

# BAPTIST FEATURES

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A BAPTIST NEWS SERVICE

Special reports on Baptist programs,  
activities, trends, and newsmakers.

FROM WASHINGTON OFFICE  
W. BARRY GARRETT, REGIONAL EDITOR  
1628—16th St., N. W., Washington, 9, D. C.  
Telephone: ADams 2-1760

January 13, 1964

Baptists In 115 Countries Will  
Observe World Fellowship Sunday

by C. E. Bryant\*

Baptist churches from the cathedral-like structures of American cities to the grass tabernacles of remote New Guinea will observe Baptist World Fellowship Sunday, Feb. 2.

The date, the first Sunday of each February, is marked by the Baptist World Alliance as a time for the world's 25 million Baptists to think of their common faith, to pray for one another, and to seek, according to the Scriptures, to "bear one another's burdens."

Josef Nordenhaug, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, Washington, D.C., said that Baptists "live, worship, and witness" in 115 countries. Seventy-six Baptist conventions in 56 countries hold membership in the Alliance, which is a voluntary body for purposes of "fellowship, service and cooperation."

Joao F. Soren, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Rio de Janeiro, is president of the Alliance, elected to serve between 1960 and 1965 Baptist World Congress sessions.

In a special message for reading in the churches on Baptist World Fellowship Sunday, Soren and the Alliance secretariat called attention to 1964 as a worldwide Baptist year of evangelism and declared:

"The world today stands in need of a fresh outpouring of Christian love, for we live in a world of hate and violence. Suspicion and fear engender strife between neighbors, nations and races."

Love, the statement asserted, "is a way of life, rather than a mere high-sounding declaration." Christian love, it continued, is "a revolutionary force...not satisfied with things as they are." And thirdly, the Baptist officials said, "Christian love is the invincible motive for all Christian work."

The statement laments that churches not always lead in promulgation of love. "Strife has, perhaps, made the world vaguely aware of its need for love, but the world does not seem to expect much help from churches where love is often lacking among those who profess to be Christians.

"Let us remind ourselves, this Baptist World Alliance Sunday, that Christian love is rooted in the nature of God and his revelation of himself in Jesus Christ."

Baptists trace their modern beginning to the founding of a church by English separatists headed by John Smythe at Amsterdam, Holland, in 1609, though minority groups throughout Christian history have adhered to the doctrine of individual soul liberty and congregational government which are distinctives of the Baptist tradition. The first Baptist church in America was founded by Roger Williams at Providence, R.I. in 1639 after he had been exiled from Massachusetts because of his insistence on religious liberty for individual believers.

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The spread of Baptists to 115 countries has been due primarily to the work of missionaries, though migration carried the faith to parts of South America and Africa. The Baptist movement in the U.S.S.R., where 5000 Baptist churches now list 560,000 members despite that nation's atheistic government, is indigenous. It began in 1867 when Nikolai Voronin, a merchant at Tiflis, arrived at his own set of doctrines after reading a Bible he had borrowed from the Orthodox church.

Nordenhaug said the worldwide fellowship is nurtured by publications and correspondence, visits by Alliance officials, relief projects to those in need, the meetings of study commissions to plan and promote programs of common interest to all Baptists, and international congresses. A Baptist Youth World Conference met in July 1963 in Beirut, Lebanon, and a Baptist World Congress, the 11th in a series which began in 1905, will meet at Miami Beach, June 25-30, 1965.

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\*C. E. Bryant is Publications Director, Baptist World Alliance, Washington, D. C.

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Colleges Plan Study On  
Future Baptist Policy

WASHINGTON (BP)--Fifty Baptist college educators voted to request a special study on the effect of federal aid to higher education on Baptist education in America.

(The Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, enacted by the first session of the 88th Congress and signed by President Johnson, provides \$1.2 billion for the nation's colleges both public and private. The act provides both grants and loans for academic facilities.)

The action was taken at the close of a fellowship meeting of American Baptist and Southern Baptist college representatives at the Mayflower Hotel here. They were in Washington to attend a meeting of the Council of Protestant Colleges and Universities, with which many of the Baptist schools are affiliated.

