

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 21, 1966

Baptist School Accepts  
Science Building Grant

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DeLAND, Fla., (BP)--Trustees of Stetson University, a Baptist school here, have voted to accept a government grant of \$501,926 for construction of a science building, Stetson President J. Ollie Edmunds has announced.

The grant, approved by the Florida Commission of Higher Education providing federal funds under the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, will be used to reduce an already approved federal loan of \$1,272,000 from the U.S. Office of Health, Education and Welfare.

Edmunds, who stated he did not feel there was any violation of the principle of separation of church and state involved in accepting the grant, said that the Baptist school actually would not receive federal money under the grant, but that a bookkeeping entry would be made to reduce the amount of the previously-approved federal loan of \$1.2 million.

Stetson becomes the second Baptist college within a year to accept a federal grant for a science building. Furman University in Greenville, S. C., accepted a grant of \$611,898 last fall, but the South Carolina Baptist Convention instructed Furman to return the grant and called on Baptists in the state to raise the \$611,898 instead.

The Stetson grant came at a time when a special committee of the Florida Baptist Convention was studying the church-state separation implications of accepting federal grants and loans by Baptist institutions.

The study was authorized in November when the convention adopted a resolution asking a committee to report back next year on its findings.

The resolution also re-affirmed "that church and state should be separate," and stated that "there are many warning signs that this cherished freedom is being threatened."

"One of the specific areas of dangers," said the resolution, "is in the acceptance of government grants by institutions and agencies of our Baptist life."

Stetson University is a Baptist school, but technically is not owned, operated, and controlled by the Florida Baptist Convention. It is a Baptist, private school which receives much of its financial support from Florida Baptists.

Stetson's trustees are elected by the trustees themselves to form a self-perpetuating board. Under a written "agreement," however, a committee of the Florida Baptist Convention works with a committee of the Stetson trustees in suggesting a list of nominees for trustee consideration. Three-fourths of the trustees must be Baptists, but not necessarily members of Florida Baptist Convention churches.

The Florida Baptist Convention allocated \$269,700 last year to Stetson through its Cooperative Program budget. Florida Baptists gave the school about \$80,000 in additional financial support during the year.

Edmunds, in making the announcement of the trustees' decision to accept the grant, said that the action did not violate any policy of the Florida Baptist Convention or the Stetson board of trustees.

Edmunds said it was regrettable that the trustees' decision could not have been delayed until after the special committee had made its report, but he pointed out that a government restriction requires that any application for a grant must be made within 18 months after a loan for the same project has been approved.

"The committee of trustees which made the recommendation felt that we couldn't afford to wait, or we would have lost forever the \$500,000. The trustees felt it would not have been prudent to pass up the grant," Edmunds said.

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Edmunds also said that the trustees would not have approved the grant had the funds been available from other sources.

He told the Baptist Press he did not feel there is any violation in the principle of church and state in the decision, because there has never been any complete separation of church and state.

"This is not a change in the Stetson trustees' policy, for the trustees and other Baptist schools have been accepting federal subsidies for 75 years. "Anyone who takes a tax exemption accepts government subsidy. It's a matter of how far you go."

The Executive Secretary of the Florida Baptist Convention, John Maguire, said however that the convention as a whole is very much against Baptist institutions' taking federal grants.

"Just as sure as God made little green apples, this is a break in the wall" separating church and state, Maguire said. "Just as sure as anything, other state Baptist Conventions will release control of their schools and turn them over to private boards."

Maguire pointed out the action of the convention in 1946 when a policy was adopted regarding the convention's relationship between two Baptist hospitals which had accepted federal funds under the Hill-Burton Act.

The policy adopted then said: "We deplore the consequent association of the Baptist name with the acceptance of grants from public funds. We earnestly fear that the acceptance of tax moneys by these institutions has weakened the voice of Baptists in Florida in our historic position on separation of church and state, to which principle we do here and now reaffirm our unqualified loyalty."

Edmunds, however, said that the policy did not apply to Baptist educational institutions. He pointed out that in 1903 the Florida Baptist Convention accepted from the state of Florida the title to an entire college campus in Lake City, Fla., by a unanimous vote.

In a release from the Stetson news bureau announcing the trustees' action, Edmunds listed specific ways in which Stetson and other church-related educational institutions have received government aid for nearly 50 years.

He said that Congress has declared a "state of emergency" in building science equipment and research facilities quickly, and that the Stetson trustees had decided to cooperate with the government as it has in all previous emergencies.

"Although preferring to have obtained funds from private sources to construct this science building," Edmunds said, "the trustees have authorized the president to continue to accept federal grants when private funds are not available, and the complete independence of the institution is not threatened in any way."

Edmunds said that the only restriction on the grant was a stipulation that the building could not be used for religious instruction.

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Retired Seminary Prof  
To Be Teaching Minister

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ATLANTA (BP)--A retired seminary professor who left the class room after 30 years of teaching is coming to Atlanta's First Baptist Church to pioneer a teaching ministry for laymen.

E. A. McDowell, who retired from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1964, will have the title of Minister of Teaching.

