



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 13, 1972

### Kansas Convention Rejects Effort To Delete Membership Restrictions

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--Following intense debate, the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists rejected by a three-to-one margin an effort to delete constitution restrictions denying membership to churches which practice alien immersion, open communion, or have ties with ecumenical organizations.

A six-member committee had recommended deletion of restrictions in the constitution which currently require a church seeking affiliation with the convention to present evidence "of being in harmony with the doctrinal principles generally held by Southern Baptists, including repudiation of alien immersion and 'so-called' open communion."

The committee also asked for repeal of another section requiring that "any church which directly or indirectly affiliates with the National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches or any other federating or other interdenominational agency must repudiate such affiliation before it can be recognized by this convention."

The committee's proposal, in a secret ballot, lost by a vote of 120 favoring the deletions to 283 opposing the proposal.

After the convention had rejected the proposed new constitution, the messengers went on to defeat another motion seeking a committee to define the terms "alien immersion," "open communion," and "affiliation with other interdenominational agency..."

(Generally, the term "alien immersion" is interpreted by Baptists to mean baptism by immersion practiced by denominations other than Baptists. Open communion generally is the practice of allowing persons other than members of a local Baptist congregation to participate in communion.)

Debate on the proposed new constitution was described as brief but intense. The Baptist Digest, the convention's weekly newspaper, had earlier carried pro and con articles on the constitution, pointing out that Kansas is one of only four states in the SBC with doctrinal statements in its constitution.

Lynn Clayton, pastor of University Baptist Church in Wichita, Kan., argued in favor of the new constitution, declaring that to continue with the old constitution would "wipe out the priesthood of the believer." Clayton also argued that the role of the state convention is not to protect the denomination from doctrinal diversity.

C.A. Kincheloe, pastor of Allerton Baptist Church in Wichita, countered that the current constitution "does not infringe on the autonomy of the local church." Kincheloe argued that the new constitution, with no doctrinal requirement "would open the door to anybody and everybody."

Following arguments by Clayton and Kincheloe, a motion to cut off debate and vote by secret ballot were approved, and the new constitution was soundly rejected.

During a later miscellaneous business session, John Click, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church of Wichita, made a motion that the incoming president appoint a committee from every geographical area to define the terms "open communion, alien immersion" and affiliation with other interdenominational groups.

A substitute motion introduced by John Zobel, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Ulysses, Kan., asking for appointment of a new committee to recommend another new

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constitution was tabled without debate.

Click's original motion calling for a definition of terms failed by an estimated two-to-one margin.

One pastor, following the action defeating Click's efforts to define the controversial section, commented that it left the convention with "a constitution that is not worth the paper it is written on," since there is no way to enforce the measure.

Click, in the discussion, asked whether his own church would be in conflict with the convention since his church's constitution specifies that any believing Christian can sit at the communion table.

One amendment to the constitution recommended by the six-member committee will be considered next year. The committee had recommended that the name of the convention be changed to the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists.

For the first time, a Nebraska pastor was elected president of the convention. He is Jim Martin, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Omaha, Neb.

The convention also adopted a 1973 budget of \$672,189, including a \$79,500 preferred item for the convention's bond sinking fund, and a 17 per cent allocation to Southern Baptist Convention missions through the Cooperative Program.

Resolutions adopted by the convention opposed the so-called Mansfield-Mills legislation in Congress which would remove certain tax exemption benefits for churches and non-profit organizations, and opposed the sale of pornography.

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#### Two Former Chile Missionaries Named for Home Missions Work

11/13/72

ATLANTA (BP)--Two former foreign missionaries to Chile were among the three new home missionaries appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here.

Mr. and Mrs. Evan Holmes, once missionaries to Chile, were named to work with Spanish-speaking people in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area of Minnesota by the Home Mission Board's language missions department.

Also appointed by the board's Division of Chaplaincy was Mrs. Sarah Pitschmann Williamson, a native of Houston, Tex., to serve with her husband, B.J. Williamson, chaplain of Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

Both appointments were made in cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, which sponsors Baptist missions work in Minnesota along with the Home Mission Board.

The Home Mission Board also appointed 13 missionary associates in cooperation with the state conventions in which they serve.

Mr. and Mrs. Holmes went to Chile in 1947, and served there until returning this year for family reasons. In Chile, he was pastor of First Baptist Church of Concepcion Brotherhood director and evangelism secretary for the Chile Baptist Convention, and chairman of the Crusade of the Americas for Chile.

A native of Alabama, Holmes is a graduate of Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Mrs. Holmes, also a graduate of the same schools, is a native of Texas. While in Chile, she served as Woman's Missionary Union and Young Women's Auxiliary director for the Chile Baptist Convention.

Mrs. Williamson, a former substitute school teacher in Texas and Minnesota, is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and attended Winona State College, Winona, Minn.

