

May 11, 1961

Majority Rules Baptist
Affairs, Judge Holds

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--A Kansas District Court ruled here a majority vote determines the course of First Baptist Church, Wichita. The ruling sustained the majority's right to use the church property after voting itself out of affiliation and support of the American Baptist Convention and two related groups.

The minority loyal to the American Convention, Kansas Baptist Convention (of American Baptists) and Wichita Association of (American) Baptist Churches sought to prevent the majority from having access to the church.

Judge Howard C. Kline noted that forwarding money to the American Convention and the two local groups, and sending representatives to their meetings, did not constitute a fundamental tenet, practice, belief or doctrine of the church.

There was no immediate word on an appeal by the minority. But previous cases of this nature in Kansas were appealed.

In March, 1960 the church voted to withdraw support of the American Convention and related bodies since they participated in the National Council of Churches. A majority vote in July, 1960 withdrew the church from affiliation with the three groups.

The minority contended custom, tradition and doctrine of the church required it retain these affiliations. The majority has remained unaffiliated since the break.

Judge Kline also held to these statements of facts in ruling:

1. First Baptist Church, Wichita, is an autonomous church and neither American Baptist Convention, Kansas Baptist Convention (affiliated with American Convention) nor Wichita Association of Baptist Churches has any control over First Church.

2. Nowhere in the charter of First Baptist Church, or in its constitution, or bylaws, is there provided for affiliation with American Baptist Convention, the state convention and Wichita association. Neither the declaration of faith nor the church covenant provides for such affiliation. Nor does this provide for representatives or money from the church to be sent to the national, state and city organizations.

3. The governing body of First Baptist Church, Wichita, is the congregation or given membership. The membership by majority vote, can, at any regularly scheduled meeting, transact business. Its majority vote is binding upon the church so long as that action does not constitute a departure from doctrine, customs, practices and fundamental tenets of the church.

There was no indication at the three-day trial that the 4300-member church, which was one of the largest in the American Convention, might be moving toward affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention. Testimony at the trial, however, disclosed that Southern Baptist church literature was used.

Various Constitution,
Bylaw Changes Listed

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention was to present to the 1961 session at least 15 recommendations changing the SBC constitution, bylaws or procedure.

Three of the recommendations took the place of one presented in 1960 which was referred for further study. According to Executive Secretary Porter Routh of Nashville, this was intended to provide a more democratic process by doubling the size of the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Boards.

There were to be two members of the committees from each state rather than one. One of the two members became a layman, if the change passed.

The third of this group recognized "the principle that the boards, commissions, and trustees named should represent the constituency of Convention, rather than the staff of the agency."

It eliminated any negative inference that staff members of agencies influenced the choice by the Committee on Boards of those it nominated for governing bodies of agencies.

Having two members of these committees from each state will, according to Routh, bring a wider acquaintanceship with talented people in the states eligible to fill vacancies. It will help insure wider representation of the state itself on agency governing bodies.

Up for second approval at St. Louis was a recommendation dealing with the composition of SBC boards. It did not change the number of members or their functions, Routh said. It made the constitution consistent with the bylaws in selection of board members by adding the phrase "or Convention action" in Article VI, Section 2:

"If the composition of the board is not determined by charter requirement or Convention action..."

Article XII of the constitution was to be changed--by the proposal--to provide explicitly that agencies of the Convention shall comply with bylaws and the Business and Financial Plan as well as the constitution of the SBC. Also on second reading, this proposal stated precisely something has been followed in principle.

Five more proposed changes dealt with clearing up inconsistencies in language in the constitution and bylaws. In some places, the reference "boards, institutions and commissions" used together has meant the same thing as the sole word "boards" used elsewhere. The language was made consistent, if the recommendation passed.

The Executive Committee of the Convention was directed to keep the accounting record of the Inter-Agency Council and any other inter-agency groups established, Routh said in describing another proposal.

Still another change treated the Inter-Agency Council. It enlarged the description of the council's function in the line with the council's own constitution.

Members of the Committee on Order of Business can not succeed themselves after their staggered, three-year terms, according to another proposal. This committee drafts Convention agenda each year.

Two other matters affected the Executive Committee. One recalled the Executive Committee, while still handling annual Convention arrangements, no longer has a special committee on arrangements.

The other cleared up an omission where in a group listing the Executive Committee was omitted. The change included it.

The Executive Committee included the proposed changes in its report at St. Louis.

Peacock In Tizzy
Over Plume To Wear

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Meet Billy Ray Peacock, bachelor of music, master of religious education, master of sacred music and soon to be bachelor of divinity. The man has so many degrees he doesn't know which academic plume to wear.

Minister of music-education at Florida Boulevard Baptist Church in nearby Baton Rouge, Peacock was a candidate for the bachelor of divinity degree at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

But what color tassel would he wear for the commencement procession?

Ought it to be the soft pink of music, since he holds the bachelor of music degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and the master of sacred music from New Orleans Seminary?

Or might the pale blue of the master of religious education suit Peacock better since it would perhaps match his red hair?

According to ladies called in for counsel, the red theological tassel to go with the newest degree would be acceptable on most any occasion. So that's what Peacock was to wear in the seminary's spring graduation.

There is, of course, another alternative. He could take a tip from a bird of the same name who wears all the colors at one time in his feathered plume.

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For Your Information, Editors:

(5-11-61)

Mrs. Edgar Bates, dean of women at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, will speak to the annual convention of Woman's Missionary Union of Southern Baptist Convention. She will replace John F. Soren of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, president of the Baptist World Alliance.

Soren can not attend due to illness. Mrs. Bates is chairman of the women's department of the Alliance. The Canadian churchwoman was born in India, daughter of Canadian missionaries. She has spoken before numerous Baptist groups around the world, including some Southern Baptist groups.

