

For Sunday editons, May 10

From 12,000 to 15,000 persons are expected to attend the 1959 session of the Southern Baptist Convention and affiliated groups at Louisville, Ky., May 18-22.

It is the first session of the Convention in Louisville since 1927.

The session of the Convention opens on Tuesday night, May 19, in Freedom Hall. However, four preliminary meetings by special groups will have preceded it.

About 3000 women will meet in Freedom Hall Monday, May 18, and on Tuesday morning and afternoon, May 19, for the annual session of the Woman's Missionary Union, a Convention auxiliary.

A short distance away, in a wing of the vast Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center adjoining Freedom Hall, thousands of Baptist pastors, ministers of education and church musicians will meet together Monday morning, May 18.

They will continue to meet Monday afternoon and night, and Tuesday morning and afternoon, but each group at a separate place. The ministers, forming the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, will use the Exposition Center.

Following the joint session Monday morning, ministers of education will meet at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Church musicians will convene at Carver School of Missions and Social Work located next door to the seminary.

Both educational institutions are operated by the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Convention chose Louisville for its 1959 site because the seminary is celebrating its 100th anniversary. It is the oldest of six seminaries owned and operated by the SBC.

The seminary will conduct its graduation exercises during the first night of the Convention Tuesday, May 19. Dr. R. Paul Caudill, pastor, First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., will preach the Convention Sermon which will serve also as the graduation address.

Former Congressman Brooks Hays of Little Rock, Ark., and Washington, D. C., is president of the Convention. He will deliver his President's Address on Wednesday. Other major addresses will be brought by Dr. Harold W. Tribble, president of Wake Forest College (Baptist), Winston-Salem, N. C.; Dr. J. D. Grey, pastor, First Baptist Church, New Orleans, La., and former Convention president, and Rep. Walter Judd (R., Minn.), of Minneapolis.

Election of officers and consideration of a committee report that would adjust policies and procedures of the Convention are expected to be the major items of business.

Having served two successive one-year terms as president, Hays is not eligible for re-election. The election is held Wednesday morning.

A committee had been at work for two years surveying the Convention and its 20 agencies. A number of policies and procedures recommended by the committee were adopted a year ago when the Convention met in Houston, Tex.

Other recommendations were referred back for further study. These are contained in a fresh report of the committee for presentation. The survey committee report will be voted upon Thursday afternoon.

Theme for the 1959 session of the Southern Baptist Convention is "teaching to observe." It is based on the scripture verse, Matthew 28:20.

The Southern Baptist Convention has 31,498 co-operating churches in 43 states. The membership of these churches totals 9,206,758.

(Editors: Program personalities for the Southern Baptist Convention and any of the four related meetings who come from your circulation area are attached to this news release.)

May 10, 1959

Urge Florida To Keep Its Public Schools

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.--(BP)--The Tallahassee Ministerial Association has adopted a resolution urging the Florida Legislature to "do everything possible to maintain the free public schools system for all children."

The resolution said the "considerable agitation" toward the closing of the public schools has been motivated by "prejudice, ignorance and hate. . ." It went on ". . . we believe the closing of the public schools would be an act which would be foolish, irresponsible, and contrary to the best interests of the whole state. Therefore . . . (we) strongly urge the legislature of the State of Florida to do everything possible to maintain the free public school system for all children."

Dozens of bills relating to segregation in the public schools are under consideration by the legislature but all are still in committees. At least one of the bills calls for closing of any school before racial integration in classes.

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Louisiana Implementing Survey Recommendations

ALEXANDRIA, La.--(BP)--The six new committees of the executive board of Louisiana Baptist Convention made their first reports to the board's May meeting in Alexandria.

Following the Booz, Allen & Hamilton management consultant's administrative and program study of the convention, the board was reorganized. The committees have been meeting respectively to perform the assigned functions which relate to each phase of the convention program, its institutions, and boards and also which relate to Southern Baptist Convention programs.

A revised constitution for the convention, which will be proposed to the convention session in November, was tabled until the September meeting of the board for final approval.

