



BAPTIST PRESS

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Baptist Church Leaving Negro Neighborhood

By Billy Keith

FORT WORTH (BP)--A Southern Baptist church will leave the all-Negro Morningside neighborhood here and merge with another church of the same denomination seven miles away.

Evans Avenue Baptist Church, one of the last all-white congregations in the predominantly Negro area of the city, will merge with the Westcliff Baptist Church, the pastors have announced.

Frank Minton, pastor of the Evans Avenue Church, tagged prejudice as the major contributin factor for the church failing to integrate and minister to the needs of its surrounding area.

"Individually our people will witness in the community but not corporately," he said. "This has created a vacuum of witness and has resulted in our not serving the community and thus not fulfilling our responsibility."

"Our people can get concerned about Africans but not about the Negroes across the street," Minton said. "We have been missionary minded in an impersonal way for so long that when the mission field moved next door we didn't know what to do."

Minton has often cautioned his people from the pulpit that some of them are "not right" in their attitudes toward the Negro.

"Some think you are superior to the black man, but if you do it is pure racism," he said.

Minton argued that many Christians in various denominations are trying to buy off their consciences regarding the race issue.

"Our neighbors may be going to hell but we don't want to feel responsible for them," he said. "If we do become responsible then we can no longer be comfortable."

Referring to the church's withdrawal from Morningside, Minton said, "You can grow a vigorous integrated church in an integrated area." But he believes, as do most of his church members, that in a segregated (all Negro) area like Morningside it might be impossible.

According to Minton the Evans Avenue members all live in the suburbs and come in on Sunday morning like commuters and do nothing for the community.

He added that there have been excellent relations with the Negroes living adjacent to the church but none of them have shown an interest in joining the all-white church.

"I believe a Negro Baptist church will be able to win these people," Minton stated. "In an area like this an aggressive Negro church will be able to do much more than a white one."

Evans Avenue church is now negotiating the sale of the church plant for an estimated \$600,000, to a Negro Baptist congregation.

Minton credited Frank Moore, Westcliff pastor, as being the architect for the merger. The two men are now referred to as co-pastors. However, when the merger is completed, Minton will serve as pastor and Moore as associate pastor.

No new name has been chosen but both congregations now refer to the new church as Evans-Westcliff Baptist Church.

September 28, 1966

2

Baptist Press

Texas Administrators
Back Loans Proposal

DALLAS (BP)--The presidents of Texas Baptists' nine colleges and universities and one academy went on record as supporting a church-state proposal which would allow the schools to obtain loans from public funds.

The Texas Baptist School Administrators Association, composed of the presidents of the 10 educational institutions of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, voted to endorse the loans section of a church-state report and recommend its approval at the annual state Baptist convention in Dallas on Nov. 3.

The group recommended the loans provision of a report brought by the church-state study committee of the convention be approved so that the schools would be permitted to borrow money as long as the loan did not involve a subsidy from the government.

The educators reported an urgent need for such funds for 15 dormitory projects now needed to house more than 2,500 additional men and women students at the schools. Projected cost of the projects is in excess of \$9 million.

"Long range financing from such funds would result in savings to students of as much as 40 per cent of the cost of dormitory housing," said Howard C. Bennett, president of East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, Tex.

The exact wording of the study panel's recommendation to which the educators referred, reads:

"We recommend that the Baptist General Convention of Texas approve the securing of long-term, low interest loans from public funds for construction of buildings by Texas Baptist institutions provided the institution voluntarily reimburses the government annually the additional amount of interest which will cover the government subsidy involved in the loan. This amount will be determined by the Treasury Department estimate of cost based on the average rate produced by the going market yield on issues with remaining terms to maturity of 15 years or more at the time the loan is secured plus one-fourth of one per cent per annum for administrative costs. The amount of the subsidy each year will be recommended to the institutions on this basis by the Program Coordinating Committee of the Texas Baptist Executive Board."

