

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Kan.-Neb. Baptists Vote
 To Sell Offices; Relocate**

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. (BP)--The Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, which has progressed from financial chaos to total solvency in the past six years, approved, in annual session here, the sale of its office building in Wichita, Kan., and a move to Topeka in five years.

Registered "messengers," for the second consecutive year, honored Pat McDaniel, convention executive director, a layman who joined the convention in 1969 to salvage its financial integrity.

Six years ago, in November, 1968, the convention assumed the liabilities of its Church Loan Association (CLA) to keep from losing some 77 church buildings because of the CLA's insolvency.

In 1969, the association had liabilities of \$3.39 million and assets of only \$1.75 million, leaving a deficit of \$1.64 million.

At last year's convention in Bellevue, Neb., the messengers voted, among other actions, to recall all the CLA's outstanding bonds, assuring all bondholders, a convention spokesman said, of receiving 100 cents on every dollar they invested with the CLA.

"If we sell that office building," a spokesman commented after this year's convention, "the convention will only owe some money on a small Baptist Student Union center in Emporia, Kan. The convention is totally solvent. We have more money on hand than we have outstanding bonds."

Messengers voted to sell the convention's office building, at 3000 West Kellogg Drive, for \$325,000 or higher.

In other action the convention adopted a record budget of more than \$996,000, elected a new president and refused to strike a clause from its constitution eliminating messengers from churches which accept "alien immersions" from other denominations.

Of the \$996,000 budget, \$614,100 is expected from Kansas-Nebraska churches through the convention's Cooperative Program unified budget. Nineteen percent of that amount will go to worldwide missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program.

Luther Berry, pastor of Pleasant View Baptist Church, Derby, Kan., was elected convention president.

Also, messengers approved changing the name of the convention's religious education division to church services division and approved an additional staff member for the division, Harry Taylor, present minister of music for Nall Avenue Baptist Church in the Kansas City area, as an associate in the division. His position was made possible by funds from the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. Also approved was the promotion of Robert Powell from convention accountant to administrative assistant.

Next year's convention is set Nov. 11-13 at First Southern Baptist Church, Topeka, Kan.

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Northern Plains Baptists
 Vote \$468,429 Budget

11/21/74

MINOT, N.D. (BP)--Registered "messengers" to the Northern Plains Baptist Convention voted a total budget of \$468,429 and approved staff and structure changes.

The title of the convention's executive secretary-treasurer, John Baker, was changed to

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executive director; Mrs. Charles Highlan, a bookkeeper with the convention for the past seven years, was named to a newly created post of executive assistant; and the religious education department was restructured into a teaching-training department with a director and two associates.

In other action, Harley Miller, a layman from Bismark, N.D., was named president of the convention, which covers Southern Baptist work in both Dakotas, Wyoming and Montana.

Of the \$468,429 budget, \$172,666 is expected through the convention's Cooperative Program unified budget, with 15 percent of that amount to go to worldwide missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program. The convention set a 1976 Cooperative Program goal of \$195,000.

The balance of the budget will come from supplemental sources, such as the SBC Sunday School and Home Mission Boards.

Next year's convention will meet Nov. 12-13 in Rapid City, S. D.

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SBC Sets Sunday School
Attendance of 4.4 Million

11/21/74

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Sunday Schools reported 4,409,136 present for Bible study on "High Attendance Celebration Sunday," making Nov. 17, 1974, the highest single Sunday attendance in Southern Baptist history.

"Compared to an average Sunday in Bible study, attendance was up 659,959, or 9.2 percent," said A.V. Washburn, secretary of the Sunday School department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, which sponsored the special attendance emphasis.

The total attendance on "Celebration Sunday" represents 61.4 percent of the 7,182,550 enrolled in Southern Baptist Sunday Schools. The 4.4 million attendance, although it set an SBC record, fell short of the goal of 5 million for Nov. 17.

The Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey recorded the highest percentage attendance with 79.9 percent of the total Sunday School enrolment present. The Baptist General Convention of Texas had the highest number present with 615,436.

