

December 12, 1963

**Atlanta Church Votes
On Seating Negroes**

ATLANTA (BP)--Atlanta's First Baptist Church, scene of intermittent picketing by Negroes for eight months, is voting on whether to drop racial bars in its sanctuary.

Deacons of the church established a policy several years ago which resulted in Negroes being ejected from the sanctuary last April. The church was one of two which did not admit Negroes two years ago when representatives of organized groups visited 12 churches.

A ballot mailed to the membership under deacon sponsorship asked a vote on this statement: "After careful communion with God, under the divine leadership of his Holy Spirit, and without persuasion from any person, are you in favor of seating in the main sanctuary all who come to attend our services irrespective of race, creed or color?"

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**Decatur Family Has
Deacons Three Deep**

(12-12-63)

DECATUR, Ga. (BP)--You have to be specific in the First Baptist Church here when you call on Deacon Guy Rutland. There are three of them.

Guy Jr., now a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board and formerly a trustee of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, was ordained in 1937 at the age of 24.

Guy Sr., formerly a member of the Home Mission Board, was 49 when ordained in 1941.

Guy Rutland 3rd was ordained the other day at the age of 26.

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**Many Jewish Friends
Sent Hanukkah Cards**

(12-12-63)

ATLANTA (BP)--Many Christians remembered their Jewish friends at Christmas time with Hanukkah cards, noting the Jewish observance of the Festival of Lights.

Hanukkah begins Dec. 11. Eight days long, it commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over Antiochus of Syria and their rededication of the defiled Temple at Jerusalem.

Southern Baptists were prompted also to remember their Jewish friends this way by William B. Mitchell, Atlanta, an officer of the Convention's Home Mission Board.

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**Tapscott Resigns;
Takes Church Post**

(12-12-63)

DALLAS (BP)--L. H. Tapscott, secretary of the Brotherhood department for the Baptist General Convention of Texas here, has been elected minister of education for the 6,700-member Cliff Temple Baptist Church of Dallas.

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Tapscott has directed statewide Brotherhood work in Texas for the past 18 years. He assumes the local church position Jan. 1.

Before becoming secretary of the Texas Baptist Brotherhood department in 1945, Tapscott was for eight years minister of education at the First Baptist Church of Dallas, working with the late Dr. George W. Truett, pastor.

A native of Alabama, Tapscott was previously education director at First Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; field worker for the Tuscaloosa Baptist Association; Baptist Student Union director at the University of North Carolina, and Training Union field worker for the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

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(EDITORS: The following story must not be published in any paper, Baptist or otherwise, before Wednesday, Dec. 18.)

Faith, Message Action
Rated Top 1963 News

(12-12-63)

By the Baptist Press

Renewed expressions of Baptist beliefs and doctrines, including an official statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, were rated the top news story of 1963 among Southern Baptists.

In a Baptist Press poll of editors of state Baptist newspapers from the Atlantic Coast to Alaska and Hawaii, this story won six first-place votes, 15 second-place votes and 251-1/2 total points.

Southern Baptists and the racial issue in America received 10 votes for first place in the poll, to which 32 editors responded. But it secured only one second-place mention and thus, with 215 points, was the second most important SBC story of the year.

The five-week crusade, known as the Japan Baptist New Life Movement, attracted six first-place votes and two for second place. It tallied 198 points and was the third-rated news story of 1963 in the denomination.

Baptist reaction to the United States Supreme Court ruling on required Bible reading and prayer in the public schools was considered of fourth importance. It had three first-place votes, six marks for second place, and a score of 181-1/2 points.

First-place mark was equal to 10 points in the scoring system; second-place for nine points, and so on, until 10th rating by an editor scored only one point for the story indicated. Editors balloted on nearly 25 stories in making their choices.

Two editors volunteered the remarks, on their ballots, that 1963 was not one of the newsiest years in the denomination. The scattering of first-place votes among eight stories (one of which failed to get enough points to make the top 10) seems to confirm the indecision of the editors. Past years' ballots have often made one story dominant, with considerably less distribution of first-place marks.

Other stories in the top 10, their position, points and first-place votes follow:

5. Continued discussion of academic freedom within the denomination--139-1/2 points, three first-place markings.

6. Response by Baptists to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy--121 points, two first places.

7. The SBC Foreign Mission Board reaching a long-awaited goal of 1800 missionaries under appointment--120 points, no first places and only one second-place mark, but enough other scores to make high rank.

