



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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U.S. Baptists Pushing 30-Million Member Mark

WASHINGTON (BP)--Baptists in the United States, numbering only 25,000 in 1776, will likely surpass 30,025,000 in 1976, the Baptist World Alliance announced here.

In 1876, when the nation celebrated its centennial, the Baptists numbered slightly more than 1,750,000. This year the number is approximately 29,380,000, and still climbing, said Carl W. Tiller, BWA associate secretary in charge of study and research for the alliance.

"The increase is due in large part to the growth in population," he said, "but our Baptist growth has greatly outstripped the rate of increase in the number of inhabitants. An important factor has been the evangelistic zeal which has marked our Baptist people.

"Another element in our growth has been our tradition of being a comfortable fellowship for the 'humble poor,'" Tiller said. "During the second century of this growth period," he continued, "a contributing factor has also been the identification of the Baptist faith with the predominant culture of society in many places, a situation which is somewhat dissimilar from the point just made, and also a situation which is a change from a long-standing Baptist tradition."

The alliance statistics recognize 20 Baptist denominations in the United States. Other surveys sometimes identify a larger number by counting some very small groups of half a dozen or so kindred churches as a denomination.

Those over the million-member mark are said to be Southern Baptists with 12.3 million; National Baptists, Incorporated, 6.5 million; National Baptists, unincorporated, 3.5 million; National Primitive Baptists, 1.6 million; American Baptist Churches, 1.5 million; and the Baptist Bible Fellowship, 1.3 million.

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Cooper's Motion to Result In June 1 Day of Prayer

3/25/74

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BP)--The North American Baptist Fellowship, a committee of the Baptist World Alliance, has called Baptists of the United States to observe Saturday, June 1, as a day of thanksgiving, penitence and prayer.

The June 1 date was chosen because it is the 200th anniversary of a prayer meeting held by members of the Virginia House of Burgesses, a significant event in the prelude to American independence, according to Sloan S. Hodges, president of the fellowship, which includes seven major Baptist bodies in the U.S.

"We call upon our Baptist people in the United States to observe a day of prayer in their congregations. . . in which we especially examine ourselves and confess in penitence our sins, and a day in which we seek God's renewed blessings upon us and our nation," says a proclamation signed by Hodges and Carl W. Tiller, secretary of the fellowship.

The proclamation suggests that each Baptist church in the United States arrange for observance of the day in such a way as best fits the situation.

Plans for the anniversary observance were initiated by the fellowship's general committee following a motion by Owen Cooper, layman and retired industrialist from Yazoo City, Miss., who is president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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20,000 Attend Youth
Conference in Nashville

NASHVILLE (BP)--Over 20,000 young people from church in Tennessee attended the 5th annual Tennessee Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference here.

Richard Hogue, 26-year-old evangelist from Houston, spoke during the opening session in the Vanderbilt University Memorial Gym, with Fenton Moorehead, director of Love One Another Ministries, West Palm Beach, Fla., speaking in the second session, also in the Vanderbilt gym.

"If you are not openly telling your friends about Jesus, you are not doing what God wants you to do," Hogue declared. The young evangelist said the "rah rah" days of the Jesus movement are over and that young people are having a much deeper, spiritual experience now.

Closing sessions were held at twelve different locations in Nashville, with the largest at the Baptist Sunday School Board led by Frank Hart Smith from the board's church recreation department.

Darcy Hodges, soloist from Richard Hogue Evangelism, Inc., and ventriloquist Beth Ann Derksen and "Rusty" of Plainwell, Mich., were special guests on the conference program.

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Mission Agencies Tops in
Public Relations Awards

3/25/74

SAN FRANCISCO (BP)--Two Southern Baptist Convention agencies, the Brotherhood Commission and the Home Mission Board, dominated the awards competition at the annual session of the Baptist Public Relations Association (BPRA) here.

In other action at the three day meeting, which explored "the dynamics of communications," outgoing BPRA president Clarence Duncan appointed special committees to study a possible BPRA study scholarship fund and to examine ways for BPRA to help with public relations job placement in the SBC.

Wesley M. Pattillo, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., succeeded Duncan of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission as president of the organization comprised of Southern Baptist public relations professionals.

The Brotherhood Commission, led by Jim Newton with six individual awards, and Steve Wall with five individual awards, received fifteen awards, including nine first place citations and six second place ones. The Home Mission Board won ten total awards--six first place and four runner-up.

The Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., received seven awards, the third highest.