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The Home Mission Board, in appointing 13 missionary associates, named Sami and Hrispsime Ammari of Zerka, Jordan and Beirut, Lebanon, to work with Arabic and Armenian people living in the Boston, Mass., area.

Two Hawaiians, Glenn and Roberta Harada, were named missionary associates and are involved in a training program in Honolulu for the board's Christian social ministries department.

Ramiro and Maria Espinoza, natives of Edinburg and Corpus Christi, Tex., will work with Spanish-speaking people at the Primera Baptist Mission in Big Wells, Tex.

Joan Harvey, a native of Rome, Ga., will serve in New Haven, Conn., where her husband, Wayne, is a student pastor.

David and Janice Jacobson will work with Spanish-speaking people at Grace Baptist Mission in Weslaco, Tex. They are natives of Tracy, Minn., and Delta, Ohio, respectively.

Nicaragua natives, Ventura and Olga Robleta will work with Spanish-speaking people at Tigua Baptist Mission, El Paso, Tex.

Appointed to work with the Spanish at West Flagler Baptist Church in Miami are Jose and America Ruiz, natives of Cuba.

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Fred Hubbs Resigns Missouri  
Post to Enter Evangelism

11/13/72

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Fred D. Hubbs has resigned as director of associational administration for the Missouri Baptist Convention here to enter the field of full-time evangelism, effective Dec. 31, 1972.

Hubbs, executive secretary of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan for 13 years before accepting the Missouri position in January, 1971, will direct the work of the Midwest Evangelistic Association based here.

Hubbs was the first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1966. He has served as pastor of churches in Arkansas and Texas.

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Kennedy Named Academic Dean  
At New Orleans Seminary

11/13/72

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The executive committee of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's board of trustees has named James Hardee Kennedy as dean of academic affairs, approved a degree exchange program, and authorized renovation and building expansion.

Kennedy, who has taught at the seminary here since 1947 and was acting dean at the time of his appointment, will coordinate and supervise academic affairs in a new organization plan of five divisions within the seminary, according to president Grady C. Cothen.

In another action, the board's executive committee approved the exchange of the bachelor or divinity degree for the master of divinity degree, and authorized an architect to consult in renovation of present buildings and in preparation of plans for a new library.

Kennedy, the new academic dean, received the doctor of theology degree from New Orleans Seminary in 1947, and is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton. He has also done additional study at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Conn.

Since 1947 he has served the seminary as professor and associate professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, as chairman of the graduate council in the School of Theology, and as dean of the School of Theology.

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## Schwengel Challenges Baptists To Larger National Influence

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Republican member of Congress challenged a group of Baptist leaders here to exert a stronger influence in public affairs so that "the moral law can prevail in government."

Rep. Fred Schwengel from Iowa, in an address to the fifteenth Religious Liberty Conference sponsored by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said the church has a larger opportunity today than ever before in history to make its influence known in national life.

"You have the pulpits, you have the brains. I hope you have the will," Schwengel challenged the conference.

Eighty-five participants, representing eight Baptist denominations, registered for the three-day meeting called to study religious liberty and the Bill of Rights.

Schwengel, a Baptist layman, criticized church members who say they want their pastor "to preach the gospel" and not be on Capitol Hill. He urged Baptists to visit members of Congress and make their convictions known concerning national issues.

"If Baptists, Methodists and Catholics had pled before Congress regarding the war in Vietnam, for example, this war would not have been upon us," Schwengel said.

The Baptist lawmaker made a special appeal for Baptists to do a better job of teaching church members the meaning of religious liberty. Among the suggestions he made were that each minister write his own dissertation on religious freedom and that he preach on this subject at least once a year. He urged further that more lessons on religious liberty be included in study materials.

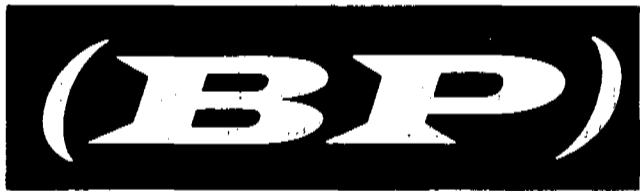
Schwengel, who helped lead the fight last year against a so-called amendment to the constitution, said he was appalled that in such an enlightened period Congress would be debating repealing the First Amendment.

"With all the churches and all the great preachers in our land, here we were debating something that would do violence to the First Amendment to the Constitution," Schwengel said.

Describing some of the letters he received from prominent Christians who supported the prayer amendment, Schwengel expressed shock that "any intelligent American" would not know the meaning of the First Amendment, which states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."

Schwengel challenged Baptists attending the conference to help Christian people to understand the meaning of the First Amendment and to make religious liberty a concern of first priority.

"By sharing our feelings and convictions on public matters and especially religious freedom, we will be standing for what is right and good and as deeply Christian as anything I know," Schwengel declared.



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