He will be on the level of an associate pastor serving with a former pupil, Roy O. McClain, who is pastor of the church.

McClain said that in effect McDowell would realize an ambition expressed this way in a newspaper interview shortly before he retired: "If I can be of help to any church in promoting an inner-revival of its life, I'd be happy to be available for that service."

In his new position, McDowell will conduct the weekly study period for Sunday School teachers, direct a special study for Training Union, teach a special Bible course open to members of other churches and also a special class for ministers of the Atlanta area.

McDowell was professor of New Testament interpretation at Southeastern for 12 years and before that was for 17 years a member of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary faculty. The McDowells will move to Atlanta to begin the new program in September.

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Plaque Presented Extolling  
Influence of Baptist Leader

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (BP)--Three Southern Baptist historians presented a plaque to the Philadelphia Baptist Association here praising the contribution of an American Revolution Patriot who founded the Charleston Baptist Association patterned after the Philadelphia Baptist Association.

The plaque honored Oliver Hart (1723-1795), who was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston for 30 years and founder of the Charleston Baptist Association in 1751.

It was presented to the American Baptist Convention affiliated association by two representatives of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society, and by the executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Historical Commission.

The bronze plaque will mark the grave of Hart, buried in a cemetery adjacent to the Southhampton Old School Baptist Meeting House. A weathered stone monument with a barely-visible inscription now marks the grave.

Hart is known among South Carolina Baptists as "the father of the education movement among South Carolina Baptists."

Philadelphia Baptists welcomed the three Southern Baptist historical society representatives to their associational meeting, citing their visit as "a link in fellowship between American and Southern Baptists, who had been tragically divided since the Civil War."

Robert Matherly, moderator of the Philadelphia Association, said that the base of fellowship between American and Southern Baptists can best be restored by such informal visits.

The three Southern Baptists attending the meeting were Charles A. Arrington, president, and Mrs. Ollin J. Owens, secretary, both of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society; and Davis C. Woolley, executive secretary of the SBC Historical Commission.

The plaque they presented cited Oliver Hart as pastor of the Charleston church, founder of the Charleston association, patriot of the American Revolution, father of the education movement among South Carolina Baptists, and pastor of the Baptist Church of Hopewell, N.J.

The Philadelphia Baptist Association was founded in 1707 and is the oldest Baptist association in the nation. The Charleston Baptist Association, founded in 1751 by Hart who patterned the organization after the Philadelphia association, was the second such Baptist Association.

Hart went to Charleston in 1750 and served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Charleston until 1780 when he had to flee from the British. He fled twice from the British and was a leader in an effort to gain support for the American Revolution in South Carolina.

He became pastor of the Baptist church at Hopewell, N. J., in 1780 and continued in this pastorate until his death, Dec. 31, 1795.

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Photo being mailed to State Baptist papers

Seever, Blind, Retires  
From Mobile Pastorate

3-21-66

MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--Harold W. Seever, pastor of the Dauphin Way Baptist Church in Mobile for more than 16 years, has resigned because of almost complete blindness.

Seever, 53, is a former chairman of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, and pastor of the denomination's tenth largest church.

Last April he suffered almost complete loss of vision in both eyes. Since then he has continued as pastor, at the insistence of the church.

The church's deacons drafted a resolution urging Seever to reconsider his decision to retire, but Seever reaffirmed his resignation, saying he felt "it is in the best interest of the Dauphin Way Baptist Church."

Seever is a former president of the Alabama Baptist Convention, and is currently vice

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chairman of the board of trustees for Samford University (formerly Howard College,) Birmingham, Ala.

He is a graduate of Georgetown College (Baptist), Georgetown, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

He was pastor of Baptist churches in Ohio, Kentucky, Richmond, Va., and Florence, S.C., before coming to Mobile in 1949.

Seever and his wife will continue to live at 1957 Old Government Street in Mobile.

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Baptist Unity Meeting  
Planned April 21-22

3-21-66

WASHINGTON (BP)--The fourth annual Conference on Baptist Unity will be held April 21-22 at the First Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., featuring an address on "The Need for Baptist Unity" by William L. Lumpkin, pastor of Freemason St. Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va.

Sponsor of the meeting is the Baptist Unity Movement, a voluntary group of Baptists interested in "healing the divisions among Baptists in the United States," according to a release from the organization's publicity chairman.

The organization has no official connection with either the Southern Baptist Convention or the American Baptist Convention, although ministers and laymen from both conventions are active in the group.

The group is expected to discuss proposed adoption of a constitution and articles of incorporation. Resolutions urging unity might also be considered.

Theme for the meeting will be "Pathways to Unity--Dual Allignment," said Howard Stewart, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dover, Del., and chairman of the conference.

Closing speaker for the meeting will be Sterling Price, pastor of Third Baptist Church in St. Louis, Mo.

Other speakers and panel discussion leaders will include: Herbert J. Gilmore, pastor, Chevy Chase Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., Robert J. Smith, pastor, Salem Baptist Church, Jenkintown, Pa., O.E. Luttrell, Norfolk, Va., and Robert Seymour, pastor, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church, Chapel Hill, N.C.

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