

FROM REGIONAL OFFICE

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Graham To Keynote '63
Evangelism Conference

DALLAS (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham has been named as one of the main speakers for a nationwide Southern Baptist evangelism conference to be held here July 2-4, 1963.

Southern Baptist Evangelism Director C. E. Autrey said more than 20,000 persons from 37 states are expected to hear Graham's concluding address in a Dallas football stadium. Main conference sessions will be held in Dallas' Memorial Auditorium.

Theme for the meeting will be "Spiritual Conquest...Now!" Autrey said the purpose of the meeting is to spearhead a nationwide evangelistic emphasis culminating the Baptist Jubilee Advance.

The Jubilee Advance commemorates the 150th anniversary of organized Baptist work. Seven Baptist groups throughout the U.S. have been participating in the advance, which ends in 1964. Evangelism leaders from these groups will be invited to the Dallas meeting, Autrey said.

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Florida Board Prefers
Separate Mission Work

(5-17-61)

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--The Florida Baptist Mission Board voted not to join the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board in a new joint missions program proposed for Florida.

It said dual control and financial support "is not in accordance with the intent and purpose of the recommendations of the (SBC) survey committee and that same is unwise and impractical..."

Each body should accept aspects of mission work singularly, it maintained.

The board announced it will assume full financial responsibility for programs of evangelism, associational missions and city missions carried out in Florida beginning Jan. 1, 1962. The Home Mission Board will be relieved of its present participation in these programs.

The Home Mission Board, it said, now contributes \$8,000 a year toward these three programs.

"The Home Mission Board is adequately prepared to handle and administer the phases of mission ministry dealing with language groups, National Baptists (Negroes), Jews, migrants, Indians, mission centers, juvenile rehabilitation and other related mission work, while the Florida Baptist State Convention is not presently adequately prepared to handle and administer same," it was reported.

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A possible alternative was listed. Should the Florida State Board conclude it best to take over other phases of missions, it would do so "completely and totally," and set up administrative departments to accomplish this. If the alternative were enacted, the Home Mission Board "shall relinquish at that time all of its rights and responsibilities thereto."

The Home Mission Board has been working out a new form of joint missions cooperation with many state conventions. Some, like Florida, before this action, have not yet acted on the Home Board's proposal. Twenty-two conventions have accepted the Home Mission Board's new program.

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Mission Worker Asks
Appalachian Emphasis

(5-17-61)

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists have been asked to intensify mission work among the 3 million non-church residents in the southern Appalachian areas of the United States.

"Recent exhaustive studies financed by the Ford Foundation emphasize this is still one of our largest mission fields," announced M. Wendell Belew of Atlanta, secretary of the associational missions department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here.

He referred to the southern Appalachian studies, a three-year \$250,000 survey of the social, cultural and economic conditions in 190 mountain counties in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Virginia.

Despite reports that Southern Baptists are the largest group with more than a million members, and the fastest growing (4.7 per cent), Belew cited figures showing that only 2.5 million of the 5.75 million residents are members of any church.

Preliminary releases indicate the formerly isolated area is moving into the mainstream of American life, due to the opening of the area by industry, modern highways, television, and improved public education.

The area has lost heavily in population due to migration of residents to industrial centers. The survey indicated that counties with lowest membership are losing the most population. Counties with less than 20 per cent of their population in churches declined 8 per cent, while those with more than 50 per cent in churches increased 1 per cent.

The average size of churches in the area is 158 members, less than half the size of the national average. Of the 13,387 churches in the mountains, 4,351 are Southern Baptist.

The study showed Protestants were closing secondary and elementary schools as public schools were provided, while Roman Catholics were opening their own schools.

Denominations have increased their emphasis on the support of mission churches and mountain workers. More churches have been started since 1950 than during the first 25 years of this century.

"Fewer people in this area belong to churches than in any comparable territory east of the Mississippi River," Belew said.

The study originated at Berea College in Kentucky, and basic research data will become a part of the college's library. Many groups, including the National Council of Churches, are publishing results of the study.