Major awards, which called for a plaque and \$50 cash prizes went to Mike Davis of the Brotherhood Commission for his total public relations program on the fifth national RA Congress; Pattillo for total development project; John Earl Seelig and Don Hepburn of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for total publications program.

Newton was cited for "best of show" in the section of the competition including ten writing and six photography categories.

Floyd Craig of the SBC Christian Life Commission also received a plaque and \$50 cash prize as the recipient of the annual Arthur Davenport Award for a total public relations project titled "Focus on Family."

Newton, editor of World Mission Journal and director of communications for the Brotherhood Commission, men's division, was the top individual winner. Besides the best of show award, he took first place in the feature writing, feature series and news writing categories, runner-up awards in the total public relations and letterhead categories and tied with Richard Styles of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for runner-up in the news series category.

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W. C. Fields, director of Baptist Press and director of public relations for the SBC Executive Committee, won two writing awards. He finished ahead of Newton and Styles in the news series category for his articles on a controversy over mismanagement of the Missouri Baptist Convention. A single story on that subject finished second in the single news story category to a Newton entry.

Other Brotherhood Commission awards went to Wall, who collected three first places and two second places in photography categories and a runner-up in feature writing; to Davis, editor of Probe magazine, who collected a first in photography; and to Lee Hollaway, editor of Crusader magazine, whose publication finished second in the magazine category.

Walker Knight, editor, and Everett Hullum, associate editor, collected a first place in the magazine category for the March, 1973, issue of Home Missions magazine, published by the Home Mission Board.

Knight and Hullum and photographer Don Rutledge paced Home Mission Board entries. Knight and Hullum tied for second in the feature series category and Knight finished second in the publications photography series category won by Davis. Rutledge gathered two first place awards and one runner-up citation in photography categories.

Another photography first place went to R. Knolan Benfield Jr. of the Home Mission Board and HMB staffers Thomas Baker and Larry Goddard took first place awards in the poster and promotional folder of a slide publication presentation categories respectively.

Four individual awards to Richard Styles, public relations consultant, led the Foreign Mission Board entries. Styles took first place in the annual report and advertising series categories and second place in the news series (tie with Newton) and single advertising categories.

Other Foreign Mission Board awards, all second places, went to Jesse C. Fletcher in the poster and folder promotional category, G. Norman Price in the special publications category and Fon Scofield in the motion picture category.

Besides his total development project cash award, Pattillo also received a first place for the Southern Seminary catalog and runner-up award for the general information brochure and news letter category.

Besides Pattillo, BPRA installed other new officers--president-elect, Roy Jennings, administrative assistant, Brotherhood Commission, Memphis; program vice-president, Tom Miller, associate editor of The Religious Herald, Richmond; membership vice-president, James Cox, public relations director for Belmont College, Nashville; recording secretary, Mrs. Francis Carrington, coordinator of news and information, Baylor University, Waco, Tex.

Also, newsletter editor, Eugene Baker, public relations director, Union University, Jackson, Tenn.; Inter-Agency Council representative, Miss Jennifer Bryon, communication specialist, book store division, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; and treasurer, Mrs. Agnes Ford of Nashville, retired Baptist Sunday School Board public relations staffer.

Other agencies with multiple winners include the Baptist General Convention of Texas with three awards and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, the SBC Education Commission and the National Student Ministries of the Baptist Sunday School Board, with two each.

Orville Scott, public relations director, and David Clanton, audiovisual director, of the Baptist General Convention of Texas tied for first place in the motion picture category with John Ivins of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. The Texas convention art director, Mrs. Lynn Yarbrough, won the letterhead category and finished second in the development brochure category.

Larry Baker, director of news services, won the newsletter category and finished second in news photography for Golden Gate Seminary.

Howard Bramlette of the Education Commission was awarded a first place for single advertisement and a second for direct mail.

William Junker and Norman Bowman took respective second place awards in the total publications program and advertising series categories.

Other first place awards went to Duncan of the Radio and Television Commission in the development brochure category; Fred Cooper of Stetson University in the general information brochure category; Jack Brymer of the Alabama Baptist Newsmagazine in the special publication category and Carl K. Tipton of Carson Newman College in the direct mail category.

Other runner-up citations went to John Bloskas of the SBC Annuity Board for the annual report; Mrs. Sarah Rice of Judson College for catalog; Christ Hansen of Baylor University for feature photography series; Norman Rourke of Georgetown College for publication photography series and Catherine Allen of the Woman's Missionary Union in the slide presentation.

Next year's BPRA meeting is set for Feb. 25-28, Williamsburg, Va.