Washburn said he anticipated the possibility of as many as 100,000 being added to Sunday School enrolment because of this effort.

Eugene Skelton, consultant in the Sunday School department and coordinator for Celebration Sunday, reported that "High Attendance Celebration Sunday was for many churches the climax of a 'Reach Out' emphasis, which involved a people search and six weeks of intensive visitation of Bible study prospects."

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(RF) Photo and table with state by state breakdown mailed to state Baptist editors.
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Annuity Board Investments
Weather Stock Decline

11/21/74

By Theo Sommerkamp

DALLAS (BP)--The diversified investment approach taken by the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board has helped it weather declining prices in stocks, according to Frank L. Durham, senior vice president for investments.

The Annuity Board, the SBC agency responsible for providing retirement plans and investing retirement plan contributions for church-related vocational workers, reported investments of \$322.6 million as of Sept. 30.

A little over 52 percent of that--or \$168 million--was in property. Slightly over 36 percent--

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or \$117 million--was in stocks. The balance was in various other types of investments.

During the recent stock market tumble, the Annuity Board took the best advantage of high interest rates by investing in short-term securities and real estate, Durham said.

"Our large investment in real estate has cushioned us against the impact of the stock market drop," Durham explained.

Then, when real estate lost much of its investment lure, the Annuity Board allocated the first money in about 15 years to purchase corporate bonds, Durham noted, "because they offered a better return than some real estate investments."

The Annuity Board had, prior to the downturn, been moving slowly toward putting 50 percent of its investments into stocks. But the board eased off stock investments.

"We haven't allocated any 'new money' for stocks in 18 months," the investments officer said. We presently have about 36 percent of our portfolio in common stocks, he added, and we will probably keep it within 40 percent.

Durham expects the stock market to climb. "In the next 18 to 24 months, the market probably will regain the high point it had reached in January, 1973," he observed.

"When that occurs, our stock portfolio will be in good shape, including the recovery of our variable fund (Plan C)," he said. Plan C, tied to equities, or stocks, dived along with the sliding market.

"As the general market picks up to any extent, Plan C should do a little better," Durham said.

The stock market affects total investment programs of the Annuity Board, which includes two major retirement plans, in addition to Plan C.

Durham doesn't anticipate interest rates remaining as high as they have been. "We feel in the long term, interest rates will drop to some extent," he declared. Again, the diversified approach will help calm the scene.

The Annuity Board simply will look around for the best place to invest its money elsewhere, he said.

If the Annuity Board has suffered with the declining stock market, consider what has happened to some other pension funds, where 80 percent of their money had been invested in stocks.

Obscured by the avalanche in stock prices has been the fact that many corporations, despite the lower quotations on the exchange, have been paying a higher dividend, Durham said.

The Annuity Board's dividend experience has stood up well through the economic pinch. "We don't own a stock that has failed to pay at least its regular dividend or one higher than usual, despite their position on the exchange," Durham continued.

The senior vice president for investments said the extent of the decline caught even the experts by surprise. "Apparently most money managers really did not anticipate this drop," he commented.

Investors lost confidence in the stock market and this became perhaps the major contributor "to what we would consider an unusual decline."

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Florida Baptists Urge
Combat Against Hunger

11/21/74

LAKELAND, Fla. (BP)--Florida Southern Baptists adopted a record budget and called for specific action to combat world hunger during the Florida Baptist State Convention's 113th annual session here.

In other action, registered "messengers" elected James F. Graves, pastor of First Baptist

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Church, St. Petersburg, as convention president, succeeding Mrs. Henry Parker, wife of the pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando.

Mrs. Parker, elected last year as second vice president, served nearly a year as president, after succeeding to the presidency following resignations of the president and first vice president. She was not re-elected because the Florida convention's constitution limits a president to one term.

The resolution on hunger called for setting up World Hunger Sunday, urged churches to set aside days of fasting and prayer and called on Florida Baptists to give \$1 over and above their entire tithe and offering for world food relief.