Commenting on why Southern Baptists were the largest group and still the fastest growing, Belew said, "It is primarily because our church polity permits the people to remain independent. We have no hierarchy. Our work is entirely church centered, and these people have always been strongly independent. They can identify easily with our work."

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He added these additional reasons for Baptist growth: the development of programs of enlargement that reach into the grass roots and which can be used by the smallest church, the use of ministers of varying educational achievement, and the development of leadership from the area as a mission force.

"It is important also that we are concerned about what a person eats and wears, but we realize that to change a man's nature is more important than to change his environment," Belew said.

"And Southern Baptists do not feel two or more churches in a community is necessarily a divisive factor," he added. "The presence of more churches can complement each other in building a total Christian environment in a community where one church could not possibly accomplish this."

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Half Mississippi
Preachers Students

(5-17-61)

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Nearly half of the Baptist preachers in Mississippi are students, according to a report from the seminary extension department of Southern Baptists here.

Seminary graduates constitute one-fourth of the preacher population, and the other fourth has never attended a college or seminary, W. A. Whitten, Jackson, associate director, said.

Whitten's was one of several reports on extension and correspondence education given at the department's conference of field workers at its offices in Jackson. Area field representatives from all parts of the United States attend.

Seminary extension department, cooperatively supported by six Southern Baptist seminaries, offers Bible and religious education courses of main interest to ministers who have not attended a college or seminary.

In North Carolina, the department and the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board have employed J. Alton Morris to work in the mountainous western area of the state. He will devote half his time to promoting, teaching and supervising seminary extension centers.

The 12 centers in the Carolina project have enrolled 390 persons, including 155 ministers.

Total enrollment for the department, both in extension center classes and by correspondence, approached 4000 this year, G. Ray Worley, Jackson, interim director, announced. About 1000 are correspondence students.

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'Thieves Break Through'

(5-17-61)

NASHVILLE (BP)--"Lay not up for yourselves treasures in a church safe over Sunday night," might be a good text for Belmont Heights Baptist Church here. Burglars made off with approximately \$5,000 after breaking open the safe in the church office long after Sunday evening worshippers had gone home.

Approximately two-thirds of the missing amount was in checks stamped for bank deposit only. Most of the missing money and checks represented Sunday's offering.

The safecrackers forced open an auditorium window to gain entrance, and jimmed a door into the bookkeeper's office.

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Oklahoma Baptists Name
New Assistant Secretary

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Joe L. Ingram, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Shawnee, Okla., has been named assistant executive secretary-treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

Appointment of the 41-year-old pastor came from the convention's board of directors meeting here. Ingram will resign his church in June to assume duties of the new position.

In other action the board approved a \$2,530,000 record budget for next year. The budget includes \$1,518,000 for state missions and other work and \$1,012,000 to the Southern Baptist Convention. The new budget is \$30,000 higher than the previous one.

Ingram's appointment ended a search to fill the position left by W. E. Grindstaff who vacated the post in October to become director of Cooperative Program promotion with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Ordained in 1944 by First Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Ark., he is a graduate of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Although he will assist in promoting all phases of denominational life, his primary responsibility will be the promotion of stewardship and Cooperative Program.

Ingram is now on the Oklahoma Convention's board of directors, executive committee, chairman of the Brotherhood and evangelism committees, and member of the auditing and insurance commission.

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Colonel Memphis Makes
12-Day Tennessee Tour

(5-17-61)

MEMPHIS (BP)--A Southern Colonel promoting the Baptist Men's Conference here wound up a 12-day tour of Tennessee with an appearance before 150 Shelby Baptist pastors and laymen at Bellevue Baptist Church here.

Titled "Colonel Memphis" by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Paul Cates, clad in a Colonel's regalia, including a genuine beard, made appearances in a 1916 model car, drumming up interest in the Second National Conference of Southern Baptist Men, scheduled for Sept. 13-15 at Ellis Auditorium here.

Cates, who visited 22 cities between Johnson City and Memphis, is attendance chairman for Tennessee, which has a goal of 2,250 men.

