



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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76-195

Kan.-Neb. Baptists Urge 'Open Doors' to All Races

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--A record 480 "messengers" attending the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists adopted resolutions here that urged the convention's churches to practice an "open door policy" to persons of all races coming to worship, assured President-elect Jimmy Carter of prayer, and adopted a \$1,291,387 budget for 1977.

The messengers also noted that "beverage alcohol and addictive drugs continue to be a major, psychological problem for millions" of Americans. In the same action, they commended and pledged support to the work of the Nebraska Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and of the Kansas United Drive and the two agencies' directors.

Doy Jones, pastor of Tyler Road Baptist Church in Wichita, Kan., was elected president.

The "open door policy" resolution was an apparent reference to action by deacons at Plains (Ga.) Baptist Church who had twice refused to allow a black minister to attend services. The convention's action was approved prior to a vote by Plains Church on Nov. 14, to end racial discrimination.

The resolution said: "Whereas the Bible emphasizes that God is no respecter of persons, be it resolved that churches in the Kansas-Nebraska Convention . . . be encouraged to practice an open door policy to all races that come to worship."

Messengers also voted to send a message of congratulations to President-elect Carter and assured him of their prayers.

In another resolution, messengers noted:

"Whereas both the (Southern Baptist) Home and Foreign Mission Boards are challenging Southern Baptists to witness to every person in the world by the year 2000, be it resolved that Kansas-Nebraska Baptists become involved individually and as churches and support our evangelism and missions directors in outreach which encourages this objective."

The 1977 budget total includes a \$708,200 Cooperative Program unified budget goal, of which 20 percent will go to worldwide causes of Southern Baptists. The Cooperative Program goal also includes a \$60,000 missions challenge goal, a convention spokesman said.

The 1977 Cooperative Program budget goal represents a 7.1 percent--or \$54,022--decrease in anticipated receipts from affiliated convention churches, according to the spokesman. He said the decrease was necessary because 1976 receipts were running about 16 percent behind budget requirements as of mid-November. However, Cooperative Program receipts were still about 14 percent ahead of those received in 1975 for the same period, he noted.

A motion in the last session that would have reprimanded, "in love", the convention's executive board for a decision to proceed with construction of a new Baptist state office building failed by more than 2-1, the spokesman said.

During the discussion, he added, messengers stood in appreciation of Pat McDaniel, the convention's executive director.

The convention voted in 1975 to purchase land and move the offices to Topeka, Kan. The building will probably be completed and occupied in May, 1977, the spokesman said. But there was some apparent confusion, he noted, as to when construction was to have begun originally, if a fund raising effort failed, which it did.

Some opposed the move from the beginning, he continued, and this was attributed in part to the effort to reprimand the board.

Messengers voted unanimously to proceed with plans to complete fund raising efforts to pay for construction and moving of the convention offices from Wichita into the new building in Topeka.

In other action, messengers approved two amendments to the convention's constitution. One provides for succession of convention officers in case someone resigns. The other has to do with keeping associational balance on the executive board and its executive committee.

Messengers also commended Lynn P. Clayton, editor of the convention's Baptist Digest weekly newspaper and director of evangelism, "for his sacrifice and dedication."

The Kansas-Nebraska Convention will meet Nov. 8-10, 1977, at First Southern Baptist Church, Topeka, Kan.

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New England Aims At Status
As State Convention By 1981

Baptist Press
11/16/76

MIDDLETOWN, R. I. (BP)--In moves aimed at gaining status as a Southern Baptist state convention by 1981, the Baptist General Association of New England, in its ninth annual meeting here, adopted a new constitution with more provision for growth, and accepted the report of a long range planning committee.

The association, which covers six New England states and is currently under the sponsorship of the Maryland Baptist Convention, elected Robert Brindle, pastor of the South Burlington (Vt.) Baptist Church, as president. Brindle chaired the committee which wrote the new constitution.

In other action, the body also approved a total 1977 budget of \$156,176, including a goal of \$104,060 in receipts from New England churches through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. Twenty percent of the association's Cooperative Program goal will go to worldwide mission causes of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Besides the 1981 target date for convention status, goals included construction of new office facilities for the association (now underway in Northboro, Mass., with a Jan., 1977, target date, receipts of 10 percent from all member churches through the Cooperative Program, acquisition of assembly facilities, and participation in the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust which would evangelize and congregationalize the nation by 1980.

Other goals include increasing association staff from the present six professional staff as funds are available, increasing the number of pastors in the association, and increasing communications efforts.

A group of Baptists may start a state convention whenever it wishes, but, under guidelines from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, a convention must meet several requirements to receive financial assistance in launching itself.

It must have either 70 churches with 10,000 members or 50 churches with 12,500 members. The New England Association, at the end of 1975, had 44 constituted churches, 15 chapels and 6,931 members.

Its churches must establish a fund with which to begin a state convention and give an average of 10 percent of their receipts to the Cooperative Program. New England is working on these goals.

It must have a record of five years of cooperative relationships with Southern Baptists and two years of a relationship of churches in a regional fellowship sponsored by the state convention with which it is affiliated. New England has accomplished these two requirements.

