



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lynn M. Davis, Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-5461
RICHMOND Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 333-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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Florida Committee Urges Salary Increases for Pastors

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--A study of pastors' salaries by a special laymen's committee of the Florida Baptist Convention has disclosed that the average Baptist pastor's salary in Florida is about the same as that of a beginning high school teacher, and his total compensation including fringe benefits is less than an electrician's salary.

"We are in trouble . . . deep, serious trouble," said the committee in a booklet published here which details results of the study.

After showing trends in pastors' salaries, the committee recommended minimum salary and fringe benefit compensations for churches on the basis of five membership categories.

Outlining results of a survey of 451 Southern Baptist churches in the five membership categories, the survey disclosed that the average salary for the 451 churches, regardless of size, was \$7,219, slightly more than a beginning high school teacher's salary, but about \$3,400 less than a high school teacher with a master's degree and 15 years experience.

Average total compensation, including such fringe benefits as automobile allowance, house allowance, insurance, retirement, utilities and convention expenses, was tabulated at \$10,717, about \$50 less than an average electrician's yearly salary.

A chart in the booklet which shows comparative salaries for other Floridians listed average salaries for various professional and skilled groups as follows: physicians, \$51,500; attorneys (10 years experience), \$34,385; engineers, \$24,385; college professors, \$23,500; accountants, \$19,500; plumbers, \$12,500; electricians, \$10,769; carpenters, \$8,080; high school teachers, beginning, \$6,800.

The study showed that the personal income of the average Floridian rose an average of 12.9 per cent in each of the last 12 years, compared to an increase of only 4.5 per cent annually for Baptist pastors, an increase less than the rate of inflation. "Already substantially behind his peers, the average pastor thus dropped eight to 10 per cent further in arrears every year," the committee said.

The study cited two reasons for failure of pastors' salaries to keep pace with society: (1) because Baptist congregations have not been realistic about pastors' salaries, and (2) because most churches establish salaries by comparing compensation among various churches rather than as part of the community.

Acknowledging tax benefits for the pastor derived from housing allowances and other fringe benefits, the committee pointed out, nevertheless, that many churches calculate a pastorium as a benefit without considering the fact that the minister has no opportunity to build equity in a home for the future. The survey disclosed that many ministers would prefer arrangements whereby they might buy their own homes.

The committee further indicated that the average pastor's annual expense for automobile was \$1,697, while the average allowance was only \$858.

Noting that most pastors work on the philosophy that "the Lord will provide," the committee observed that "few pastors or church staff members actively seek pay adjustments. They rely on the sense of fairness of the Christian employers." Then the committee asked: "Are we worthy of that trust?"

Some startling statistics were disclosed in the survey.

There are at least 43 retired Florida Baptist pastors now on welfare, the committee reported.

The average retirement income among 206 Florida pastors surveyed was only \$1,038, or \$86.55 per month. Among 109 other retired church staff men and women, the average retirement income was only \$37.69 per month.

Noting that pastors' salaries are inadequate, the committee pointed out that the salary situation for associate ministers, ministers of education and music, youth workers and other church staff members is even worse.

"Within the church, the minister's salary is the top," said the committee. "What then of the remainder of the staff? Their compensation is regulated below that of the pastor." The study warned that many Florida Baptist churches are beginning a compensation schedule "with a faulty foundation," and thus "will build a faulty house."

The committee further forewarned that "our churches, like those of other denominations, are finding their servants and potential servants of tomorrow tempted by opportunities in other greener pastures.

". . . Churches must act now to prevent further loss of valued servants from the ministry for economic reasons; or the continuing embarrassment of its servants," the committee cautioned.

In a section reporting the average salary and fringe benefit compensations for churches of varying sizes, the committee recommended minimum salary and benefits for each size category.

For churches with one to 250 members, the average pastor's salary was \$4,887. Only about half of the 115 churches surveyed in this category pay auto expenses or housing allowances. The committee calculated that their average net compensation due to unpaid expenses was about \$4,000.

In the category of churches with 251 to 500 members, the average salary among 137 churches was \$6,446. The average total compensation including fringe benefits was \$10,850.

Among 123 churches with 500 to 1,000 members, the average salary was reported as \$7,981. Total compensation averaged \$12,786.

Of the 60 churches surveyed with 1,001 to 2,000 members, the average pastor's salary was listed as \$10,131, and the average total compensation was \$16,297.

Among 16 churches with more than 2,001 members, the average salary was reported as \$13,853, and the average total compensation was \$21,025.

In its recommendations, the committee proposed a minimum salary plus fringe benefit compensations, pointing out that the salaries according to Baptist polity were not binding on any church. The committee said it felt the churches "would appreciate guidelines based upon the investigations (it had made)."

For churches with less than 250 members, the committee recommended a base salary of \$5,200 plus \$4,650 in other benefits for a total compensation of \$9,850.

For churches with 251-500 members, the committee recommended a base salary of \$7,800 plus \$6,400 in other benefits for total compensation of \$14,000.

Among churches with 1,001 to 2,000 members, the recommended base salary was \$12,000 plus \$9,500 in other benefits for a total of \$21,500. For churches with more than 2,000 members, the recommended base was \$18,000 plus \$12,900 in other benefits for a total of \$30,900.