This was the second joint meeting of the American and Southern Baptist educators. The other took place in Cleveland two or three years ago. The purpose of the meetings is for fellowship and discussion of mutual problems and issues in higher education.

Rabun L. Brantley is executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Education Commission. Robert Evan Davis is director of the Division of Christian Higher Education for the American Baptist Convention.

R. Orin Cornett, director of the Division of Higher Education of the United States Office of Education, addressed the Baptist educators. The Office of Education has conducted similar orientation seminars in other parts of the nation to help college administrators understand the new college aid bill.

The decision to ask for a study on the effects of the new program of federal aid to colleges came after remarks by Weimer K. Hicks, president of Kalamazoo (Mich.) College, which serves an American Baptist constituency. J. Ollie Edmunds, president of Stetson University at DeLand, Fla., a Southern Baptist school, made the proposal for the study.

Hicks told the group that Kalamazoo had never accepted a dime of aid for any purpose from the federal government. But now the college board has voted to make application for federal funds. The reason that the school shifted its position, explained Hicks, is simple. "Our decision was based on the reasoning that if you can't beat them, join them," he said.

Edmunds said that Stetson University would probably be the only private school in Florida that is not making application for federal grants. However, he said, "We are going to move rapidly at Stetson to get loans" from the government. He did not indicate what the future policy of the school might be toward federal grants.

In calling for the special study Edmunds said that the findings should be made available to pastors and leading laymen in the states. "An impartial, factual study might give us opportunity to say some things collectively that we would hesitate to say individually," he said.

The Florida college president said that this study should be done by the educators themselves. He said that the conferences sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs were not representative of the views of the educators. He felt that the

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educators were able to express only a minority view in these conferences. (In 1962 the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs conducted a conference on church-state problems in higher education. Baptist leaders in the nation were invited, including the college presidents. Many of them were present and participated in the conference.)

"I would hate for us to stand by and see a great procession for education move by and then for us to say that we won the battle for a principle (separation of church and state) but lost it for education," Edmunds said.

The request for the study of federal funds and Baptist education was referred to the Southern Baptist Education Commission and the Division of Christian Higher Education of the American Baptist Convention. Indications were that the study would be undertaken immediately.

Cornett expressed the opinion that a substantial amount of the federal funds would go to private colleges. He reported that one state at least was considering dividing its allotment 60 per cent to private and 40 per cent to public schools. The reason, he explained, is that this would save the state the problem of building more public colleges in certain areas.

During the meeting the view was expressed that the pattern of policy on Baptist schools and federal funds would be uneven and changing. Some state Baptist bodies may allow their colleges to accept federal funds while others may refuse. It was pointed out that American Baptist colleges would be freer in this respect because most of them are independent and loosely related to the denomination. Most Southern Baptist colleges are owned directly by the Baptist state conventions.

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Baptist College  
Gets Federal Loan

(1-13-64)

WASHINGTON (BP)--One Baptist university and eight other church-related colleges received \$7,027,000 in college housing loans in November and December, according to reports from the Housing and Home Finance Agency of the Community Facilities Administration.

Mercer University, a Baptist institution in Macon, Ga., was approved for a \$1,250,000 loan. The funds are to be used for construction of two residence halls.

The other eight church-related colleges include five Roman Catholic, and one each of Methodist, Evangelical Reform, and Society of Friends.

During the same two month period requests for loans totaling \$69,104,950 were received from 56 colleges and universities. Of these, 19 are church-related schools, including one Baptist, Grand Rapids (Mich.) Baptist Bible College.

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Russian Baptists Cordial  
To American Visitors

(1-13-64)

WASHINGTON (BP)-- Baptist leaders visiting in the U.S.S.R. found "a warmth of hospitality not only on the part of the Baptist people but on the part of Russian people generally."

Robert S. Denny, associate secretary of the Baptist World Alliance here, noted that audiences to which he and three other visitors spoke were "particularly sympathetic and responsive."