The special new building committee reported "very satisfactory progress" on the new state Baptist office building which is being constructed here at a cost of \$1,300,000 plus architect fees and property. The building is expected to be completed by early spring in 1960 and will house offices and various types of conference and assembly rooms for convention activities.

Included in the project is a new Baptist Book Store which is a one-story structure connected to the main building by a covered walkway.

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Anti-Death Penalty Bill Not Favored

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.--(BP)--A committee of the Florida legislature here voted 9-2 to kill a bill aimed at abolishing the death penalty for murder and certain other crimes committed in the state.

An unfavorable report by this committee means it will take a two-thirds vote of the state house of representatives to get the bill before the entire house for consideration. Generally an unfavorable report means the end of the bill.

The house committee was admittedly swayed by a criminal assault, and the arrest of four persons in connection with it, which recently occurred in the Tallahassee area. This crime carries a death penalty on conviction unless the trial jury recommends mercy.

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Rep. Robert E. Knowles of Manatee County told the committee he had been "on the fence" on the death penalty issue, but implied that the nature of the recent crime had fixed his opinion. He and eight other members of the house judiciary committee voted to kill the bill. Two members voted for it.

Florida Gov. LeRoy Collins and House Speaker Tom Beasley had recommended the death penalty be abolished in Florida, where death is by electrocution. They made their recommendation several weeks ago at the start of the current session. The governor appeared to base his objection to capital punishment to some extent on religious grounds.

Rep. John Crews of Baker County attacked the argument that the death penalty is no deterrent to violent crimes. "This is opinion only, and cannot be proved", he said. "We have no way of knowing how many murders haven't been committed because of the death penalty. I think it is a deterrent."

BAPTIST FEATURES

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Theo Sommerkamp, *Assistant Director*

May 10, 1959

Mixed Emotions Mark
Secretary's Retirement

RALEIGH, N. C.--(BP)--North Carolina's "Mr. Baptist" had more than 2000 members of his denomination laughing and weeping as he neared the end of a 27-year term as their general secretary.

The occasion was a special session of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina here at which a new general secretary was elected.

Three men spoke in honor of the retiring general secretary, Dr. M. A. Huggins, at a service of tribute opening the special Baptist State Convention. But it was Dr. Huggins himself who stole the show.

Explaining his retirement effective June 30, the convention's 68-year-old top administrative officer said his "get up and go has got up and went."

"But I really don't mind," he said, "when I think of all the places my get up has been."

He was recalling his years of traveling to North Carolina Baptist churches, small and large, from the beaches to the mountains. He has traveled almost a million miles in 10 automobiles and knows more Baptist ministers by name than any other man, one of the speakers in his honor said.

Dr. Huggins recalled also the regular 1958 convention session last fall, when he announced he would retire. "I think I cried enough at that convention," he said. "Today I have two impulses--one to be grateful and the other to strut."

Dr. Huggins, once a high school principal and later a college professor, was commissioned by the messengers to write a history of state Baptists. Former U. S. Rep. Charles B. Deane of Rockingham, N. C., who headed the committee on Dr. Huggins' Retirement, said this will be a "labor of love."

Douglas M. Branch, pastor of First Baptist Church, Rocky Mount and W. Perry Crouch, pastor, First Baptist Church of Asheville spoke with Deane in tribute to Dr. Huggins. (Branch was later elected to succeed Huggins.)

Branch traced the growth of the convention during Dr. Huggins' career, noting a 38 per cent gain in the number of churches and a 101 per cent membership gain.

Dr. Huggins, in turn, said the convention is about to enter its "greatest era." But he warned the messengers of "our constant temptation to put our faith in numbers, in buildings, and in organizations."

"These are only a means to an end," he said. "Our greatest mission is the development of our people in Christian maturity."

Cutline

Baptist Press

HEADS COMMISSION---Davis C. Woolley, director of extension for Christian education at Howard College, Birmingham, Ala., has been elected executive secretary-treasurer of the Historical Commission, Southern Baptist Convention. He will succeed Dr. Norman W. Cox, who retires Aug. 31.---(BP) Photo.

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