President Ramsey Pollard of Memphis for the convention to be optimistic. Executive Secretary Fred D. Hubbs of Detroit said receipts from the churches have "shown an incline" lately.

Receipts, which have been trailing 1960 income, now may equal the 1960 sum by the year's end. Contract strikes in the auto industry were said to have interrupted incomes of church members, hence some loss in church collections.

The convention elected Ray Babb, pastor, First Baptist Church, Clio, Mich., president. It voted to meet in Lansing for the next session Nov. 6-7, 1962.

This year's convention, originally scheduled for Lansing, was moved to Garden City while the host church in Lansing completes a building program.

A resolution urged "increased faithfulness" in stewardship of the gospel in light of the "seriousness of world affairs."

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**Prayer In School Hit  
As Unconstitutional**

(11-12-61)

WASHINGTON (BP)--Does separation of church and state bar a school board from directing the recitation by pupils, on a voluntary basis, of a nonsectarian prayer as part of the opening exercises in public schools?

This is the question which the United States Supreme Court is asked to rule upon in a petition filed by five parents of New Hyde Park, N. Y.

The parents, two of whom are Jewish, one Unitarian, one a member of the Society for Ethical Culture, and one a professed non-believer, assert that recitation of the prayer constitutes an effort at "religious education" and should be barred from the public classroom.

The prayer, which was approved in 1951 by the Board of Regents of the New York state school system, and is in use in many public schools in that state, is one sentence long. It declares:

"Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon thee, and we beg thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers, and our country."

Recitation of the prayer in the New Hyde Park schools follows the unison recitation of the pledge of allegiance each morning.

A number of cases have been initiated in the lower courts, notably in Miami, Fla., which challenge all religious practices in the public schools, including daily Bible reading; Christmas, Easter, of Chanukah programs, and any reference to religion.

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They have not been appealed as far as the Supreme Court yet.

The court in 1960, on a technicality, sidestepped a ruling on the recitation in the Pennsylvania public schools of a Bible verse, without comment. It remains to be seen, in the current appeal, whether the Supreme Court will decide that the constitutional issue is sufficiently strong to warrant a review of the New York courts. This may be only the first of a series of cases the court will have to face.

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East Berlin Editor  
Reports Wall's Effect

(11-12-61)

EAST BERLIN (BP)--"The events which have affected us Germans in recent weeks are political in character," says Baptist Editor Gunter Lorenz of East Berlin, "but their consequences reach far beyond the political."

Lorenz is editor of "Wort Und Werk," East German paper of "Bund Evangelisch-Freikirchlicher Gemeinden" (mainly Baptist). He also edits a paper of the national church.

His remarks introduced a report on the meeting of East German members of the executive committee of the "Bund" in Leipzig. German Baptists from both sides of the divided country previously met together to plan their work but since the building of the wall this has been impossible.

The scheduled meeting of the executive committee called for Munich (West Germany) was held as announced but only West German members were able to attend.

"We are born into our national community," says Lorenz, "and we are a part of it." But it is also true, he adds, that "as children of God and citizens of his kingdom even the truly serious problems of this world are not for us the ultimate ones."

"In view of the apparently insoluble conditions of our time," he says, "we learn anew what it means to be saved." He explained that "this has nothing to do with other-worldiness but rather provides the true measure for our tasks in the world."

Those gathering in Leipzig were aware of the confidence and love of their brethren in the West, says Lorenz. "The realization of this confidence gave us inner freedom without bitter or sad reminiscing and complaint in facing the challenges of a changed situation."

Reports at the Leipzig meeting indicated the work was already separately-organized to a great extent, and is self-supporting. The seminary in Leipzig has 19 students and 29 deaconesses serve in the churches. There was a free church service broadcast by the DDR Radio in September, with a sermon by Rolf Dammann, German Baptist chairman in East Germany, and singing by two Baptist choirs.

Decisions for Christ and for fulltime Christian service were reported from Baptist youth Bible weeks held during the past summer. Seventy attended a lay workers' conference in Leipzig in October. The lay helpers assist in the general work of the churches and especially in the nine churches without pastors.

"Let us pray for one another and remain with one another in faith," concludes Lorenz, in sending the greetings of brethren in East Germany to their fellow believers of the Western part.

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Folks and Facts.....

(11-12-61)

.....Charles C. Bowles announced to his congregation at Hunter Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, he had accepted a call to First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex. His resignation is effective Nov. 31.

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Swiss Baptist Women  
Seek Delegate Status

RUSCHLIKON, Switzerland (BP)--The Baptist women of Switzerland think they have a valid reason for asking an end to the "men only" restriction on delegates to the Swiss Baptist Union meetings.

Meeting here, they urged the Union to seat women delegates when no men are available. Some small churches have few men members, it was explained, and sometimes one who is appointed to attend the convention is unable to do so.

