

March 2, 1965

Survey Asked To Probe
Church Vocation Field

NASHVILLE (BP)--A survey has been requested to find out if there is a reduction in the number of young people entering church-related work and whether a personnel shortage looms in denominational life.

The survey, asked for here by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, would be made by the research and statistics department of the SBC Sunday School Board. The vocational guidance program leader would work with the research and statistics department.

"For several years Southern Baptists have been disturbed about the apparent reduction of the number of young people entering ministry and other church-related vocations as revealed in enrolment reports of the colleges and seminaries," the Executive Committee was told in a resolution introduced by committeeman Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss.

"The natural and warrantable assumption is that if the decline increases or even remains at the present rate, there will be shortages of personnel for the churches and Convention agencies," the statement continued.

No "really comprehensive study of the total picture of needed supply and demand" has been made to back up the statement with statistics, the Executive Committee learned further.

The survey requested would take into account the needs of churches for pastors, ministers of education and ministers of music at the present rate of SBC growth or if the rate accelerates. It would also consider the personnel needs of agencies of state Baptist conventions and the SBC.

The extent of education obtained by church-related vocational workers would be involved in the survey.

The factors associated with present call into church-related work would be suggested as a part of the survey. Answered too would be the question, Why are young people leaving the various ministries after professional training and long experience?

-30-

Move Of '68 Convention
To New Site Proposed

3-2-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--Moving the site of the 1968 Southern Baptist Convention session from Jacksonville, Fla., to Miami Beach has been recommended.

Because of limited housing close-in to the Jacksonville auditorium and the request of Jacksonville Baptist Pastors' Conference that their city be host at some later date than 1968, the change will be recommended to the SBC at Dallas in June.

Jacksonville was formally approved by the Southern Baptist Convention which met in Kansas City in 1963.

The SBC met in Miami Beach in 1960. The same convention hall there will be used this summer for the meeting of the Baptist World Congress. Miami Baptists said they would welcome the Convention if it were moved to Miami Beach.

The Dallas Convention also will vote on the site of the 1970 Convention session, but no recommendation has been made so far on the 1970 location.

The SBC Executive Committee, which handles Convention arrangements, studies the invitations to the Convention for future meeting places and informs the SBC Committee on Time, Place and Preacher of those which meet the requirements for auditorium and housing. The recommendation of site, made five years in advance, comes to the messengers for voting through the report of the Committee on Time, Place and Preacher.

-30-

Credentials Committee
Proposed To Convention

NASHVILLE (BP)--The naming of a credentials committee has been proposed to assist the Southern Baptist Convention registration secretary "regarding the registration and seating of messengers" to the annual Conventions.

This proposal, coming from the SBC Executive Committee, will be voted on in June in Dallas by the 1965 session of the SBC.

The registration secretary would have the assistance and advice of the proposed credentials committee when someone without credentials wished to register as a messenger, or when there was a question of how many messengers a church was entitled to register, or on other similar matters.

Several changes in the wording of the SBC constitution are recommended and other procedure changes proposed affecting messenger registration. These all developed from the study by a three-member special committee on registration and procedures, authorized by the SBC in Atlantic City.

The committee included two former SBC presidents and a seminary professor of church history. J. W. Storer of Nashville, now executive secretary of Southern Baptist Foundation, an SBC agency, was chairman. The other former Convention president was J. D. Grey, New Orleans. Robert A. Baker of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, completed the committee.

Other recommendations from the special committee, approved by the Executive Committee for Convention voting in Dallas, include (1) a rephrased statement in the SBC constitution designed to make clearer the method of election of messengers in the churches, (2) provision for earlier registration of messengers at the Convention city, and (3) microfilming of registration cards of messengers for legal and historical reasons.

The special credentials committee would be named by the SBC president each year in conference with the vice-presidents of the Convention. The committee, appointed at least 30 days before the Convention was to open, would consist of seven qualified members of churches cooperating with the SBC.

The present language of the SBC constitution at one point concerning appointment of messengers in the churches is: "The messengers shall be appointed and certified by the churches to the Convention, but no church may appoint more than ten (10)."

Messenger election would be interpreted thus: "That a messenger to the sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention must be a member of the church that elects him or her. This election to be done in a business session of the church, and the registration card to be signed and dated by either the pastor, moderator or church clerk."

The bylaws of the Convention would be "so interpreted as to allow for Monday registration when said Convention begins its sessions on Tuesday evening."

The special three-member committee said they hoped the credentials committee would have its first effect in 1966 at Detroit.

Storer said the special study group was aided in research by the SBC Historical Commission. This research found that at the 1963 Convention in Kansas City, Mo., "only 6,643 of our 32,351 churches were represented or about 20 per cent."

The Convention had about 10.5 million members of cooperating churches. Kansas City registration was 12,971, or about .012 per cent of the membership. "And the figures further revealed that although Convention regulations provide that no church have more than 10 messengers, a great many churches had more than 10, one church having 29."

The committee noted that the Convention has no authority over churches or individual Baptists, but it can recommend its rules of procedure, bylaws and business and financial plan.

