

(BP)
December 9, 1976

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

-- FEATURES
produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee
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Nashville, Tennessee 37219
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76-208

**Texas Baptists Set Pace
In Oral History Research**

WACO, Tex. (BP)--A cooperative oral history venture that may serve as a pattern for other Baptist state conventions is completing its first year among Texas Baptist's 12 educational institutions and the Texas convention's historical committee.

Billed as the Texas Baptist Oral History Consortium (TBOHC), the project is designed to study the historical development of Baptist institutions and work in Texas.

In the project, a living history is captured through tape recordings of people who relate their first-hand involvement in Baptist life through the years.

The consortium aims to create a large body of Texas Baptist oral memoirs available to libraries and archives of Baptist institutions in Texas.

The project was funded by the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) at its October 1975 meeting in Dallas and was officially launched on Jan. 1, 1976.

Baylor University here is where the consortium network's coordination, transcribing and editing center is housed. The Baptist university began its own oral history program in 1970.

Although the consortium is designed primarily to enhance Texas Baptists' "Baptistiana" holdings, the Southern Baptist Historical Commission is viewing the project with great interest, says the Nashville-based agency's executive director-treasurer Lynn E. May Jr.

May noted that the Texas Baptists have set a pattern of denominational cooperation in oral history for other states to follow.

"This is the first systematic effort, so far as is known, to pool resources, personnel, finances and skills of leadership among Baptist institutions in cooperative efforts to gather and preserve memoirs in a given state," May noted.

While the Texas program has no direct tie with the SBC's Historical Commission, the national agency does work with the Texans on a consulting basis.

"The Historical Commission will benefit," May said, "as historical information, interviews and other information are made available for broader research."

One means of making available the Texas research is that some type of bibliography or index is expected to be eventually programmed into the Baptist Information Retrieval System (BIRS), a computerized cross-indexing of information and articles directly involving and relating to Baptists, May added.

In addition to studying Baptist work in Texas, several schools are interviewing Texas Baptists who work in other states and countries. Retired missionaries, and past and present SBC leaders are major interview subjects.

Consortium directors are Thomas L. Charlton, who directs the Baylor University Program for Oral History, and Leon McBeth, professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

"It's important to realize that all results of the consortium will benefit the BGCT in general," Charlton said.

State director of the consortium is David B. Stricklin, a Baylor oral history graduate who serves as a "liaison man," and "troubleshooter" in both the personal and technical sides of the project.

Bound volumes of consortium interviews will be distributed to the library of the school that conducts the interviews, the Texas Collection of Baylor, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's library in Fort Worth, and to the interviewee. Southwestern Seminary's library is the depository for all BGCT historical records, Stricklin said.

"For schools who have never done work in oral history, we usually ask them to begin with studies of their institution's founding, their past presidents and similar subjects," he noted.

"After they get some experience, they usually get off their campus and spread into other topics."

A less obvious value of the consortium besides more information of institutional history is the "reevaluation that leaders of some schools and institutions do during such a study," Stricklin reflects.

"One ultimate result," he said, "is that this material will be available to help present and future leaders make decisions. It could affect the future in a very positive way."



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Texas Baptists Ask Landes For Two More Years

DALLAS (BP)--Texas Baptist leaders, meeting here, called on their executive director to serve two additional years to carry out his plan for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all Texans.

The 192-member executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas also pledged prayer support for that plan--"Good News Texas," a multimedia evangelistic campaign scheduled for early 1977.

James H. Landes, the man who conceived this campaign while serving as executive director of Texas' two million Southern Baptists, was asked to serve two years beyond his normal retirement at the end of 1977.

Obviously moved by the board's action, Landes promised that "I will be praying with you about the future and will be giving you a certain word right away."

Landes, in his first three years as executive director, has expressed deep concern for the 4.7 million Texans who are not members of any church. About a year ago he presented plans for television, radio, newspaper, and billboard promotion to tell all Texans of God's love.

Texas Baptists will spend more than \$1 million for the multimedia presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The state has been divided into three regions for the campaign, to be held Feb. 20-March 20 in North Texas, March 6-April 3 in South Texas, and March 27-April 24 in West Texas.

George E. Worrell, associate in the convention's evangelism division, called on the pastors and laymen who constitute the executive board to pray fervently for a spiritual awakening similar to those which swept across America in 1734-60, 1800, and 1858. Worrell said history records that the great awakenings happened because of daily prayers by a group of concerned people.

Two new staff members, Gary D. McCool of Fort Worth and Bill Blackburn, a native of San Angelo now living in Kentucky, were introduced at the meeting.

McCool, 34, a certified public accountant, has been named controller and assistant treasurer of the convention. Blackburn, 30, will be the first family life consultant with the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The board cited "extraordinary circumstances" as the reason for extending Landes' term.

Robert W. McGinnis, director of missions for Dallas Baptist Association, said, "For him (Landes) to step out at this time would be an unfinished task. It would penalize the work of the Lord."

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Texas Baptists Name Family
Consultant, Controller

Baptist Press
12/9/76

DALLAS (BP)--Feeling the need for strengthening family relationships, Texas Baptists have named their first family life consultant.

He is Bill Blackburn, a native Texan who has served as pastor and counselor in Indiana and Kentucky. He will return to Texas as a staff member of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

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Texas Baptists also named Gary D. McCool as controller and assistant treasurer, succeeding Harold Richardson, who has joined the staff of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Blackburn, 30, will consult with churches, helping plan local church family life programs, making suggestions for family life ministry to the local churches, and coordinating marriage enrichment opportunities for church and associational life.

A graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Fort Worth. Blackburn received his doctor of philosophy degree in theology and pastoral counseling at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

While at Southern Seminary, he was pastor of Burks Branch Baptist Church, Shelbyville, Ky., and worked part-time at personal counseling service in Jeffersonville, Ind., doing individual, marriage, family, and group counseling. He also was director of special projects coordinating marriage enrichment conferences and workshops for parents.

McCool, 34, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), has worked for accounting firms in Tulsa and Dallas and served as pastor of Corinth Baptist Church, Ravenna, Tex. A native of Oklahoma, he is a graduate of the University of Tulsa and Southwestern Seminary.

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Equip the People
To Minister, Hogue Says

Baptist Press
12/9/76

LOUISVILLE (BP)--"We need to take the pastor off the pedestal and let the people do it," says C. B. Hogue, director of the Home Mission Board's division of evangelism.

Speaking to evangelism classes at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here, Hogue says that effective evangelism must mobilize every member of the church.

"The people are discovering that they really want to be involved in this business of touching their world for Jesus Christ," Hogue asserts.

The evangelism director believes that pastors have a responsibility to equip their members for personal evangelism, but he also contends that they should be given a proper motivation.

"Don't send them out to put another notch on their guns. Send them out to witness in the traffic patterns of their lives," Hogue urges.

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