No recommendations were made and no statistics were reported on other church staff members besides pastors, since the data was not sufficient to provide a meaningful sampling, the committee said.

The committee concluded with the suggestion that salaries for such positions should be comparable with others in the community, and should be developed by using business standards, including the business principle that a person exercising supervision should have a salary differential of at least 15 per cent above the next lower level in the organizational chart.

Baptist VIEWpoll
Martin B. Bradley, Director

Survey Shows Baptists Oppose
U.N. Seat to Communist China

By Ken Hayes

NASHVILLE (BP)--Communist China should not be admitted as a member of the United Nations, according to the majority of a representative panel of Southern Baptist pastors and Sunday School teachers.

Opposition to admission of Red China to the U.N. has decreased, however, since the last time the panel was asked this question.

The survey, conducted by the Baptist VIEWpoll in May, asked this question: "Do you think Communist China should or should not be admitted as a member of the United Nations?"

"Should" was the response of 31.2 per cent of the pastors and 25.6 per cent of the teachers. This represents a change in the attitude of Baptists on this issue.

In January, 1970, only 20.8 per cent of the pastors and 20.4 per cent of the teachers on the panel favored the admission of Communist China into the United Nations.

The majority of the VIEWpoll panel (55.9 per cent of the pastors and 57.6 per cent of the teachers) oppose United Nations membership for Communist China on the basis of the latest poll.

The Baptist VIEWpoll's January, 1970, poll showed that 69.3 per cent of the pastors and 65 per cent of the teachers did not favor Communist China's admission to the United Nations.

In the latest poll, 12.9 per cent of the pastors and 16.8 per cent of the teachers had "no opinion" on the current international topic.

The Gallup Poll survey of May, 1971 reveals that 45 per cent of the United States civilian adult population favors seating Communist China in the United Nations, while 38 per cent oppose such a move.

Both the Baptist VIEWpoll and Gallup Poll surveys were conducted prior to President Nixon's announcement that he will be going to visit Communist China sometime before May of 1972.

The current Baptist VIEWpoll report is based on 90 per cent response from a national panel, composed of approximately 300 pastors and 300 Sunday School teachers selected to represent a cross section of persons holding those leadership positions in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Disorderly Conduct Charges
Against Tippit Dismissed

10/20/71

CHICAGO (BP)--Disorderly conduct charges against Southern Baptist Evangelist Sammy Tippit, arrested here after passing out tracts and witnessing in Chicago's nightclub district, have been dropped by the city of Chicago.

The charges were dismissed during a pre-trial hearing shortly before Tippit's case was to have gone before a jury trial in the 46th District Court here.

City attorneys, in dropping the charges, secured from Tippit his promise in return not to file suit against the city for false arrest.

City Counsel Arthur Mooradian asked Tippit and Lloyd Cole, another member of Tippit's "God's Love in Action" ministry, to accept some "ground rules" which would protect the rights of businessmen in the area by not blocking sidewalks.

"We don't want to stop them from their religious philosophy," said Mooradian. "All we want is a little discretion."

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City attorneys asked Tippit and his followers not to force religious literature in the hands of passers-by if they did not want it, or to stuff tracts into the pockets of people on the streets. Tippit denied they had ever done this.

Tippit said he and others involved in his street ministry would continue to witness and pass out religious tracts in the Rush Street area of Chicago's Old Town, where there are numerous night clubs.

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Baptist Named to World
Council Study of Church

10/20/71

NEW YORK (BP)--A Southern Baptist professor at Vanderbilt University's Divinity School, John R. Killinger, has been named to an 11-man study team by the World Council of Churches to study the meaning of salvation.

Sponsored jointly by the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A., the study on "The Meaning of Salvation Today" will be completed in time for a report to the National Council meeting in 1972 and the World Council meeting in Indonesia in 1973.

Killinger, the only Southern Baptist named to the study team, taught at Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky., and the University of Chicago, and was academic dean at Kentucky Southern College, Louisville, before joining the Vanderbilt faculty in 1965.

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Seven Guest Lecturers
Slated at Southern

10/20/71

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Seven special lecturers, including specialists in biblical studies, Christian ethics, religious education and church music, have been scheduled to speak at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during the 1971-72 academic year.

A series of lectures on "Ethical Dimensions of the Ecological Dilemma" have been scheduled Nov. 2-5 by Henlee Barnette, the seminary's senior ethics professor currently on sabbatical in Florida studying the relationship of ecology and theology.

A member of the President's Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, G. William Jones, associate professor of film arts at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, will give lectures and hold forums Nov. 18-19 on "The Film in Religion."

Harvard University Professor Frank M. Cross will speak on developments in archaeology, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Old and New Testament studies on Feb. 14-16. Cross is professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages at Harvard.

Union Theological Seminary Professor Edmund A. Stemle will speak on preaching, March 7-10, and Allen J. Moore of Claremont School of Theology in California will speak on "Life Style Education," March 14-15. Stemle is Brown Professor of Homiletics at Union; Moore is professor of religion and personality and education at Claremont.

Two major lectures in the year's series have already been presented. W. O. Thomason, director of the Bookstore Division of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, delivered the Gheens lectures on the subject, "Toward a Recovery of the Essence of Religious Education." Elaine Brown, founder and director of "Singing City" of Philadelphia, presented a series of lectures in connection with the 11th annual Church Music Institute at the seminary.

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