The visiting group included Harold E. Stassen of Philadelphia, president of the American Baptist Convention; Paul S. James of New York, vice-president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Alfonso Olmedo of San Luis, Argentina, a vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance; and Denny.

They spent 12 days in the Soviet Union as guests of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, an organization representing the Soviet Union's 5000 Baptist churches. They visited Moscow, Leningrad, Tbilisi and Baku.

This was the second group of Baptists to visit Russian Baptists recently. Ernest A. Payne, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and Erik Ruden, associate secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, made a trip in December.

Denny said that they talked with the minister of religious cults, who oversees government relations with religious groups in the Soviet Union. There was reason to believe, Denny said, that "the cordial attitude which we enjoyed will continue."

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Hardin-Simmons Votes  
To Discontinue Football

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--The Hardin-Simmons University board of trustees voted here to discontinue the Baptist school's intercollegiate football program.

The action was taken in order to stop a mounting deficit in the athletic program and to "accelerate progress of the university's academic objectives," said board chairman W. B. Irvin of Dallas.

During the past ten years, losses in the Hardin-Simmons athletic program have mounted to nearly \$1 million.

Hardin-Simmons, although it is dropping football, will seek continued membership in the new Texas conference for competition in basketball, track, and other sports.

Hardin-Simmons President James H. Landes said that the athletic financial problem had been critical for several years, and that the board of trustees had pledged to solve the problem itself "prior to my acceptance of the presidency." Landes, former Wichita Falls, Tex., Baptist pastor, became president April 2, 1963.

The board announced no decision on what will happen to the school's two football coaches, Floyd Huggins and Jim Gray.

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Seminary Breaks Ground,  
Announces New Expansion

(1-13-64)

FORT WORTH (BP)--Ground was broken here on a new \$1 million student center building at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and plans were announced for a complete expansion program to be completed by 1966 if possible.

The new student center, scheduled for completion in November, will house all food services including a main cafeteria, snack and refreshment areas, and special dining and banquet rooms.

It will also include reception areas, meeting rooms, a formal parlor, offices, lounges, lockers for commuting students, a theater area, bookstore, student store, and post office.

Plans announced during the groundbreaking ceremonies also called for a complete expansion program that will include remodeling of residence halls, a children's building as part of the religious education school, additional apartment housing for married students, and an entire physical fitness block with a swimming pool, golf putting course, and gymnasium.

J. T. Luther, chairman of the seminary's building committee, outlined future construction plans during the ceremonies.

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Literacy Workshop May Aid  
Texas Latin Evangelism

(1-13-64)

WACO, Tex. (BP)--A Baptist literacy workshop for groups dedicated to evangelism through teaching illiterates how to read will be held at Baylor University July 13-17.

The workshop, planned as a pilot project for future such church-centered local programs, is jointly sponsored by the Language Missions Department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Baylor University.

The workshop will tie in closely with the statewide Latin American Baptist New Life Crusade sponsored by Texas Baptists. The crusade will utilize about 1,500 laymen and 600 ministers and singers throughout Texas August 30-October 11.

The literacy workshop will be limited to approximately 25 pastors of Latin American Baptist churches who will attend under scholarships provided by the Texas convention and approximately 100 members of the Woman's Missionary Union.

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Baptist Press

Baylor's new emphasis on literacy teaching is designed especially to furnish trained personnel along with literature for Baptist churches in Texas which sponsor local literacy teaching programs.

"The workshop will tie in with the Latin American crusade primarily as an ongoing and conservation project," said Dallas P. Lee, secretary of the Texas Baptist Language Missions Department.

"It will keep open the doors to many homes for our churches which have made initial approaches through the crusade," said Lee. "It will be a help for local pastors in giving a needed service to the people of their communities. It will make friends for Baptists wherever the need for literacy teaching occurs--and this is everywhere in our state."

Texas has 2½ million Latin Americans. The incidence of illiteracy is high in this population group. Response to literacy classes among Latin Americans is enthusiastic.

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