

September 22, 1962

West Virginia Churches  
Form State Committee

CHARLESTON, W. Va. (BP)--The 12,500 Southern Baptists in West Virginia, whose 45 churches and 26 missions are affiliated with four state conventions surrounding the small, mountainous state, are organizing their first missions committee.

The committee is expected to enable the churches to do more about reaching the state's million and a quarter unchurched population.

According to Area Missionary John I. Snedden of Charleston, an employee of the denomination's Home Mission Board, there have been Southern Baptist churches in the state since the Convention was formed in 1845 in Augusta, Ga. However, the churches are scattered among nine associations in Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio and Maryland.

The Home Mission Board in 1958 called Ohio-born Snedden out of a pastorate in his native state to lead in the starting of churches and missions in West Virginia.

He found 35 churches with a few missions. He immediately encouraged the organization of a Pastors' Conference to give the churches a sense of unity. Many of them had not known the others existed. Since 1959 this conference has been the only statewide organization for Southern Baptists.

The state, beset with out-migration, unemployment and travel difficulties of a heavy mountainous area, has a population of 1,360,000 of which more than two-thirds are unchurched.

"That's a conservative figure," Snedden says, "and because of the heavy out-migration these people have not been members of churches in other states. The largest Protestant denomination only has some 200,000 members."

A. B. Cash of Atlanta, secretary of the pioneer missions department of the Home Mission Board and director of Snedden's work, says, "The primary purpose of the missions committee is to coordinate efforts to strengthen churches and to establish work in the many areas that are without a Baptist witness."

Four of the associations, those with the greater number of West Virginia churches, will send two representatives each to form the missions committee. Other members will be the officers of the Pastors' Conference and two members picked from among the other churches.

The Pastors' Conference early this year approved the mission committee concept. Recently representatives from the state conventions around West Virginia, the Home Mission Board and the Pastors' Conference met at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly in North Carolina to discuss organization of the committee. Everyone agreed it was the thing to do, so the first meeting will be Oct. 15.

At that time, the committee will establish its own internal organization, adopt a budget and discuss such projects as church extension, statewide meetings, a summer assembly at a 4-H camp, the summer student ministry and other functions.

The number of churches in the state affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention is less than the minimum necessary for a state convention, in keeping with policy established by the Home Mission Board and other Convention agencies. However, many in the state see these first organizations as the beginnings of a state convention. But Snedden says, "A state convention would be premature at this time."

### Kentucky Faces Three Decisions On Colleges

MIDDLETOWN, Ky. (BP)--Kentucky Baptist Convention faces three decisions about its program of higher education when it meets in Owensboro in November.

First, it will be asked to approve a \$12 million capital needs campaign to aid convention-operated colleges and such other work as assemblies, child care, Baptist student centers and hospitals.

Next, it will be asked to pave the way for Kentucky Southern College in Louisville, which opened for classes this year, to become a convention-operated college.

Third, it will have before it a recommendation affecting the future of Bethel College, Baptist junior college at Hopkinsville, Ky. The school will be asked to raise \$250,000 by next March 1 "in order to continue as a vital part of the Baptist program of higher education in Kentucky."

Most of the \$12 million to be voted on will go to Kentucky Baptist schools. The schools' share is \$10,410,000. The balance will go to assemblies and camps, child care, Baptist student centers, a Baptist Building addition here and hospital nurses' training.

Kentucky Southern College is using the campus of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for its classes this school year. About 125 have enrolled, it was reported. It is building its own campus on the outskirts of Louisville.

Bethel College will be included in the \$12 million capital funds campaign for \$810,000 if the \$250,000 is raised in Hopkinsville. It's subject to both recommendations gaining convention approval.

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### Survey Finds Out How Churches Call Pastors

(9-22-62)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Would your church call a pastor without knowing his conversion experience, whether he paid his debts or if he could control his temper?

Apparently about half the Southern Baptist churches do!

More than four of 10 churches secure a pastor without finding out what people of other churches he served think of him.

These facts were revealed in a survey of 1,191 Southern Baptist Convention churches to find out how they secure pastors. The survey was made by Leonard E. Hill while gathering information for his doctor of theology thesis at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Hill is production editor of the Baptist Program, monthly Baptist leadership magazine issued by the SBC Executive Committee here.

In making the survey, Hill sent a lengthy questionnaire to the pastor and to a leading layman in each church. Sixty-two per cent of the churches responded. Both the pastor and layman in 46 per cent of the churches returned questionnaires.

Your church has probably secured a pastor within the last three years, the survey revealed. The survey also showed most Southern Baptist churches use pulpit committees. Most have five or less members. They begin looking for a new pastor within two weeks after the former one resigns.

They take about 10 weeks to find a new pastor. More than three-fourths of the churches do not know about the man they call until someone recommends him to them.

Of the laymen answering, 95 per cent believed a pastor should be divinely called to preach. But only 54 per cent believed God had only one man in mind for an individual church to call.

