



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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November 16, 1973

Body Urges Baptist Harmony,  
Aid to "Fallen Politicians"

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BALTIMORE, Md. (BP)--Maryland Baptists, meeting in the home base of Ex-Vice President Spiro Agnew, decried the current political crisis but called also for "redemptive involvement in the affairs of government and personal relationships wherever possible with the fallen politicians."

"Messengers" to the 138th annual session of the Baptist Convention of Maryland, in apparent reference to watchdog doctrinal groups, also resolved to "pledge ourselves to be constructive rather than critical, wherever possible to do so, to be positive instead of negative, to build bridges of understanding instead of creating chasms, to lift up the fallen and bring back the erring which is our 'priestly' role. . . , ever recognizing our human limitations and our absolute dependence on God."

The resolution cited "those within Southern Baptist ranks, as well as (those) outside, whose questions and charges are contrary to the facts available to us" and it reaffirmed "our love for, our confidence in and our opportunities through Southern Baptist life for the carrying out of the Lord's Great Commission."

The convention also adopted a \$1.37 million gross budget, of which \$1,009,000 is expected through the Cooperative Program unified budget of Maryland Southern Baptist churches. Forty per cent of the Cooperative Program figure will go to Southern Baptist Convention-wide causes.

The resolution on integrity commented on "men elected to a public trust (who) have exploited and betrayed those who placed them in office" and have "caused the American people to become further discouraged and more cynical about the political system."

But the resolution added, "The desperate need of the time is not pious judgement upon the offenders so much as a redemptive involvement in the affairs of government and personal relationships wherever possible with the fallen politicians."

Government officials were called on "to restore confidence, integrity and honesty in government by careful and ethical conduct" and Baptists were urged to "refrain from any personal conduct that will be similar to that which we have deplored in our secular society" and to pray for the world situation and participate in the "activities of government in the hope of bringing the morality of Christian integrity into our system."

Other resolutions called for repeal of Maryland's one-year-old lottery, which was branded "not successful," and opposed use of tax money for sectarian schools.

Messengers, meeting in what observers called "a very spiritual mood of unity and love and fellowship," heard their president, Lewis C. McKinney, stress the "priesthood of all believers." He emphasized the dimension of priesthood "that man is responsible for his fellowman" (as well as to God).

McKinney, pastor of Allen Memorial Baptist Church, Salisbury, Md., who was re-elected to a second term as president, "electrified" the messengers, spokesmen said, when he closed his address by asking those present to form groups of three or four and join hands to pray for each other by first name "in a sense of fellowship and commitment." He appealed to Baptists "to live together in harmony, despite our personality and theological differences."

The messengers also heard plans for the development of Skycroft, the Maryland convention's new conference retreat and camping center, and set next year's meeting for Nov. 11-13, Glen Burnie Baptist Church in suburban Baltimore.

Attendance at the three-day convention nearly doubled last year's meeting, a spokesman said.

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Michigan Baptists Elect  
Black Vice President

11/16/73

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LANSING, Mich. (BP)--"Messengers" to the annual session of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan elected their first black officer and approved future relocation of the Southern Baptist body's administrative offices.

Rochelle Davis, black pastor of Temple of Faith Baptist Church, Detroit, was named second vice president. Billy Whitt, white pastor of Columbia Avenue Baptist Church, Pontiac, is the new president.

No date has been set and no site selected for the relocation, but a spokesman said the move would probably take the convention's headquarters out of the Detroit city limits to a suburb more easily available to expressways.

The messengers set a \$987,984 gross budget, of which \$452,022 is expected to come in from the Cooperative Program unified budget of the convention's 177 churches. A spokesman said 21.5 per cent of the Cooperative Program figure will go for Southern Baptist Convention-wide causes.

Also approved was a five-year program emphasizing various aspects of developing a stronger convention, including strengthening of fellowship, stewardship, local churches and evangelism and building a stronger base through expansion of the number of congregations in the convention.

Next year's convention site will be Middlebelt Baptist Church, Inkster, Mich., Nov. 12-14.

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Arizona Baptists Defeat  
Restructure Proposal

11/16/73

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TUCSON, Ariz. (BP)--"Messengers" to the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention defeated a proposal which would have radically restructured the convention and adopted a record budget during the convention's three-day meeting here.

The budget was set at \$1,041,554, of which \$706,287 is expected from the Cooperative Program unified budgets of Southern Baptist churches in the convention area of Arizona and Nevada. Nineteen per cent of the Cooperative Program figure was set aside for Southern Baptist Convention causes.

A study committee proposal which would have placed the two-state convention and all its institutions under the administration of one executive director-treasurer, was referred back to the committee for another year of study.

The proposal would have put the one executive over the convention administrative structure and the convention's college, foundation and child care services operation.

It also would have made the church services and missions functions of the Arizona convention into a fourth institution with a governing board and director under the overall direction of the proposed executive director-treasurer.

A spokesman said the messengers "were not quite ready" for such far reaching changes and simply chose to sidestep them by referring them for further study.

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The atmosphere of the convention, the spokesman said, was "amicable and highly spiritual, with no suggestion of discord," even during the debate over restructure.

Henry Wooten, pastor of North Tucson Baptist Church, was elected president of the convention. Next year's meeting was set for Nov. 11-13 in Las Vegas, Nev.

Colorado Baptists Speak  
On Morality, Elect President

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11/16/73

PUEBLO, Colo. (BP)--In the midst of what observers called "a revival atmosphere," messengers to the Colorado Baptist General Convention passed resolutions on government and morality, adopted an increased budget and elected a new president.

Citing crises which have "already caused untold misery and serious deterioration in the character and spiritual life of many Americans," a resolution opposed "any action of inhumanity and injustice," pledging prayer support for President Nixon and other government leaders.

