

November 23, 1961

Oklahoma Exploring
Church-State Affairs

TULSA, Okla. (BP)--A committee to explore church-state relations has been elected by the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

The convention, meeting for 1961 session here, approved a recommendation from its board of directors for the study. Behind it lay questions concerning the convention's hospitals and golden-age homes.

The study recognized "the many questions being raised throughout our nation concerning the complex facets of overlapping interests of the church and state in the areas of benevolence, healing, education, taxation and privileges extended to our denomination, churches and ministers."

This vote carried with approval of 20 men named to serve on the committee. No one voiced opposition to the study.

The committeemen, "holding various points of view," were "instructed to make a detailed and comprehensive study of the whole problem as it affects our Baptist life and witness." The committee must report back to the convention.

The study committee resulted from objections by some to the present convention operation of six community-owned hospitals. They are operated under lease to Baptists.

Of the record \$2,530,000 Cooperative Program budget approved, 40 per cent--\$1,012,000 will go to the Southern Baptist Convention. The new budget is \$30,000 more than the 1961 amount.

Messengers approved a resolution "favoring a uniform day of rest in our state." Churches and church members were encouraged "to give every possible aid to developing and actively supporting legislation which effect such a uniform day of rest."

Hugh R. Bumpas, pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, was elected convention president.

The convention heard Jack L. Gritz, editor of the Baptist Messenger, sound a warning of "dangerous drifts" for Southern Baptists. "Whether we have been aware of it or not, during the last 10 years something has been happening to us theologically," he declared.

Citing recent developments, the editor stated, "Southern Baptists are drifting theologically into liberalism." He also pointed out a drift in missionary concern evidenced by lack of growth in giving and a drift from proven evangelistic methods, especially Sunday school enlargement.

The usual pattern of meeting site for the convention will change in 1962. The annual session will be held at Shawnee in the new John Wesley Raley Chapel at Oklahoma Baptist University, Nov. 15-17.

-30-

Largest Ohio Church
Votes To Relocate

(11-23-61)

DAYTON, Ohio (BP)--The largest Southern Baptist church in Ohio and oldest in Dayton is relocating its building.

Westwood Baptist Church of Dayton voted to sell its building and to rebuild in Kettering, a suburb. The church, served by S. M. Mulkey as pastor, has about 1800 members.

-more-

Until it completes a building on the new site, Westwood--henceforth to be known as Far Hills Baptist Church--will meet in a junior high school.

It sold its Dayton property to Shiloh Baptist Church, a Negro church, for \$170,000, effective almost immediately. "We are relocating because our membership has moved from this area," Mulkey said.

-30-

N. C. Paper Protests
Ruling On Sales Tax

(11-23-61)

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP)--The board of directors of the Biblical Recorder, state Baptist paper, may seek a ruling from state Attorney General Wade Bruton on the legality of a 3 per cent state sales tax on part of the Recorder's income.

The 1961 General Assembly levied a 3 per cent sales tax on food and newspapers, among other things. The State Revenue Commission ruled recently that the tax not only applies to the Recorder's subscription income of approximately \$140,000 a year, but to the \$43,500 provided by the Baptist state convention. The latter amount is used to supplement the cost of every family plan and to send the paper to pastors, missionaries, Sunday school superintendents and libraries.

Editor Marse Grant of Raleigh told the recent state convention in Greensboro that taxing the \$43,500 "comes very close to taxing the offering plate dollar since this money comes directly from the churches." The Recorder is paying the tax under protest, he said, awaiting a decision from the attorney general's office.

If both subscriptions and convention funds are taxed, it will cost the Recorder nearly \$6,000 a year, Grant explained. The tax became effective July 1 and the Recorder has been negotiating with the State Revenue Department since that time.

Gov. Terry Sanford recently said that he plans to ask the next legislature to remove the sales tax on newspapers in the state.

-30-

Arizona Includes
'Southern' In Name

(11-23-61)

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--The Baptist General Convention of Arizona voted here to change its name, identifying clearly its cooperative relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The new name, approved at the 1961 session, is Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

The convention also adopted a resolution "encouraging our denominational press and publications in their efforts in opposition to communism and its teachings.

"Be it further resolved that this convention encourage our pastors and churches to inform their members of this pernicious, pseudo-religion."

Another resolution thanked Gov. Paul Fannin for his position on liquor and narcotics problems in Arizona.

The convention authorized a \$5 million bond issue to build a "large Baptist hospital" in Phoenix or Tucson. No target date was set for establishing it.

The convention's hospital board, now directing operation of a hospital in Yuma, would direct operation of the proposed new one.

The convention voted a 1962 Cooperative Program budget of \$340,000, with 18 per cent for the Southern Baptist Convention. The date and place of the 1962 session are Nov. 14-16 at Tucson.

Ed. J. Packwood, Phoenix realtor and former staff employee of the convention, was elected its new president.

-30-

California Elects
Lay Vice-President

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (BP)--California Southern Baptists have elected their first layman vice-president--Charles Bethell, a minister of music and education in Bakersfield.

He will serve with W. B. Timberlake of Sacramento, whom the Southern Baptist General Convention of California reelected to a second year's term as president.

The convention also voted to conduct its 1962 session in Sacramento, Nov. 13-15. It adopted a total budget of nearly \$1.5 million. Of the Cooperative Program sum, \$210,000 will go to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The convention further voted to support Los Angeles in its bid to have the Southern Baptist Convention session at the next uncommitted date. That would be at least 1967 since Detroit was already voted for the 1966 SBC.

The 1962 session of the national body is being held in San Francisco.

-30-

J. D. Grey Lashes
Louisiana Gov. Davis

(11-23-61)

WEST MONROE, La. (BP)--Jimmie H. Davis, governor of Louisiana, was lashed by a New Orleans pastor here for failing to act against "organized and commercialized gambling and corruption."

J. D. Grey, pastor of New Orleans First Baptist Church and a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, called the ballad-singing governor the "shame of Louisiana Baptists."

Speaking before 2000 men who attended the annual Louisiana Baptist Brotherhood Convention here, Grey called for the people of the state and Baptists in particular to stand up for their convictions.

"In the 24 years I've lived in Louisiana," Grey said, "we've had Baptists in the governorship for 16 years.

"They've been the sorriest years that our state law enforcement has ever seen," he added.

Lowering his voice, Grey added, "I'm not mad--I'm embarrassed."

Grey was president of the SBC in 1952-53.

Davis is a Baptist and once taught school in a Baptist college in Shreveport. He has written a number of songs, including "You Are My Sunshine."

-30-

BAPTIST PRESS

127 NINTH AVE., N.
NASHVILLE 3, TENN.

Albert McClellan
Executive Committee
127 Ninth Avenue, North
Nashville, Tennessee

X

NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
WATCH FOR THE (BP) CREDIT LINE