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The survey disclosed the qualifications most churches expect a pastor to have are far below the standard listed in the New Testament.

For instance, only 35 per cent of the churches had requirements concerning a man's spiritual qualities. (The same percentage had educational requirements.) Thirty-one per cent had character requirements and 29 per cent doctrinal qualifications.

Requirements or preferences of age and appearance were listed by 28 per cent of the churches.

The survey discovered that churches with better than average statistical records were most apt to follow one similar routine in looking for pastors. Churches with sub-par averages usually followed a different pattern.

However, using a given routine in securing a pastor didn't guarantee a church statistical success.

Churches with above average records more often (1) used a pulpit committee, (2) had the entire congregation participate in the selection of committee members and (3) paid all or part of the pulpit committee's expense.

These churches also were influenced more often by recommendations of ministers, state denominational workers and college and seminary personnel.

Above average churches went greater distances to obtain a pastor, required higher standards to be met, investigated more thoroughly and had a higher percentage of membership present at the meeting when the pastor was chosen.

Methods of investigation varied greatly. One church hired a private detective. Others said they depended "entirely on prayer" and deliberately made no attempt to learn about a man. Smaller churches were more likely not to investigate.

Other practices of Southern Baptist churches in securing pastors included:

Pulpit committee--Only 8 per cent of the churches chose not to use a pulpit committee. Approximately 11 per cent did not need one, since the pastor was selected while they were still a mission or was agreed on by all members from the beginning.

Influence--A layman's recommendation most influenced a church as often as did that of another pastor (32 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively). Another 11 per cent were most influenced by an associational worker, 7 per cent by college and seminary personnel and 6 per cent by state Baptist workers.

Associational workers had greatest influence on churches with under 300 members. State denominational workers had more effect with churches of 750 or more members. (In pioneer areas, every church surveyed checked with the state Baptist executive secretary before calling a man.)

Qualifications--Of churches listing educational requirements, 27 per cent wanted a seminary graduate. Of those where age was a factor, all wanted a man under 50 years of age. Seventy-five per cent wanted him to be under 45.

Forty-two per cent wanted him before he became 40, another 10 per cent before he was 30. The average age of Southern Baptist pastors was found to be 40.

Procedure--Twelve per cent of the churches considered more than one man at a time. Eight per cent voted on more than one man at the same service. Most churches (44 per cent) voted on pastoral calls on Sunday, 24 per cent at the midweek service.

Six per cent didn't hear the man preach before voting to call him. Eleven per cent of the churches still call a man on a year-to-year basis, not indefinitely. Only 29 per cent write out agreements made with the pastor before he accepted the call.

Baptists May Exhibit  
At 1964 New York Fair

NASHVILLE (BP)--Baptists may have an exhibit at the New York World's Fair going on in 1964-65.

The Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention voted here to allocate \$32,750 from Convention operating reserves for it. Other Baptist bodies in North America would be expected to combine financial resources and provide another \$32,750.

SBC participation was made dependent on the favorable decision of other groups taking part in the Baptist Jubilee Advance.

Wayne Dehoney of Jackson, Tenn., chairman of the public relations subcommittee, said from 70 to 100 million persons are expected to attend the Fair. It opens April 22, 1964 and closes in the fall of 1965.

"Exhibit space is available in the Protestant Center on a corner location on the Avenue of the Americas...one of the principal thoroughfares (in the fair)," he added in presenting the report.

"An art exhibit depicting Baptist mileposts, especially with reference to religious liberty has been discussed" although nothing has been chosen yet for the exhibit space, the subcommittee said.

Printed material telling about Baptists would be given out to Fair visitors, it was pointed out. Also, student summer missionaries under the direction of the SBC Home Mission Board would possibly help staff the exhibit during the two summer seasons.

Many Baptists who come to Atlantic City, N. J., for the climaxing service of the Baptist Jubilee Advance in May, 1964 would attend the Fair in New York, a comparatively short distance away. Baptists of seven groupings would take part in the Atlantic City meeting.

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Canadian Question Due  
For February Hearing

(9-22-62)

NASHVILLE (BP)--A full hearing will be conducted next February into the matter of seating Canadian messengers at the annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention.

This was reported here to the SBC Executive Committee. The 1962 session referred the controversial question to the Executive Committee for study. A report is expected to be made to the 1963 Convention at Kansas City, Mo.

Some Baptist churches in western Canada already send messengers to the Baptist General Convention of Oregon-Washington, the state convention with which they cooperate.

But Article II of the SBC Constitution has been interpreted as barring Canadians and all others outside the United States from coming as messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Other Baptist groups in Canada have protested the proposed admission of Canadian messengers to the SBC. Messengers are elected by local churches to vote on Convention business.

The Canadian seating question was one of the major items of business before the 1962 SBC at San Francisco.

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