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460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

**REGIONAL OFFICES**

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 1350 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
DALLAS Billy Keith, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996  
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

**BUREAU**

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,  
Telephone (615) 254-1631

October 2, 1969

SBC Central Computer  
Feasible, Committee Says

NASHVILLE (BP)--A central computer service for all Southern Baptist Convention agencies and perhaps state conventions, is feasible by as early as 1975-78, a subcommittee assigned to study the possibility reported here.

The report came from one of four subcommittees of the Southern Baptist Inter-Agency Council Coordinating Committee, which last year set up the study at the request of the council.

Although the committee's report said the central computer service was possible, the council's Coordinating Committee took no action on the report, referring it to another committee which will coordinate the reports of all four committees dealing with computers in the denomination.

The final report from the group, coordinated by J. M. Crowe, associate executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, is scheduled for May of 1970.

It will include the results of four different study projects dealing with the use of computers by SBC agency management and administration, the use of computers by SBC agencies in program planning, the use of computers by Southern Baptist churches, and a study of computer equipment, systems and financing.

Report of the last group was brought to the council's Coordinating Committee by John H. Williams, financial planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee and chairman of the subcommittee study.

Though a central computer servicing the entire denomination would be feasible by 1975-78, it is possible now for the smaller agencies of the convention to depend upon the larger agencies for computer services, the committee reported.

"Possibilities of centralization as to system, costs and quality of service would depend on the needs of the various agencies," said the report. "It would be impossible to evaluate this question without the benefit of specific information from the units interested in such a service."

Williams said the committee sought answers to several basic questions in its study. In brief, the questions dealt with what computer equipment is now or soon to be available, strengths and weaknesses of each, costs involved, compatibility of different systems, and feasibility of a central computer service.

Although no action was taken on them, the subcommittee made six recommendations which were referred to the committee which would coordinate the reports of the four different studies.

The recommendations suggested that a seminar be held for top convention executives covering the entire computer field, that an organization of computer executives within the SBC be created, that duplication of mailing lists be eliminated, that periodic surveys be made of SBC agencies and state conventions to determine existing computer equipment used, that a three-stage process be followed by any Baptist group wishing to install computers, and that a professionally-directed study provide guidelines to SBC agencies in procurement of data processing services, including an appropriate date for central computer services.

Three other major papers were presented to the council's Coordinating Committee, all of which were made available to SBC agency personnel to help them in their work, said Davis C. Woolley, committee chairman and executive secretary of the SBC Historical Commission.

The three papers covered Fundamental Axioms of Effective Promotion, An Orientation Manual for coordinating the cooperative work of all SBC agencies, and a paper on The Evaluation of Programs of Southern Baptist Convention Agencies.

Maryland To Lease Camp,  
Study MU Student Work

LUTHERVILLE, Md. (BP)--The State Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland voted here to lease a 116-acre camp in Southern Maryland for a Royal Ambassador camping program, and to study the feasibility of assuming the Baptist student work program at the University of Maryland.

The camp, located near the Virginia line, is owned by the Boy's Club of Greater Washington, but the Maryland Baptist Convention will have year-round access and control of the facilities during the one-year lease period, with an option for two years.

The Baptist student ministry at the University of Maryland, located at College Park just across the state line from Washington, D.C., presently is the responsibility of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention.

The board voted to recommend to the state convention in November a new mandate for its Christian life and public affairs committee, which previously had no clear convention instructions on its function.

Under the proposed scope and purpose, the committee "shall act for the convention in the field of Christian ethics, public affairs, interfaith cooperation and Christian social concerns." This would include the areas of family life, race relations, human relations, moral issues, economic life, daily work, citizenship, church-state relations, cooperative relations with other religious groups, etc.

Although not specifically mentioned in the proposed document itself, the committee will seek to implement on the state level the concerns of both the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs on the national level.

A progress report was given to the board on construction of a new wing of the Baptist Home (for the aged) of Maryland, indicating that the new \$410,000 wing named in honor of Willoughby McCormick of McCormick Spice Co., would be complete in early 1970.

The board also agreed to allocate \$5,833 to the Pennsylvania South Jersey Baptist Fellowship in 1970 to help the group proceed toward formation of a state convention, possibly in 1971.

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Woman's Work Organized  
In New York Convention

10/2/69

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (BP)--Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) has been organized in Southern Baptists' newest state convention--the Baptist Convention of New York.

The organization will be a department of the state convention, with a subcommittee of the state Executive Board to deal with WMU work. A separate WMU council made up of associational WMU directors and state officers will direct program affairs.