Serving as chauffeur for the colonel was Paul Phelps, a Lenoir City auto dealer and owner of the antique car.

The conference Colonel Memphis is promoting is expected to attract about 10,000 men from 50 states to hear such personalities as Charles Malik, former president of the United Nations General Assembly as the delegate from Lebanon, and Brooks Hays, assistant secretary of state and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Colonel had his troubles as well as his high moments in visiting such cities as Maryville, Knoxville, Greeneville, Jefferson City, Clinton, Rockwood, Athens, Cleveland, Chattanooga, Nashville, Murfreesboro, Springfield, Lebanon, Columbia, Shelbyville, Huntingdon, Jackson, Paris, Union City, and Dyersburg.

Appearing in Knoxville just before a legalized liquor referendum, some of the voters thought the colonel and his car were connected with the alcohol question.

The colonel left the old car parked on a downtown sidewalk while he went to dinner and returned later to find it tagged with a legalized liquor button.

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In Johnson City, the Colonel's downtown parade coincided with the blast into space of the United States astronaut. Spectators interpreted the procession as a spontaneous celebration of the Cape Canaveral success.

But the crowning blow came in Clinton, where the Colonel stopped for dinner one night. A woman who spied him in the restaurant asked the Colonel's companion if the strange visitor was a Castroite.

And in Rockwood, the Colonel's local contact forgot the Colonel's motel room number and awoke the wrong man for an early breakfast. The disturbed occupant became quite indignant and belabored the local man for making such a mistake at 6:00 in the morning.

Mechanical troubles were few. The top of the car threatened to blow off only once. But the Colonel hastily tied it down with baling wire.

As the official greeter for the men's conference, Cates also appeared in costume at the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis.

Colonel Memphis' final appearance will be on opening night of the conference when he chugs into Ellis Auditorium in the old car.

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Folks and facts.....

.....Nearly \$50,000 has been left to Stetson University, DeLand, Fla., by a St. Petersburg widow who became interested in the Baptist University's Christian education program as the result of talks with her pastor. By terms of the will of Mrs. Fanny B. Starry, the remainder of her estate totaling between \$45,000 and \$50,000 has been left to Stetson. Mrs. Starry's bequest resulted from her discussions of the University's needs with Earl B. Edington, pastor of the St. Petersburg First Baptist Church. (BP)

.....C. E. Autrey of Dallas, director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board, will receive an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Louisiana College (Baptist), Pineville. Others getting the same honor are W. L. Stagg Jr., Alexandria, La., secretary of missions for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and A. E. Pardue, Baton Rouge, La., secretary of missions for that district of Louisiana. (BP)

.....Two professors have been added to the faculty of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla. They are Carl T. Degener, professor at Idaho University, Moscow, Idaho, who will become assistant professor of German, and J. Don Reeves, religious education instructor at Union Baptist Theological Seminary, New York, who will become associate professor of religious education. Degener holds the master of arts degree and doctor's degrees from Gottingen University in Germany. Reeves holds a bachelor of arts degree from Mercer University, Macon, Ga.; and the bachelor of divinity, master of theology and doctor of education degrees from Columbia University, New York. Reeves also has done graduate work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. (BP)

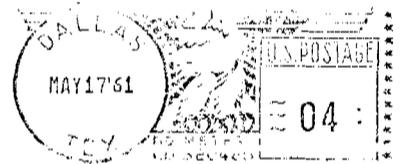
.....Mrs. Minnie Henderson, Spanish teacher at Belton (Tex.) High School, has been named to the faculty of Mary Hardin-Baylor College in Belton. She is a graduate of Mary Hardin-Baylor and also holds the master of education degree from Southwestern University, Georgetown, Tex. (BP)

.....Ben A. Copass, superintendent of public schools in Nacogdoches, Tex., has been named director of curriculum at San Marcos Baptist Academy, San Marcos Tex. Copass holds the bachelor of arts degree from Baylor University, Waco, Tex.; a master's degree from Texas Christian University, Fort Worth; and an honorary doctor of laws degree from East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Tex. (BP)

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