



BAPTIST PRESS

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October 22, 1974

First Filipino Southern
Baptist Church Constituted

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LOS ANGELES, Calif. (BP)--With 66 charter members, the first Filipino Baptist church to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention has been constituted here.

Representatives from First Southern Baptist Church of Hollywood (which sponsored the church as a mission), the San Fernando Valley Baptist Association, the California Southern Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board participated in the constitution services at the new church building at 837 South Park View in Los Angeles.

Eduardo R. Peol, a native of the Philippines and a graduate of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., is pastor of the church which will attempt to minister to the 65,000 Filipinos in the Los Angeles area.

Peol, former preacher on the Baptist Hour radio broadcast in the Philippines, began working among Los Angeles Filipinos in 1970, starting with a Bible study in an apartment.

Under sponsorship of First Southern Baptist Church of Hollywood, the mission began on April 11, 1971, with assistance of the San Fernando Valley Baptist Association.

Peol, who had been working part-time in a secular job in addition to serving as pastor of the mission, was appointed as a full-time language missionary by the Home Mission Board department of language missions in 1972 and the church began to grow.

In June, aided by a gift of \$5,000 and a loan of \$33,000 from the board, the church bought property formerly occupied by First Southern Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

Thirty persons have joined the church through baptism and another 33 by letter. The church already has begun several mission projects, conducting Friday evening services at Chula Vista, Bible studies in La Mirada and Long Beach and a children's ministry on Thursday afternoons in the church community.

At the constitution service, Peol thanked Southern Baptists for their mission support.

"I am a product of foreign missions in the Philippines where I was saved and educated," he said, "and now I am a beneficiary of the Home Mission Board which has enabled me to have a place to serve Jesus Christ."

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Supreme Court Denies
Parochial in Two States

10/22/74

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed decisions by two lower courts denying tax credits to parents whose children attend nonpublic schools in California and upholding Missouri's prohibition against providing transportation to students in parochial schools.

The California case, decided by a 6-3 margin, involved a state law enacted in 1973 providing a tax credit of up to \$125 for parents who choose to send their children to nonpublic schools. A similar New York statute was struck down by the high court last year.

Earlier this year, a group called United Americans for Public Schools challenged the California law on the grounds that such tax credits violate the U.S. Constitution's

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prohibition of an "establishment of religion." The district court agreed, thus setting the stage for California's appeal to the Supreme Court.

Justice Byron R. White issued a brief dissenting opinion, in which he was joined by Chief Justice Warren E. Burger and Justice William H. Rehnquist.

In the Missouri case, *Luetkemeyer v. Kaufmann*, the parents of two children attending a Roman Catholic parochial school challenged sections of that state's constitution which prohibit outright any aid, direct or indirect, to nonpublic schools.

A U.S. district court in Missouri held last year that the state may enforce its constitutional provisions by denying bus transportation to all students attending nonpublic schools, despite the parents' contention that the provisions forced them to pay taxes for which they received no benefits.

The parents also claimed that the state's refusal to make transportation available to their children was discriminatory and violated their free exercise of religion as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In disagreeing with the parents, the district court said, "Missouri has a long history of maintaining a very high wall between church and state." It also said that although the state could furnish such transportation if it wished, it was not "constitutionally obligated" to do so.

The Supreme Court's decision to affirm the lower court's decision in the Missouri case came in a 7-2 decision, with only Justice White and Chief Justice Burger dissenting.

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Dallas Church Has 10,278
In Sunday School on Oct. 6

DALLAS (BP)--The 18,000-member First Baptist Church here registered 10,278 in Sunday School attendance on Oct. 6, at the conclusion of the church's week-long fall promotion and observance of Pastor W.A. Criswell's 30th anniversary.

Present Sunday School enrollment in the largest of the Southern Baptist Convention's 34,665 churches is 10,600, reported Herschel Creasman, First Baptist Church's education director. "It was no big Sunday School party with lots of visitors. It was our people going to the regular classes with the regular teachers," he said.

The church recorded a previous one-Sunday high of 7,669 last year. No figures are available as to whether the Oct. 6 attendance is a record for the SBC or the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The offering for that day included \$230,035 in undesignated receipts and \$88,000 undesignated.

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Association Asks Charismatic
Churches: Desist or Withdraw

10/22/74

DALLAS (BP)--Dallas Baptist Association has requested its member churches to desist from the charismatic movement or voluntarily withdraw from association membership.

The 234-church association of Southern Baptist congregations, during its annual meeting here, took a strong stand against charismatic churches in light of a story which ran in a local newspaper.

A Dallas Times Herald story on Oct. 6, spotlighting the spreading scope and influence of the charismatic renewal movement, featured Howard Conatser, pastor of Beverly Hills Baptist Church, a member of the association.

The association's statement read: "We deplore the practice of those who express or imply an attitude of spiritual superiority by this misrepresentation of certain so-called charismatic gifts such as faith healing, glossolalia (speaking in tongues) and exorcism, thus disrupting

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the fellowship of our churches."

The resolution further stated the association requests churches holding such views reconsider their practices.

"If they cannot work in harmony with our historic views, we strongly urge they voluntarily withdraw from our association and seek fellowship with churches of more common practice."

The statement did not name any churches involved in the movement, not even Beverly Hills.

The Beverly Hills Church, however, is the only church in the association "openly" practicing the charismatic expression of spiritual gifts.

Following the association's action, Conatser said, "We believe God is restoring the apostolic church and the charismatic movement is part of that plan."

He indicated his church had no present plans to withdraw from the association.

Robert McGinnis, director of missions for Dallas Baptist Association explained, "This was not a hasty decision. We have been dealing with the problem for five years. Our silence gave the impression we condoned it. Churches not involved in the charismatic movement should not feel they stand alone."

Conatser denied feeling any spiritual superiority in the church ministry: "If anything, anyone who has a true charismatic experience realizes how inferior in spiritual power we are."

"God speaks to different people in different ways and we can't compare experiences. Because I have been filled with the Holy Spirit is no sign anyone else must. But because I have does not mean it's wrong."

The 3,500-member church reported 325 baptisms during 1973, the 12th highest number in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Virginia Baptist Board
Votes Equal Pay for Women

10/22/74

RICHMOND (BP)--The board of the Baptist General Association of Virginia, statewide convention of Southern Baptists in Virginia, voted here to pay female staff members of the convention "equal pay for equal work."

The adoption of special budgetary provisions completes a program of salary increases for female campus ministers and educational consultants who have been paid less than men of equal preparation and similar job description.

Three employees and two vacant positions are involved in the change.

The Baptist General Association of Virginia is one of 33 state conventions, covering 50 states, affiliated with the 12.3-million-member, 34,665-church Southern Baptist Convention.

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