Baptist Press, Nashville.

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Sports Roundup
At Baptist Schools

(5-11-61)

By the Baptist Press

Lester Craft, four-year veteran line coach at Georgetown College will assume head football coaching duties at the Kentucky Baptist school this year. He will handle duties during the absence of Bob Davis, granted a leave for doctoral study.

Georgetown was 2-6 last year, has 20 returning lettermen including four seniors. Craft also coaches swimming at Georgetown.

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Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., lined up its nine-game football card for 1961. It plays mainly other teams in Arkansas, has no sister Baptist schools as foes. Nov. 18 is an open date in the season opening Sept. 23 at Southeastern Oklahoma State, Durant, Okla., and closing at Arkadelphia Nov. 23 against Delta State.

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Baker, Woolley Lead
History Book Work

NASHVILLE (BP)--Robert A. Baker, professor of church history, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, has been appointed editorial chairman for the Southern Baptist editorial committee cooperating in the production of the book giving the story of Baptists in North America since 1814.

The book's title: Baptist Advance.

Baker will work with Baptist representatives from other bodies in North America along with the managing editor, Davis C. Woolley, Nashville, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission.

C. C. Warren, Charlotte, permanent chairman of the Baptist Jubilee Advance Joint Committee and general chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention jubilee committee, named Baker as the Southern Baptist representative on the editorial committee following the election of Woolley as managing editor. Baker has served in an advisory capacity on the project since its inception by Dr. Norman W. Cox. Dr. Cox of Mobile is executive secretary emeritus of the Historical Commission.

Baker called the first meeting of the Southern Baptist editorial committee for the new book in St. Louis in connection with the Southern Baptist Convention.

At this meeting assignments and details of preparing articles were given to representatives of Southern Baptist agencies. The number of words allotted for all of the Southern Baptist Convention agencies and activities had been set at 50,000 words. This convention allocation will be divided among the various agencies for their monographs.

The Historical Commission approved the participation in this project and the final editing and preparation of copy will be made through the Historical Commission office.

Denominational representatives appointed to the editorial committee to work out plans for creating the book had their organizational meeting in Rochester, N. Y.

Deadline date for copy to be turned in to the denominational chairmen is April 15, 1962. The copy is to be in the hands of the managing editor on Oct. 15, 1962, who will turn it over to the publisher March 15, 1963.

The book is due to be published in March, 1964, and be ready for distribution before the meeting of the Baptist Jubilee observance in June, 1964. The book is to be published as a joint project of the publication boards of the various denominations cooperating in the project.

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Baptists, Incorporated
--The 'Ultimate' Name

(5-11-61)

BALTIMORE (BP)--Baptists, Incorporated.

This is the "ultimate" name for Southern Baptist Convention, writes Gainer E. Bryan Jr., editor of the Maryland Baptist here.

Editorials in this and other Southern Baptist newspapers indicate a "growing readiness" for changing the Convention's name, Bryan adds. Various names have been advanced to replace "Southern." Most agree the former Northern Baptist Convention stole a march by trading for the title "American Baptist Convention" some years ago.

Bryan notes no name has captured enough imagination as substitute for "Southern," which is geographically restrictive.

"At last, however, the ultimate name can be unveiled... 'Baptists, Incorporated,'" he says. "'Incorporated' means 'made in one body, intimately united or blended to form one body.'"

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His editorial came out on the eve of the 1961 Southern Baptist Convention session at St. Louis, where there was a slim possibility a name change might be introduced. "Baptist Convention, U. S. A." and even "Solar Baptist Convention" have been advanced as other possibilities.

The name couldn't be changed in 1961 because the SBC constitution requires two succeeding years' action. There is doubt the constitution would permit floor debate until 1962 if a new name were proposed in '61.

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Ministers' Wives Plan
Their Conference, Too

(5-11-61)

ST. LOUIS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives' Conference announced its annual fellowship meeting here May 24 in Kiel Auditorium. The hours are 3:30-4:30 P.M.

Wallace Denton, associate in the Midwest Christian Counseling Center, Kansas City, Mo., was asked to bring the message on the theme: "Role Attitudes of the Minister's Wife." Denton, who wrote a doctoral thesis at Columbia, University, New York, on this subject, will discuss problems confronting ministers' wives.

Mrs. John A. Maguire of Jacksonville, Fla., will direct a playlet entitled, "First Church Seeks a Minister's Wife." Participating in it will be Mrs. C. DeWitt Matthews of Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. Jess Moody of West Palm Beach, Fla., and Mrs. James Monroe of Miami.

Mrs. Hobart H. Grooms (a layman's wife; her husband is Federal district judge in Birmingham) will direct the music and sing a solo at the conference. Mrs. Allan Watson of Tuscaloosa, Ala., will be organist and Mrs. Carl E. Bates of Charlotte, N. C., pianist.

Mrs. Matthews is president of the conference.

The organization is mainly for fellowship and has no official Southern Baptist Convention tie. It meets only once a year, when the ladies accompany their husbands to the Convention city. It is made up of wives of pastors, ministers of music and education, chaplains, seminary professors and denominational workers.

But wives of laymen are invited to attend, too.

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BAPTIST PRESS

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

SOCIETY BIRTHDAY--A Southern Baptist editor was among a group of religious leaders who met in New York to help the American Bible Society plan its 150th anniversary observance for 1966. From left to right, they are: James G. Patton, Presbyterian Church in the U. S.; Leonard E. Hill, Nashville, production editor, (Southern) Baptist Program; Adolf F. Meyer, Missouri Lutheran; Mrs. Stanley I. Stuber, American Baptist Convention; C. C. Burnett, Assemblies of God and Roy I. Madsen, American Baptist Convention. (BP) Photo.