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8. The coverage of the 1963 session of Vatican Council II by Baptist Press News reporter--92 points and one first place.

9. Southern Baptists passing the 10 million mark in total membership of churches to become the largest evangelical denomination in the United States--75 points, but no first or second-place choices.

10. Baptist concern over church-state issues in the higher education bill, still stymied in Congress as 1963 drew to a close--69 points and no first or second-place nominations.

The action of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina on a plan to reshape the selection of trustees for Wake Forest College there won a first-place vote from one editor, but no second-place mark and little other scoring. Its 56 points were not enough to reach top 10.

Incidentally, it was an editor outside North Carolina who gave the unsuccessful Wake Forest effort to secure out-of-state and non-Baptist trustees a first-place marking.

The SBC, in a noisy and prolonged 1963 session at Kansas City, Mo., approved by an overwhelming vote its first Statement on Faith and Message since the 1925 Convention adopted such a statement.

The statement passed with such a heavy favoring vote it startled some Convention observers. It contained 17 sections on the Scriptures, God, man, salvation, grace, baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Day, the kingdom, last things, evangelism and missions, stewardship, cooperation, the church and the social order, peace and war, religious liberty, education, and the church.

The section on the church drew opposition but remained unchanged from the wording recommended by the committee which drafted the statement.

Three months later, a Baptist Jubilee Committee in the SBC released a five-point statement on Baptist ideals. They were offered as "guidelines" rather than for official adoption. They covered (1) authority, (2) the individual, (3) the Christian life, (4) the church and (5) "our continuing task."

The committee said its purpose was "to exalt our ideals; to sound both clearly and concisely our basic convictions regarding them; to correct unwise and hurtful trends among us; to unify and inspire our people..."

On race, Baptist churches in several states were sites of "kneel-ins." Some churches welcomed Negro worshippers; others turned them away; in Virginia and Louisiana those who tried to visit two Southern Baptist churches were arrested.

A Baptist Press survey found practice of churches on welcoming Negroes to range from none in Mississippi and Louisiana to widespread acceptance in California, Alaska and elsewhere.

Baylor University, Waco, Tex., the largest Baptist college in the world, voted to admit Negroes and to permit them to compete on sports squads. Mercer University, Macon, Ga., received both foreign and American Negroes as students.

Hawaii Southern Baptists called for integration of Southern Baptist churches and institutions throughout the country. Texas Baptists took a detailed statistical poll of their churches on the policy of admitting Negroes to worship services and to membership.

Kentucky prepared to take a similar poll during 1964.

The Japan Baptist New Life Movement resulted in more than 22,000 decisions for Christ. The Japan Baptist Convention, the SBC Foreign Mission Board and the Baptist General Convention of Texas cosponsored it.

Baptist editors, based on their editorial reaction to the Supreme Court ruling against required Bible reading and prayers in the public schools, generally agreed with the ruling.

Academic freedom was one of the items raised in the section on education in the new Statement on Faith and Message. When read at Kansas City, it drew thunderous applause. The matter of academic freedom also was a major topic before the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Baptist Colleges and Schools.

The association includes presidents and deans of Southern Baptist colleges and universities.

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PLEASE NOTE: Do not release top 10 story in your Baptist paper or for use in any paper whatever before Wednesday, Dec. 18. The early forwarding of this is to permit you to make room for it in your last issue before Christmas.

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Alabama Board Elects
Claude T. Ammerman

(12-12-63)

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--Claude T. Ammerman has been elected assistant to the executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist State Convention here. He took office immediately.

Ammerman, a graduate of Georgetown College (Baptist), Georgetown, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, was pastor in Troy, Ala., 16 years. For the past five years, he has been with the convention office here as secretary of the ministers' retirement department.

He will have charge of stewardship promotion, general administration and the retirement program for Baptist ministers and vocational workers.

Announcement of Ammerman's promotion was made by Executive Secretary George E. Bagley of Montgomery, who was recently promoted from assistant executive secretary when A. Hamilton Reid retired from the executive secretaryship.

The convention board, in addition to electing Ammerman, voted to begin a girls' camp and a boys' camp at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly near Talladega, Ala. It also determined how to allocate \$500,000 for mission work in the state.

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December 12, 1963

Baptists Mark 150 Years
Of Progress, 1814-1964

by W. C. Fields

A lot of things happened in 1814!

The British captured Washington and set fire to the Capitol, the White House and the Navy Yard. The Creek Indian War ended as General Andrew Jackson defeated Chief Weatherford in a big battle at Horseshoe Bend, Ala.