Messengers also opposed any alterations, "whether amendments or otherwise," in the First Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, "which was adopted by our forefathers to assure complete freedom of religion and separation of church and state. . ."

"The First Amendment," the resolution said, "has withstood the test of time."

A resolution on morality called for Christians to give "moral examples in communities in which we live by eradicating the harsh, destructive, hypocritical statements so commonly directed toward all authority."

The convention set a total budget of \$700,000, with \$380,000 of that amount expected from the Cooperative Program unified budgets of Colorado Southern Baptist churches. Messengers designated 20.5 per cent of the Cooperative Program figure for Southern Baptist Convention-wide causes.

The Colorado convention launched a program to develop its Ponderosa Assembly. The first year goal, a spokesman said, includes \$70,000 for improvements. The project is a 10-year program, which will involve doubling all facilities, will cost an estimated \$500,000.

Carey Miller, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Aurora, Colo., was elected president of the convention for 1974.

Next year, the convention will meet Nov. 12-14 at Applewood Baptist Church, Wheat Ridge, Colo.

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Sappington 'Woman Resolution'  
Adopted; Four Women Elected

11/16/73

GREAT FALLS, Mont. (BP)--Messengers to the four-state Northern Plains Baptist Convention, meeting here, endorsed Mrs. Richard Sappington's resolution to the 1973 Southern Baptist Convention in Portland on the "God-given role of women."

They also elected the first women to the convention's executive board, named two women officers and elected their first lay president.

The resolution on women, which a spokesman said was made without most messengers knowing the specific content of the Portland resolution, passed with no debate.

Mrs. Sappington's original resolution reaffirmed God's order of authority for his church and the Christian home, listing "Christ as the head of every man, man the head of the woman and the children in subjection to their parents--in the Lord."

Wife of a Houston, Tex., pastor, Mrs. Sappington asserted that "man was not made for the woman but the woman for the man, that the woman is the glory of man and as that

woman would not have existed without man, henceforth, neither would man have existed without the woman, they are dependent---one upon the other---to the glory of God.

In its preliminary "whereases," the Sappington resolution said "Christian women have made and are making a significant contribution to the cause of Christ." She further asserted "there is a great attack by members of most women's liberation movements upon Scriptural precepts of the woman's place in society."

Harley Miller, a building contractor from Bismarck, N. D., became the first lay president of the Northern Plains Baptist Convention. Mrs. Charles Highlan, the convention's bookkeeper, was named recording secretary, and Mrs. Jerry Glass, wife of a Sturgis, S. D., pastor, was named assistant recording secretary.

Mrs. Thomas Sherrill, wife of a pastor from Minot, N. D., and Mrs. W. L. Findley of Great Falls, Mont., were the first women ever elected to the convention's executive board.

Messengers adopted a record \$377,099 Cooperative Program unified budget, with 14 per cent of that amount going to SBC-wide causes.

The convention's by-laws were amended to make provision for the convention to have agencies, including the newly-incorporated Northern Plains Baptist Convention Foundation.

Another resolution cited serious problems nationally and internationally which have "hindered the effectiveness of the administration of Richard M. Nixon."

The resolution said "we do not agree with nor understand all the legal and moral issues involved in these actions" but it pledged "prayer support" to Nixon.

The Northern Plains convention covers Southern Baptist work in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

Next year's convention is set Nov. 13-14, North Hills Baptist Church, Minot, N. D.

Mississippi Honors Hudgins,  
Inaugurates His Successor

11/16/73

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JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--The Mississippi Baptist Convention, meeting here, passed resolutions dealing with moral pollution, gambling and the proposed prayer amendment to the U. S. Constitution, honored its retiring top administrator and inaugurated his successor.

"Messengers" to the state-wide Southern Baptist body also adopted a record \$5.5 million Cooperative Program budget, allotting more than \$1.6 million of that amount for Southern Baptist Convention-wide causes.

Earl Kelly, pastor of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Jackson, was inaugurated as successor to W. Douglas Hudgins, to whom the convention paid tribute and named "executive secretary-treasurer emeritus."

A report of the "restore Gulfshore" campaign committee revealed that some \$800,000 has been pledged toward the current drive to raise \$1,250,000 to add to other funds to rebuild the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at Pass Christian, Miss., which was practically destroyed by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

The resolution concerning the proposed prayer amendment put messengers on record as "opposing any efforts to tamper with the First Amendment to Constitution."

The convention also adopted a strong statement from the convention board which opposes "the use of any governmental aid for the support of private religious educational institutions" and expresses "opposition to legislation which permits use of public tax funds, state or federal, for the direct support of parochial education at any level."

The resolution on gambling was precipitated, a spokesman said, because of the reported effort to legalize horse race gambling in Mississippi.

Among other resolutions, one urged the legal right of privileged communication between the clergyman and those seeking his counsel, one urged legislation to make possible a

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uniform day of rest and one asked that Camp Kittiwah, property the convention owns on the Gulf Coast, be designated for an apartment complex for disabled and retired Baptists.

The latter resolution was referred to the convention's board to study and bring back a report to the convention.

David Grant, a Jackson, Miss., pastor, was elected convention president.

Next year's convention is set for Nov. 12-14 in Jackson.

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CORRECTIONS

In Baptist Press story mailed 11/15/73, headlined Body Will Not Bar Churches Accepting "Non-immersed", graph 14, second line, please change the name C. B. Bean Jr. to C. B. Dean Jr.

In Baptist Press story mailed 11/15/73, headlined Alabama Baptists Celebrate; Speak on Evolution, Lobbying, please change graph 9, first line, to read:

The convention elected Dotson M. Nelson Jr., pastor of . . . , rather than Dotson M. Mills Jr. as sent. Thanks.

--Baptist Press