The Union's constitution now provides only for men delegates from the churches.

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Scots Bypass Motion  
Against Bomb Testing

(11-12-61)

GLASGOW (BP)--The Baptist Union of Scotland here turned aside a motion against nuclear testing. It had originated with the committee on Christian citizenship.

Scottish Baptists, instead, passed a substitute motion declaring that "in repentance and turning to God, and not in dependence on military might, lies the only solution to a humanly insoluble international problem."

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Church Publishing Case  
Appealed To High Court

(11-12-61)

WASHINGTON (BP)--An appeal has been filed with the United States Supreme Court which may set a precedent for revoking tax exemption of all religious publishing houses.

The Scripture Press Foundation of Wheaton, Ill., has appealed to the Supreme Court against a ruling of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue revoking its tax-exempt status.

Scripture Press serves many of the conservative Protestant denominations affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals, although it is not officially connected with the association.

Attorneys for Scripture Press say the ruling could be applied to the Methodists and their Abingdon-Cokesbury Publishing House; the Baptists and Broadman Press; the Disciples of Christ and Bethany Press; the Church of God and Warner Press, and many others.

The case first arose in 1953 when the Commissioner of Internal Revenue reviewed the tax-exempt status of Scripture Press as a religious and educational organization. He held that "your principal activity is the sale of religious periodicals, publications, and supplies." While this might aid the churches buying the supplies in carrying out their ministry, the commissioner said, "The manufacture and supply thereof does not constitute a religious activity in itself but is a business of a kind ordinarily carried on for profit."

The commissioner, on appeal, reaffirmed this ruling in 1954 (a new commissioner having taken office) saying that "the preparation and sale of this (religious) material is not a religious activity within itself but is secular in nature."

Scripture Press appealed this ruling to the United States Tax Court, which upheld it, and then, paying the tax under protest, filed suit in the U. S. Court of Claims for its recovery. Chief Judge Marvin Jones, in a brief opinion, rejected the claim. It is this decision which is now appealed to the Supreme Court.

Thus far, the Internal Revenue Service has not applied this tax interpretation to any publishing houses wholly owned by religious denominations. This has led the National Association of Evangelicals to file "amicus curiae" (friend of the court)

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briefs with the courts asserting that it is discriminatory to those conservative Protestant groups which do not maintain their own publishing houses but buy their material from the independent Scripture Press Foundation.

The case is clouded somewhat by the fact that the Court of Claims was obviously influenced in its decision by evidence that Scripture Press has accumulated a surplus of over \$1 million and spent only \$72,000 of it for educational projects.

The money has since been invested in a new printing plant in Wheaton. However, Judge Jones alluded to this surplus as representing "profits" that the Court of Claims obviously felt the government had a right to tax.

The case will be watched with interest, not only by church officials in various denominations, but by those who have questioned how far tax exemption for religious and charitable activities should extend as a matter of public policy.

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Arkansas Officials  
Asked To Curb Crime

(11-12-61)

LITTLE ROCK (BP)--Arkansas Baptists asked public officials to use the power of their offices to stamp out crime in Arkansas.

The 1961 session of Arkansas Baptist State Convention here also suggested local associations of churches hold their annual association meetings the week following the second Sunday in October.

The suggestion was not adopted without criticism. The vote count on passage was 229 to 161.

Arkansas Baptists also voted to change the name of one of their institutions. Bottoms Baptist Orphanage, Monticello, became Arkansas Baptist Home for Children.

The request for change came from the home's board and administrator.

Also approved were an endowment campaign for Ouachita Baptist College at Arkadelphia amounting to \$1,286,000 and a budget for state causes of \$1,054,600. The convention hopes to forward \$633,150 to the Southern Baptist Convention next year.

The president of the Arkansas convention is C. Z. Holland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jonesboro. The convention, which seldom meets outside centrally-located Little Rock, will hold its 1962 session Nov. 6-8 at Eldorado.

The convention will dedicate its 1961 annual to two well-known Baptist laymen of the state who died during the year--J. E. Berry of Eldorado and Fred Carter of Jonesboro.

Amos Greer of Pine Bluff opposed the suggestion of meeting dates for local associations. He said having them so soon after the association year closes (Sept. 30) would not allow adequate time for church clerks to prepare their letters of information.

E. E. Griever, pastor, First Baptist Church, Hamburg, declared the proposal tended to "promote centralization of power" over the local churches. Those who favored the motion replied the convention exercises no power over cooperating churches and the meeting time is only suggested, not mandatory.

The suggestion was offered to make it easier for various departments of the state convention to assist the associations which invite them to send representatives.

The resolution on crime also commended law enforcement officers "who are faithfully discharging their duties..."

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