Vatican Council
Proposal Deleted

NASHVILLE (BP)--A proposal to "consider the sending of a competent scholar to observe and report to Southern Baptists" on the 1965 session of Vatican Council II was deleted from a subcommittee report by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

As recommended to the Executive Committee, the presidents of the six SBC theological seminaries would have been asked to confer and consider sending such a scholar, probably a professor of church history.

It was recalled the Baptist World Alliance declined to accept an invitation to send an official observer to the Council prior to its first session three years ago.

Reuben E. Alley, Richmond, editor of the Religious Herald, had asked for consideration of the matter. He said Southern Baptists would benefit from the presence of a church historian to interpret Council discussions.

John J. Hurt Jr., Atlanta, editor of the Christian Index, told the Executive Committee two Baptist-employed editors had been present for the 1964 Council session. The two were Hurt and W. Barry Garrett, Washington, regional editor for Baptist Press and associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Garrett expects to return to Rome next fall to attend the 1965 sessions as a news reporter. This will be the third straight year he has covered it for Baptist Press, the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

-30-

Michigan Said Ready
For Representation

3-2-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--Michigan, where there are now more than 25,000 Southern Baptists, has been recommended to have representatives on Southern Baptist Convention agencies.

The Convention recognizes a state for having representatives on agencies when it reaches that church membership mark. The SBC Executive Committee will tell the 1965 Convention session at Dallas that Michigan has met requirements and should be included.

The SBC Committee on Boards will have Michigan names ready to nominate to the Dallas Convention if the Convention approves the Executive Committee report.

Most, but not all, Southern Baptist Convention agencies have their membership determined by state representation. The Michigan representatives would be elected to those agencies whose trustees, directors or commissioners are based on state representatives.

The Baptist State Convention of Michigan, which cooperates with the SBC, was organized in 1957. Convention offices are in Detroit. Fred D. Hubbs, Detroit, Michigan Convention executive secretary, presented the membership report to the Executive Committee.

-30-

Downtown Church
Trends Under Study

3-2-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--Shall we move or stay where we are? is the question faced by one downtown church after another, and which some have answered by moving and others resolved by staying put.

More statistics or research help is needed from Southern Baptist sources, according to a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee whose church is faced with the question.

The church is Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, of which Hugh R. Bumpas is pastor. Bumpas brought the matter to the attention of the Executive Committee, asking for help for his and other downtown churches.

-more-

In its semiannual meeting here, the Executive Committee proposed "that in view of the magnitude of the downtown church problem that the Department of Metropolitan Missions of the Home Mission Board working closely with the Church Administration Service of the Baptist Sunday School Board study the trends. . ."

The procedures of the departments of the two SBC agencies will be reviewed by the Convention's Inter-agency Council and the report will be made to the meeting of the Executive Committee in September.

One of the trends which Bumpas said these churches need to determine is whether downtown churches which moved have fared better than those which decided to remain in their downtown location.

-30-

SBC Group Approves
Press Coverage Policy

3-2-65

NASHVILLE (BP)--The sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in which the full committee is at work are open to press coverage and discussions and actions are "on the record."

"On the record" means votes may be reported as well as what is said during discussion and who says it. Only exception is when "good and sufficient" reasons are stated, certain statements may be made "off the record"--that is, not for publication.

Subcommittees of the Executive Committee, which consider matters referred by the full committee for study and a report back to the full group, are also open to press attendance. Here, "background rules" apply.

"Background rules" mean that no direct quotation may be made in press reporting and there can be no attribution of remarks to any speaker, according to the Executive Committee.

The "right and responsibility to conduct executive sessions in unusual circumstances," by the full committee and subcommittee, was recognized. Among "unusual circumstances" under which the press would be forbidden access, would be "consideration of certain delicate personality and personnel matters which could not be handled wisely in open session without unnecessarily embarrassing individuals."

The policy on press reporting was adopted by the Executive Committee at its semi-annual session here. It applies to denominational and secular press.

Staff and members of the Executive Committee are to "provide every assistance possible to members of the press to enable them to do accurate, complete and well balanced reporting."

-30-

College Promotes 2

3-2-65

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--Two Oklahoma Baptist University administrators here were promoted to vice-president by the school's trustees. Evans T. Moseley, assistant to the president, was appointed vice-president, with chief area of responsibility in public relations, and Eugene T. Lucas, treasurer-comptroller, was elected vice-president and treasurer, with primary responsibility in finance, buildings and grounds.

-30-

Eugene Patterson
Leaves Grand Canyon

3-2-65

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Eugene N. Patterson has resigned as president of Grand Canyon College here to accept the position of promotional secretary of Baldwin County Baptist Association in Alabama.

He has been president at the college since Aug. 1, 1959. Before coming to Arizona he was a professor in the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for 14 years.

Patterson received his bachelor of arts degree at Howard College (Baptist), Birmingham, and three degrees at New Orleans Seminary including the doctor of theology.

Mrs. Patterson is a native of Alabama. The Pattersons have one daughter, Jean Marie, whose husband is a pastor in Pensacola, Fla.

Baldwin County Association covers a section of southern Alabama between Pensacola and Mobile.

-30-