Presidents endorsing the loans recommendation represented Baylor University, Waco, Tex.; Dallas Baptist College, Dallas; East Texas Baptist College; Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex.; Houston Baptist College, Houston; Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex.; Mary Hardin-Baylor College, Belton, Tex.; Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, Tex.; University of Corpus Christi in that city; and San Marcos Baptist Academy, San Marcos, Tex.

-30-

Willis Named Controller
For Buckner Benevolences

9/28/66

DALLAS (BP)--W. Dean Willis, business administrator of the First Baptist Church of Dallas for the past 14 years, has been appointed to the administrative staff of Buckner Baptist Benevolences as controller. Willis was elected by Buckner's board of directors, to assume the new duties Oct. 15.

He succeeds James C. Wilson, who has accepted an administrative position with Presbyterian Village, a home for the aging in Dallas.

A native of Ridgecrest, N. C., Willis is a graduate of Mars Hill College (Baptist), Mars Hill, N. C.; and Wake Forest College (Baptist), Winston-Salem, N. C.

Prior to joining the First Baptist Church staff here, Willis was town manager of Black Mountain, N. C. He is a member and former president of the National Association of Church Business Administrators.

As controller, Willis will be responsible for the administration of funds used in the operation of Buckner's nine units of work located in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Lubbock and Burnet, Tex.

Buckner serves more than 2,700 dependent people in Texas each year through its ministries.

-30-

September 28, 1966

3

Baptist Press

Harold Seever Dies
Of Heart Attack

MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--Harold W. Seever, recently retired pastor of the Dauphin Way Baptist Church here and former chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, died Sept. 27 of an apparent heart attack.

Funeral services were held at the Dauphin Way Baptist Church where he had been pastor for 16 years, on Sept. 28.

The new pastor of the church, Jaroy Weber formerly of Beaumont, Tex., and the executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee, Porter W. Routh of Nashville conducted the services.

Seever, 54, had resigned as pastor of the tenth largest church in the SBC last March because of almost complete blindness. He had suffered almost complete loss of vision in both eyes about a year earlier.

Prominent in denominational affairs, Seever was chairman of the SBC Executive Committee from 1963-1965 and was vice president of the SBC Pastors' Conference in 1957. He had also served as a member of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, and the boards of trustees for both Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C.

He was president of the Alabama Baptist convention during 1956 and 1957, and was vice chairman of the board of trustees for Samford University (formerly Howard College), Birmingham, Ala., at the time of his death.

A graduate of Georgetown College (Baptist) in Georgetown, Ky., and Southern Seminary in Louisville, Seever was awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Georgetown College in 1949.

Before becoming pastor of the Dauphin Way Church in Mobile, Seever was pastor of First Baptist Church, Florence, S. C.; Bainbridge Street Baptist Church, Richmond, Va.; and First Baptist Church, Williamstown, Ky.

Survivors are Mrs. Seever, and a daughter, Mrs. Hugh C. Bailey of Birmingham.

-30-

Mississippi Board Votes
Budget, Staff Increases

9/28/66

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board meeting here has adopted a record state Cooperative Program budget for 1966-67 and elected an associate to its stewardship department.

The proposed budget of \$3,470,000 which will be submitted to the state convention in November for approval, is an increase of \$230,000 over the current budget of \$3,240,000.

The board elected N. F. Greer, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Quitman, Miss., to the newly-created post of associate in the stewardship department. Greer will announce his decision at a later date.

In other significant action the board approved a recommendation of the Convention's Education Commission which would permit Blue Mountain College (Baptist) to borrow \$325,000 from private sources for the purpose of building a dormitory for 100 girls.

The new budget is divided into three sections, Southern Baptist Convention causes, state causes and capital needs. The new budget allocates \$1,145,000 for SBC causes, an increase of \$75,800; \$1,890,000 for state causes, an increase of \$135,700; and \$435,000 for capital needs.

-30-