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After it becomes a state convention it must have 25,000 members, under the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) constitution, before it is eligible to have trustees elected to SBC boards and agencies.

The Baptist General Association of New England is currently divided into three "local" associations, with a division into four planned for 1977. Its churches are in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Southern Baptists now have 33 state conventions, with 34,902 churches and 12.7 million members in all 50 states.

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Crews Elected Editor
By Northwest Baptists

Baptist Press
11/16/76

PORTLAND (BP)--William O. (Bill) Crews, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church here, has been elected to succeed C. E. Boyle as editor of the Northwest Baptist Witness, news publication of the Northwest Baptist Convention, and to head the convention's newly formed communications division.

The Northwest Baptist Convention, formed in 1948, is one of 33 state Baptist conventions which cover Southern Baptist work in 50 states. It has churches in Oregon, Washington and northern Idaho and has also admitted some 25 churches in the four western-most provinces of Canada.

Crews, 40, a native of Houston, Tex., has just completed two terms as president of the Northwest Convention. He was pastor of five churches in Texas between 1953 and 1967, before becoming pastor of Victory Baptist Church, Seattle, in 1967. He accepted his current pastorate in 1972.

Boyle, who will retire Dec. 31, was honored for his service at the Northwest Convention's annual meeting here. Crews, who will supervise the convention's printing operation in addition to editing the paper and directing public relations, will join the staff Jan. 1, 1977.

Crews is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He married Wanda Jo Ann Cunningham of San Angelo, Tex., in 1955. They have two children.

(BP) Photo will be mailed to state Baptist papers.

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Utah-Idaho Baptists Pray
For Carter, Vote Budget

Baptist Press
11/16/76

GRANGER, Utah (BP)--"Messengers" to the 12th annual meeting of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention here adopted a record budget of \$574,022, and approved a motion to send a letter to President-elect Jimmy Carter offering him the convention's prayer support.

Bruce Gardner, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Idaho Falls, Idaho, who has just completed one year as the convention's vice president, was elected president.

The \$574,022 budget includes a Cooperative Program goal of \$144,886. Twenty percent of the Cooperative Program will go to the Southern Baptist Convention worldwide mission causes.

The 1977 convention will meet Nov. 8-9, at Mountain View Baptist Church, Boise, Idaho.

High Court Accepts
Second Sabbath Case

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Baptist Press
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By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court announced here it will decide after all whether employers must make special arrangements to accommodate the religious views of sabbatarians regarding working on Saturdays.

Just two weeks earlier, the high court, in a 4-4 tie vote, affirmed a lower court ruling which held that employers must make such concessions. The action, however, failed to establish a firm precedent for similar cases.

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A 1972 amendment to the Civil Rights Act stipulates that employers must not dismiss or refuse to hire any individual for religious reasons, including anyone whose religion requires strict observance of the Sabbath. The amendment was introduced by U. S. Sen. Jennings Randolph (D-W. Va.), a Seventh Day Baptist.

Ever since passage of the amendment, the courts have been besieged with claims of discrimination against sabbatarians.

The new case the high court agreed to hear involves an employee of Trans World Airlines (TWA) at Kansas City International Airport. Larry G. Hardison, a mechanic, joined the World Wide Church of God in 1968, more than a year after going to work for TWA.

Hardison, who also belonged to the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, worked out an agreement with his supervisors and his union's steward allowing him to be off from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, the time his church required him to observe the Sabbath.

The agreement held until Hardison, who had recently been married, took advantage of his seniority privileges by choosing to work a day shift at another TWA building at the airport. By changing jobs, however, Hardison lost some seniority at the new site. As a result, he was denied the privilege of taking off every Saturday.

After missing three consecutive Saturdays, when he was expected to work, Hardison was fired.

A U. S. district court agreed with TWA, denying that the company had refused to make efforts to accommodate Hardison's religious preferences. Later, however, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the lower court, holding against TWA.

In a written brief submitted to the Supreme Court, lawyers for TWA argued that the 1972 amendment to the Civil Rights act violates the federal constitution by establishing religion. The amendment, they said, has the "direct and immediate effect of advancing religion." In addition, it "patently require (s) pervasive and excessive government entanglement with religion," they stated.

The union, which has sided with TWA in the case, argued in a separate brief that the entire seniority system is undermined by the 1972 amendment in favor of religious factors.

On the other side, attorneys for Hardison deny TWA's allegation that accommodating their client's religious needs would require "bumping" other employees with more seniority. They claim further that TWA had alternatives which would not have violated the company's collective bargaining agreement with the union while providing for Hardison's needs.

Hardison's primary argument is that Congress was right in passing the 1972 amendment in recognition of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment. TWA counters by arguing that the law amounts to an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

The case is likely to be settled sometime next spring.

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Baptist Professor Elected
President of Hebrew Group

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ST. LOUIS (BP)--John Joseph Owens, professor of Old Testament interpretation at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, was elected president of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew at the group's annual meeting here.

Re-elected as vice president of the Hebrew professors' group was Page Kelley, also professor of Old Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Seminary. Kelley is also director of graduate studies at the Baptist seminary.

