

May 25, 1950

127 Ninth Avenue, North

Nashville, Tennessee

NORTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION CHANGES
NAME TO AMERICAN BAPTIST CONVENTION

BOSTON, Mass., May 24--(BP)--The Northern Baptist Convention changed its name today. It shall hereafter be known as the American Baptist Convention. The move was explained by Dr. E. T. Dahlberg, chairman of the Commission on Review, that made the recommendation as consistent with a century-old pattern used in the naming of its agencies. Oldest of the agencies or societies is the American Baptist Publication Society, organized in 1821.

Dr. Dahlberg also explained that the Convention's Constitution, adopted in 1910, contained the opening statement, "The constituency of the Northern Baptist Convention shall be all Baptist churches in the United States which cooperate with its work." The statement indicated, he said, that it had been the purpose of the founding fathers for the Convention to be American in scope. He said that the Commission also felt the name "American" should be assumed before some minority group usurped it. A Massachusetts pastor spoke in opposition to the move saying that the new name would not be an honest description of the Convention. The change was voted almost unanimously.

The Baptist Convention of Arizona was dropped as a constituent body because it had ceased to cooperate with the Northern Convention. Thirty-eight churches were involved. The remaining twenty-four, friendly to the Northern Baptist Convention, will continue to be listed in the official roster. The Arizona Convention is understood to have turned its support to the conservative Baptist group.

All cooperating states were strongly urged to continue sending all funds received from the churches undivided to the Convention for distribution to mission causes. The Commission on Review, in making the recommendation, said that the states had begun withholding money for their own use, a practice, if continued, that would destroy the Northern Baptist Convention mission program. Unlike Southern Baptist procedure, all money contributed by the churches to the states is considered to belong to the whole Convention. The state programs are items of the budget of the Northern Baptist Convention.

The two foreign mission societies and two home mission societies of the Convention were asked to explore the possibilities of uniting to form one foreign society and one home society. Northern Baptist women have maintained separate

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societies for home and foreign missions.

The Baptist World Alliance was asked to provide a regional section for its constituent bodies in America similar to that which it has in Europe. To emphasize the evangelistic responsibility of all its societies, commissions, committees, and councils the Convention voted to disband the special council on world evangelism. Mrs. H. G. Colwell, president, interpreted the move to mean that Northern Baptists were deepening their evangelistic interests.

Four steps taken were interpreted by some observers to mean that the affairs of Northern Baptists were being delivered more into the hands of the churches as expressed through the Convention:

1. A referendum was established providing that churches of the Northern Baptist Convention may be asked by questionnaire to express their opinion on major matters. The referendum can be conducted only when ordered by two-thirds of the delegates to an annual meeting.

2. Control of the Crusader, monthly newsmagazine, was passed from the general council to the Convention.

3. Control of the Council on Social Progress was passed from the General Council to the Convention.

4. The Convention preacher will hereafter be selected by the Convention and not by the General Council.

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MEMORIAL MISSION WILL
HONOR GEORGE W. TRUETT

DALLAS, Tex.--(BP)--The First Baptist Church here will start work immediately on a George W. Truett Memorial Mission in West Dallas, thanks to an anonymous gift that will ultimately amount to more than a half-million dollars. The announcement was made by Dr. W. A. Criswell, the church's pastor.

The gift is in South Texas business property. Already \$50,000 has been raised to construct the mission in honor of the church's famed pastor for almost a half century, the late Dr. George W. Truett. The gift is from a retired Dallas lady missionary who says she became a missionary because of the influence of Dr. Truett.

"Underprivileged persons are much more likely to attend a neighborhood church than one of the large city churches," said the woman who made the huge gift. "When parents are saved, children are given an opportunity to be reared in Christian homes."

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