"If that were carried out," a convention spokesman said, "Florida Baptists would give at least \$36 million to combat world hunger."

Some 2,097 registered messengers, who exceeded 1971's record total of 1,660, voted a record budget of \$6.2 million and heard a report that last year's Cooperative Program unified budget was exceeded by over \$900,000.

Forty-seven percent of the state's Cooperative Program receipts will go to world missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program.

Another resolution commended Florida Governor Rubin Askew for his position against casino gambling.

Messengers also voted to authorize borrowing up to \$2 million for building and remodeling of convention property and financing other convention related projects.

A motion, which was quickly defeated, called for a study of distribution of funds between two Florida Baptist schools, Stetson University, DeLand, and Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville.

The thrust of the motion, a spokesman said, was to give more money to Baptist Bible Institute. "It would have caused serious debate in past years but did not this year because of new attitudes about support of Baptist schools and the state convention's leadership."

Both schools received regular increase in funds through the state's Cooperative Program.

Florida Baptist leaders, in other action, signed a "Declaration of Cooperation" in support of observance of the Cooperative Program's 50th Anniversary.

Next year's convention is set Nov. 10-12 in Sarasota, Fla.

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Alabama Baptists Establish
Baptist Student Scholarship

11/21/74

MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--Proponents of a long fought battle to more nearly equalize tuition cost between state supported schools and the three Alabama Baptist Convention-operated schools of higher education won a major victory here when registered "messengers" approved "the Alabama Baptist State Convention scholarship."

In another matter, at the convention's 152nd annual session, messengers tabled a motion urging opposition to a name change for the 12.3-million-member Southern Baptist Convention.

To get a Baptist scholarship students must belong to a cooperating Alabama Baptist church, have been accepted as full-time entering freshmen of one of the Baptist colleges and be recommended by their pastor.

Besides a \$200 scholarship from the convention, the school must also provide qualified students \$100, amounting to a \$300 annual scholarship.

Funds for the scholarship program were provided from a \$640,000 overage in the state's Cooperative Program unified budget funds. Southern Baptist Convention causes received one-half of this amount or \$320,000.

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In the opening session, messengers approved a 1975 Cooperative Program budget of \$8.5 million. An additional \$700,000 challenge goal for missions was also adopted. Worldwide missions efforts, supported by the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program, will get 34.5 percent.

In a rather quiet convention, messengers spent much time debating whether or not to approve a request from an educational advisory committee to provide the three colleges up to \$10,000 for a feasibility study on establishing an endowment program in Alabama.

Messengers eventually accepted the report of the study committee but did not provide the \$10,000.

The convention also registered a "vigorous protest" to what they regard as legislation making possible a "no-fault" divorce system in Alabama.

In a report of the state's Christian Life and Public Affairs Commission, later adopted in resolution form, Alabama Baptists said this legislation, which deals with grounds for divorce, tends to destroy the basic foundation of marriage and is thus aimed at the home.

One resolution urged the vigorous protest of the bill to amend title 34, code of Alabama, charging that evidence indicates that no public hearing was held nor any public explanation or justification for this amendment was given when it was enacted in 1971.

Dotson M. Nelson Jr., pastor of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham, was re-elected to a second term as president of the convention, and for the first time in the history of the convention a minister of music, Asa Couch of First Baptist Church, Center Point, was named as second vice-president.

Several resolutions, including one urging cooperation with President Gerald Ford's energy conservation program and one calling for a study of the total needs of senior adults, were also adopted.

Messengers voted to table a motion calling on the Alabama State Convention to go on record as favoring the present name of the Southern Baptist Convention.

J.R. White, pastor of First Baptist Church, Montgomery, urged the messengers to have open minds and not restrict deliberations of a Southern Baptist Convention-appointed committee now studying the possibility of a name change for the nation's largest Protestant-evangelical denomination.

The 152nd session of the Alabama Convention closed with a dramatic presentation commemorating the 50th anniversary of the denomination's Cooperative Program.

Next year's convention is scheduled Nov. 18-19 at First Baptist Church, Huntsville, Ala.