Guidelines for operation, rather than a constitution and bylaws, were adopted by the 160 persons attending an organization luncheon.

Elected president of the women's organization was Mrs. Harmon Sullivan, minister's wife from Niagra Falls. Vice presidents will be the WMU directors from each of the six associations of the convention.

WMU organizations in the new convention were formerly affiliated with the Ohio and Maryland women's groups.

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Haygood Elected Missions  
Secretary For Indiana

10/2/69

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (BP)--R. V. Haygood of Little Rock, Ark., has been elected missions secretary for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, effective Nov. 1.

Since June of 1963, Haygood has been superintendent of missions for the Pulaski County Baptist Association with offices in Little Rock. Previously, he was an associate in the Training Union department of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and a pastor in Arkansas and Texas.

A native of Arkansas, he is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

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He succeeds James H. Currin, who resigned in June to become pastor of an Indianapolis church. The convention's state Executive Board elected Haygood to the post.

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News Director Named  
For Southern Seminary

10/2/69

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Louis Moore of Oklahoma City, a first year theology student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been appointed news director of the seminary and managing editor of the Tie, seminary news magazine.

Moore is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Tex., and a former editor of The Baylor Lariat, campus daily newspaper.

Moore has worked for the Baylor public relations office, the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention as press representative at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, and the Waco News-Tribune as a deskman in the editorial section.

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Baptist Leader Observes  
Devotion Life Collapsing

10/2/69

NASHVILLE (BP)--A Baptist and interdenominational world leader from England told a national consultation on devotional life here that the whole framework of private and family devotional life has in many places collapsed.

Ernest A. Payne of Northampton, England, a vice president of the Baptist World Alliance and a president of the World Council of Churches, made the statement in a conference sponsored by The Upper Room, interdenominational devotional guide published by the United Methodist Church.

Payne, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland from 1951-67, traced the history of development of "an elaborate framework of devotion" and said there are still some places where it remains vital and effective, but in large parts of the Christian world, it has been swept away altogether.

He attributed this to "the motor car, the radio and television, and the changes in social habits" which have "so increased the centrifugal pressures on family life that what went on in and around the church and chapel and in the home in the 19th century are no longer possible."

Payne viewed the development with disdain, saying that piety has to be sustained today in the face of many contrary forces.

Payne was both the major speaker at the three-day consultation on devotional life and at a citation dinner sponsored by The Upper Room honoring Charles C. Parlin, a New Jersey Methodist layman, attorney, corporation board chairman, and World Council leader.

At the consultation, he wryly compared his soft-spoken scholarly style to that of a previous Baptist speaker, Charles E. Boddie, president of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, Nashville, who spoke with great exuberance of the benefits of prayer.

"My style is a little different from that of Dr. Boddie, and that says something about Baptists, I believe," Payne quipped.

Boddie earlier had compared various forms of prayer to punctuation marks, urging the consultation delegates to punctuate life's sentence with prayer.

Another major speaker at the consultation, Thor Hall of Duke University in Durham, N.C., said that many Christians, both ministers and laymen, are questioning the meaning and value of reading from a daily devotion guide such as The Upper Room and other pietistic activities. He called this "a crisis for the concept of Christian devotion itself."

"Either this concept will be lifted out of its traditional shape and form and given a new identity in the present, or it will be buried under the successive layers of lava and ash pouring forth in the eruptions of spiritual creativity in our age," he said.

Hall explained that what he was talking about goes far deeper than the shallowness and narrowness of the image that to be a devoted Christian, one must read the Bible faithfully, have a quiet time each day, and believe in the power of prayer.

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"The problem is that we come to think that doing these things is itself Christian devotion," Hall added. "We easily come to be so occupied with keeping these things going that we miss their real meaning...Christian devotion is not to do certain spiritual exercises; it is to exercise the Christian spirit in all things."

Hall also called for an end to the idea that by such exercises, the Christian makes a bargain with God, fulfilling God's requirements for proper Christian conduct that result in joy, peace, power, success, or whatever it might be.

He suggested that Christian devotion actually involves recognition of the depth of God's reality, reorientation to the Christian perspective in all of life, recapitulation that results in total involvement in the Christian community of faith, reflection of the meaning of life, reorganization of the believer's approach to all things, and responsibility relating devotion to one's outward acts and work.

Questioning the nature of devotion life in the future, Hall observed there will always be a place for cultivating the traditional approaches to spiritual life, but they need to be set within a larger context of a more inclusive view of spirituality.

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*460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HO  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
127 NINTH AVE. N.  
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203

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