



BAPTIST PRESS
 News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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September 18, 1972

Georgia Church Elects
 Two Women As Deacons

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HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

ATLANTA (BP)--Two women have been elected as deacons by Oakhurst Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga., an Atlanta suburb, and are believed to be the first female deacons in a Georgia Baptist congregation.

They are Mrs. Sue Woolf and Mrs. Rachel Gill. Their ordination date has not been set. Both have staff relationships with the SBC Home Mission Board here.

They are not the first in the Southern Baptist convention, however. A number of women have been ordained deacons by several Southern Baptist churches in Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky, but they are believed to be the first in Georgia.

Oakhurst church revised its constitution last year to eliminate restrictions against women being deacons.

First Baptist Church of Decatur revised its constitution in a similar manner a few weeks ago, but as of this date has not elected any women as deacons.

Mrs. Woolf is the wife of Warren Woolf, director of the Personnel Division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

Mrs. Woolf's father, W.D. Barker, was administrator of Georgia Baptist Hospital from 1931-41

Mrs. Gill is an office secretary at the SBC Home Mission Board. She formerly worked for The Christian Index.

Her husband, Everett Gill, is the son of a former SBC Foreign Mission Board executive.

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Illinois Board Approves
 Church Staff Info Service

9/18/72

SPRINGFIELD, Ill, (BP)--At their semi-annual session here, the Illinois Baptist State Association Board of Directors adopted guidelines for a Church Staff Information Service, and asked that it become operative as soon as practical.

The information service had been approved by the 1971 meeting of the state association, but had not become operative, pending approval of guidelines. The new program will be designed to help pastorless churches and churchless pastors, as well as help other church staff members and churches, get together.

In brief, the guidelines point out that any church staff member (pastor, minister of music, youth, and education) may on his initiative deposit biographical data with the Information Service at the Baptist Building in Springfield.

The biographical form will be limited to objective information such as education, experience, salary and other requirements, and type of church desired.

The form will not include questions of a doctrinal nature, as this is considered a responsibility of the church in interviewing a prospective employee.

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When churches desire names of prospective staff members, they will complete another form giving basic information about their needs. In turn, they would receive biographical information about persons who appear to match the church's requirements.

In adopting the guidelines, the board spelled out that churches only may use the file, and that names will be sent to churches without official endorsement or recommendation, one way or another. The file will be confidential, and no individuals will be allowed the use of it. Information furnished to churches must be returned within 30 days.

In other actions, the board voted to recommend adoption of a record \$1.4 million Cooperative Program goal for 1973, to recommend an increase in percentage of Cooperative Program gifts going to Southern Baptist causes by one per cent per year for 1973 through 1975; and set a goal of \$115,000 for a 1973 special state mission offering.

The board also approved creation of a role as "missionary-in-residence" for the state association, whereby a Southern Baptist foreign missionary during his year of furlough would work with the state staff in promoting missions education.

A resolution adopted by the board urged recognition by the Internal Revenue Service of housing allowance deductions for retired ministers who receive retirement funds. The resolution is similar to ones adopted by several other Baptist state convention boards in recent months.

Several "role specifications" for personnel of the convention were approved, Walter Mihlfield was transferred from Springfield, to Mt. Vernon, Ill., and his title changed from rural-urban consultant to area rural-urban missionary.

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Mrs. Artie Bratcher, 81,
Emeritus Missionary Dies

9/18/72

LOUISVILLE (BP)--Mrs. Artie Bratcher, 81, emeritus Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil died Sept. 15 in Louisville, Ky.

A funeral service was held Sept. 18 with burial in Caneyville, Ky. Mrs. Bratcher, who had been in declining health for several years, was a resident of Wesley Manor Methodist Home in Louisville.

She served in Brazil for 40 years before retiring in 1958. Her husband, L.M. Bratcher, died in Rio de Janeiro in 1953.

Mrs. Bratcher is survived by three sons, all of whom are in religious work. Best known of her sons is Robert Bratcher, who did the translations work for the American Bible Society's best selling New Testament translation, Good News for Modern Man. Bratcher also is a former missionary to Brazil.

As a missionary, Mrs. Bratcher did evangelistic work at a Baptist school in Campos and taught in several schools in Rio. She also assisted her husband in his work as executive secretary of the Brazilian Home Mission Board for 28 years before his death.

The former Artie Porter of Caneyville, Ky., Mrs. Bratcher attended Georgetown (Ky.) College and Berea (Ky.) College and Woman's Missionary Union Training School (merged with Southern Seminary), Louisville. She taught school in Caneyville before she and her husband were appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1918.

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