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**Presidents Hard to Find  
In Alaska Convention**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)--Presidents of the state Baptist convention are hard to come by in Alaska. No one, especially a pastor, wants the job.

Since 1957, only two men have "survived" the job---that is, completed the term of service as president.

One survivor is a layman, James Whisenant, the only layman ever elected president of the Alaska Baptist Convention.

The other is Felton H. Griffin, veteran first president of the convention elected at its organization in 1946. Griffin, a pastor, held the office three other times, the last in 1959.

Two convention presidents died in office.

John R. Canning, Anchorage pastor elected the 17th president last August, died while preaching in a revival in Tacoma, Wash., on Feb. 3. In May of 1964, Aubrey Short, also a pastor and the 15th convention president, was killed in an Anchorage plane crash.

Five pastors moved from the state during their terms of office. Another resigned his church, although remaining in the state.

Alaska pastors are not usually superstitious, but it is as hard to get one of them to take the presidency as it is to get the proverbial calf through a new gate. The last man nominated was proposed "the man most likely to leave the state."



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Tornado Destroys Baptist  
Church in Mississippi

By Joe Abrams

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--A killer tornado completely destroyed the building of the Woodville Heights Baptist Church here and the church parsonage, but the congregation, undaunted, reported its largest attendance in history and two professions of faith the Sunday following the tragedy.

The church building and the adjoining pastor's home were in the direct path of the devastating tornado which hit Jackson March 3. Both were reduced to rubble by the twister.

More than 60 persons died in the wake of the tornado, and more than 400 were injured by what was described as the worst tornado to hit the state in more than a decade.

G. T. Bryon, pastor of the church for less than a month, was away at the time, but Mrs. Bryon and their ten-year-old son, David, were in the home when the twister hit.

When the house was lifted off its concrete slab by the force of the tornado, Mrs. Bryon clutched her son and cried, "Protect us, God."

Shortly thereafter, the two, still together, were found near Cooper Road about 1,000 feet away and were immediately taken to Hinds General Hospital by a passing motorist.

Mrs. Bryon was in a state of shock and bleeding badly from numerous cuts. David suffered from several cuts and bruises but was released that same day.

The pastor rushed home as soon as he heard of the tornado. He was stunned and shocked to find his church and home demolished, and no trace of his wife and son.

Bryon frantically began a search in the area of the church, and the nearby Candlestick Shopping Center, located only about two blocks away. The shopping center was leveled by the twister and left as a heap of rubble.

After several appeals by radio, Byron finally learned where his family was, and he was happily reunited with them.

Mrs. Bryon has since improved rapidly and is recovering nicely.

The deacons met (Friday) the day following the tornado and made plans for the Sunday morning worship service two days hence.

The service was held in the Oak Forest Elementary School here and was described as a "Thanksgiving service."

Bryon said in his message: "Let us not shed a tear over our loss of material things, but let us give our best to the major task of the church--winning the lost and ministering to the spiritual needs of the church."

The Woodville Heights Baptist Church was organized in 1959. The church plant had been built in two units, one in 1961 and the other in 1964. The home was built in 1963.

Property value of the plant had been set at \$175,000 and was "adequately covered by insurance."

A church office will be established immediately in a residence, and services will be continued in the area, although it was not announced where the services would be held.

Littleford To Head  
Missions In Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (BP)--Warren Littleford, pastor of the Southtown Baptist Church in Minneapolis for 9½ years, has been named superintendent of missions for Southern Baptists in the state of Minnesota.

Littleford will direct the work of the Northland Baptist Association, newly-formed association of Southern Baptist churches in Minnesota.

Littleford, a native of Illinois, came to Minnesota in September of 1956 and began immediately to lead in construction of what is now the Southtown Baptist Church. His resignation as the church's pastor was effective March 1.

Frank B. Burress, of Madison, Wisc., superintendent of the Wisconsin-Minnesota Baptist area, simultaneously announced his resignation of the Minnesota position effective March 1. Burress will continue, however, to direct Baptist missions work in Wisconsin.

Under the new arrangement, Burress will direct Southern Baptist missions work in Wisconsin and Littleford will head missions work in Minnesota.

Burress said that Littleford's assuming the Minnesota missions program was a natural thing. "He's the oldest pastor in the two-state area in tenure of service," and the record of his service as pastor of the Southtown church "has seldom been surpassed in Southern Baptist history," Burress said.

During his ministry, the Southtown church has established seven missions, five of which are now churches. The church has a membership of 300 with 456 enrolled in Sunday School, and an annual budget of \$46,000.

There are now seven Southern Baptist churches and three chapels in Minnesota, all affiliated with the Northland Baptist Association which Littleford will head.

The new missions superintendent will have joint responsibilities under the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board, the Missions Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Northland Baptist Association of Minnesota.

Baptist missions work in Wisconsin and Minnesota is jointly sponsored by the Home Mission Board and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Baptists in the two-state area are affiliated with the Texas Baptist state body.

The Littlefords have one daughter and three sons. They will live at 13700 Colfax Avenue, South, Colonial Hills, Burnsville, Minn. 55378

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Texas Baptists Briefed  
On Operation Penetration

3-7-66

DALLAS (BP)---A Southern Baptist pastor from the "pioneer of the pioneer Baptist Areas" briefed Texas Baptist educational directors on what to expect as they work in Wisconsin-Minnesota Baptist churches in late March.

Kenneth King, pastor of Highland Crest Baptist Church in Green Bay, Wisc., spoke in Dallas to the group of campaign directors from Texas for the "Lake Michigan Operation Penetration" phases of Sunday School adult outreach and witnessing, scheduled March 25-31.

The 22 Southern Baptist churches and six missions in Wisconsin and Minnesota invited the Texas Baptist educational workers to help in the Sunday School effort.

A mass rally in Chicago was scheduled March 11 to kick off the Lake Michigan Operation Penetration, which involves Baptist churches in Illinois and Indiana as well as Wisconsin and Minnesota. Wayne Dehoney, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was slated to speak at the rally.

The educational directors and one pastor from Texas will go as campaign directors to the two-state northern field where they will engage in an intensive week of Sunday School, witnessing, and related activities with one assigned church each.

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King challenged the Texans to prepare for an assignment of unlimited scope in an area of boundless potential. The churches in the pioneer Baptist area are participating in "Operation Penetration" in efforts to strengthen, deepen, and widen their witness across the "pioneer" states.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Baptist Press will provide complete follow-up coverage of the "Operation Penetration" rally slated Friday, March 11, in Chicago, in which Dehoney is to speak. This will be his first address after returning from a six-weeks preaching mission to the Orient. Please note dates in the above story and use before March 25-31.