The first steam-powered warship, Demologos, designed and constructed by Robert Fulton, was launched in New York harbor that year. Francis Scott Key wrote the words to the U. S. national anthem while detained aboard a British warship during the shelling of Fort McHenry near Baltimore.

The year 1814 was also a major milepost in Baptist history.
in America

The first national Baptist organization/came into being May 18, 1814. Thirty-three delegates from eleven states and the District of Columbia met in Philadelphia and organized "The General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions." In popular usage the name was switched to "The Triennial Convention."

Brought together largely because of the missionary work of Adoniram Judson and the fund-raising, organizing activities of Luther Rice, The Triennial Convention marked the beginning of a faster pace in the spread of the Baptist movement in America.

In 1814 there were 2,468 Baptist churches with 190,281 members in 25 states. By the fiftieth anniversary of The Triennial Convention in 1864 there were 16,191 churches with 1,187,974 members. In 1914 at the 100th anniversary of the organization, Baptists had grown to 52,973 churches and 7,149,878 members. As we move into 1964 and the 150th anniversary of The Triennial Convention the number of Baptist churches in America has increased to 91,500. Membership has climbed to more than 22,300,000. Baptists constitute the second largest religious group in America, being exceeded only by Roman Catholics.

For the past five years seven Baptist bodies in the United States and Canada have been cooperating in Baptist Jubilee Advance, a series of annual emphases and activities leading up to the Third Baptist Jubilee Year of 1964.

Chief event of the year will be the Third Baptist Jubilee Celebration, May 22-24, in Atlantic City, N. J. Baptists from over the United States and Canada are expected to fill the 40,000-seat Convention Hall there for one of the most significant Baptist gatherings in the past century and a half.

Speakers for the occasion include the former Prime Minister of Canada, John G. Diefenbaker, a Baptist; evangelist Billy Graham; John Soren of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, president of the Baptist World Alliance; Kenneth Scott Latourette, professor emeritus of Yale University, noted Baptist historian; and others. Presiding over the meeting will be Theodore F. Adams, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., and a former president of the Baptist World Alliance.

An oratorio, "What is Man?," written especially for the occasion will be performed during the meeting by the Singing City Choirs of Philadelphia with accompaniment by members of the Baltimore Symphony orchestra.

Earlier during the week (May 18-22) both the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Convention will meet in separate sections of Convention Hall, Atlantic City. This will be the first time since 1936 that these two national bodies have met in annual session in the same city at the same time.

The other Baptist bodies sharing in the Baptist Jubilee Year events and emphases are: Baptist Federation of Canada; National Baptist Convention of America; National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; North American Baptist General Conference; and the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

During the year the theme before Baptist churches will be "For Liberty and Light." Suggested activities for the churches include study courses with specially prepared texts on Baptist heritage, the circulation of books on Baptist history through church libraries, sponsoring the reading of the New Testament through by each member during the year, conducting a "Baptist Jubilee Revival," increasing financial support of mission causes, and the study of Baptist ideals.

In connection with the anniversary, a sixty minute color moving picture, "Magnificent Heritage," has been produced by Broadman Films to tell the story of John Leland, an early Baptist leader in America. It will be released through Baptist Book Stores in late May.

During the Baptist Jubilee Year the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention hopes to reach a goal of 2,000 missionaries under appointment. The SBC Radio and Television Commission in cooperation with NBC-TV will present a film on the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. An anniversary volume, Baptist Advance, will be released by Broadman Press in connection with the Atlantic City meeting. Other special projects, activities and emphases are under way among the many other Baptist organizational units.

A combined Baptist exhibit will be located in The Protestant and Orthodox Center of the New York World's Fair when it opens April 22.

No mergers are being proposed among these Baptist bodies, but the cooperation among them during the past five years indicates that mutual support for common objectives and activities can be expected to increase. A proposed North American Baptist Fellowship of the Baptist World Alliance would be one of the principal avenues through which members of this burgeoning Baptist family would continue to work together in the future.

When The Triennial Convention was established in 1814 The War of 1812 with England was still going. During the First Baptist Jubilee in 1864 the American Civil War was raging. The Second Baptist Jubilee fell in the fateful year, 1914, when the first Great War of the world broke out. Coming upon this new milepost, the Third Baptist Jubilee, this 150th anniversary, there is at least some semblance of peace.

Baptists enter 1964 with prayer, hope and dedication that the next fifty years leading to the year 2,014 may indeed be a half-century "For Liberty and Light."