The association is a professional organization made up of instructors of modern or biblical Hebrew in colleges, universities, divinity schools and seminaries across the United States, according to a spokesman for the group. Though most of the several hundred members are Jewish scholars, the organization also includes Protestant and Catholic professors.

Peale Lauds Ford's Honesty,
Sees Carter in Same Vein

By James Lee Young

NASHVILLE (BP)--President Gerald Ford "by his honesty has done a lot toward restoring the faith of the American people in their government," Christian minister-author-editor-publisher Norman Vincent Peale said here.

And President-elect Jimmy Carter will "build on that restoration" begun by Ford, Peale, who co-edits Guideposts magazine with his wife, Ruth Stafford Peale, told Baptist Press in an interview here.

Peale, 44-years pastor of Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, and his wife met with members of the Nashville chapter of the Religious Public Relations Council and with area Baptist media representatives during a stopover here to promote his latest book, "The Positive Principle Today" (Prentice-Hall, Inc.).

The well known minister's ideas and beliefs on successful living through positive thinking and positive application to life are centered around seven words found in Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ . . ."

The words apply whether one is successful at being a cobbler, salesman, housewife, executive or any other role in life, including U. S. President, the 78-year-old minister believes.

And, speaking of the presidency, Peale gave his views on Ford and Carter and how he sees their careers and aspirations.

Rather than viewing Carter as having a "messiah complex," as some have wondered, Peale said the President-elect is a "highly intelligent man who has drive directed toward rendering service to the world.

"I really believe he's honest. He can't turn off the plaudits and euphoria and undoubtedly likes to hear the crowd's applause," but this is normal for any man or woman, Peale observed.

"Most of our government leaders (from the beginning days) wanted to serve. George Washington, for example, left a comfortable life and good home to lead a bunch of farmers in the cold and mud.

"Carter is young, and it's a great honor to be President. As a boy growing up, he probably just wanted leadership. I think he went out normally to run for public office."

Turning to Ford, Peale said, "You could tell he was pleased at becoming President. After so many years as a Congressman, then becoming President, Ford didn't want to leave office."

"You could see the dismay when he lost the election," the minister noted.

With Ford's and Carter's honesty, Peale added, much has been and will be done to put the stigma of Watergate in the past.

"But Watergate should never be forgotten; it was a terrible thing that happened."

Peale said he didn't really know why Carter won over Ford:

"After awhile people just may want a change."

Peale said he is "happy to see a southerner and just as happy to see a Southern Baptist entering the White House as any other."

"(John) Kennedy was a good Catholic, Ford is a good Episcopalian, and Carter is a good Southern Baptist.

"I'm Dutch Reformed, and we haven't had a Dutch Reformed President since Theodore Roosevelt. It's about time we had a President from the Dutch Reformed Church in America," Peale said tongue-in-cheek.

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Peale would not say whom he and Mrs. Peale voted for in the presidential race but said: "She voted first, then I went in and cancelled her vote."

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Hawaiian Baptists Pray
For Carter, Set Budget

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11/16/76

OAHU, Hawaii (BP)--The Hawaii Baptist Convention, in annual session here, passed a resolution calling on Baptists of Hawaii to pray for President-elect Jimmy Carter and approved a 1977 budget of \$1,593,077.

Raymond Lau, pastor of University Baptist Church, Honolulu, was elected president.

The resolution on Carter took note of the "tremendous task" he is undertaking and pledged prayer support and cooperation to him.

The convention took special note of the Southern Baptist Convention's Bold Mission Thrust emphasis, which seeks to evangelize and congregationalize the nation by 1980.

Ray Villamu, missionary to Samoa, and Samoan High Talking Chief Mageo addressed the convention as part of the "bold mission challenge." The convention opened work this year in American Samoa.

In other action, "messengers" to the convention heard reports of continued growth of Hawaiian Baptist churches and approved a mission strategy report which had been in the making for three years.

The 1977 convention will meet on the Island of Kauai, Nov. 9-11.

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Famous Lawyer's Sons Give
\$150,000 to Baptist School

Baptist Press
11/16/76

RICHMOND (BP)--The sons of the late George E. Allen, a Richmond attorney who built a national reputation as a trial lawyer, have given \$150,000 to the University of Richmond to establish a law professorship in his memory.

One of the stipulations of the gift from the sons--George Jr., Wilbur and Ashby--was that "others would be encouraged to match the gift so that a minimum of \$300,000 could be set aside to produce income to cover a significant part of a professor's salary at the University of Richmond."

The George E. Allen Chair will be the first endowed chair in the 105-year history of the T. C. Williams School of Law at the Baptist university.

Allen practiced in Virginia, first in Lunenburg County and later in Richmond, for 62 years prior to his death in 1972.

Among many other honors, he was given in 1965 the first Award for Courageous Advocacy by the American College of Trial Lawyers (ACTL). The award, the only one ever given by the ACTL until 1976, was presented to the 80-year-old Allen for representing a black law student in a 1963 case in Prince Edward County, Va., at a time when feelings were intense over the integration of public schools.

The Allen sons said in a letter to University of Richmond President E. Bruce Heilman they hoped the gift would inspire others to do likewise.

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