

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Church Calls Husband-
Wife Pastor Team**

LOUISVILLE (BP)--John Sylvester and Joy Johnson--a husband-wife team--have been called as co-pastors of Twenty-third and Broadway Baptist Church, an integrated, 150-member Southern Baptist congregation in West Louisville.

The husband-wife combination, probably a first in the Southern Baptist Convention, will assume duties, June 1. Sylvester, former pastor of Big Spring Baptist Church, Breckinridge County, Ky., is expected to lead in his wife's ordination to the gospel ministry on June 3.

The couple, both graduates of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, have been members of the 150-member congregation of blacks and whites since last February, and he has served as an administrative assistant at the church. They are white.

Sylvester, 29, and Johnson 27, who married in Dec. 1975, noted that she has retained her maiden name because they are both professionals and keeping their separate names would make it easier for them to maintain their identity as ministers, according to a report in the *W stern Recorder*, Kentucky Baptist state newspaper.

They will alternate preaching and share equally in every respect as pastors, but, the *Louisville Times* reported, they will divide responsibility along the lines of their individual experience and then redivide responsibilities as time progresses.

For example, Sylvester will reportedly assume more of the administrative duties at the outset and Johnson, who has training and experience as a social worker and counselor, will initially concentrate more on the counseling sessions.

Another unusual aspect of the church's action is that a woman deacon, Cora Washburn, was head of the pulpit committee which unanimously recommended the couple after considering 19 others for the position.

Sylvester and Johnson regard their calls by the church as answer to prayer. "It's more than unusual, it's a miracle," she told the *Louisville Times*.

He added, "Many churches want a pastor's wife who will be extremely active in the church but not on the payroll or in a position of authority. This is recognition that Joy is called by God and that she is professionally trained and competent.

"It's very unusual for a church to call members as pastors," he continued, "so they know what they are getting and we know what we are getting."

Sylvester, a native of Alabama, is currently working on his Ph.D. in church history at Southern Seminary. He earned a master of divinity degree at the school in 1974. A graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, he served two years on the staff of Hong Kong Baptist College and as pastor of an English-speaking Baptist church there.

Johnson, a native of Roanoke, Va., is a graduate of Taylor University, Upland, Ind., and recently earned the master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary. Her experience includes a counseling ministry in New York and serving as minister of music for Oak Park Baptist Church, Jeffersonville, Ind.

Twenty-third and Broadway Church is affiliated with the Long Run Baptist Association, the Kentucky Baptist Convention (Southern), the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky (black), and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Earlier in the year, Beech Fork Baptist Church, Gravel Switch, Ky., got headlines by ordaining a woman to the ministry. She serves as a missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board as a church extension specialist in the role of chaplain-pastor of the Center City Baptist Chapel, a mission congregation in Philadelphia.

The South District Baptist Association voted 19-9 to ask the Beech Fork church to rescind the ordination by October or lose its affiliation with the association. The church has refused. Such loss of affiliation would not affect the church's affiliation with the Kentucky Baptist Convention or the Southern Baptist Convention.

Although no complete data is available, more than 20 women have been ordained by Southern Baptist churches in recent years, most to serve in counseling or chaplaincy roles. No figures are available on how many women hold pastorates.

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SBC Pre-Registration
In Excess of 2,680

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--When the 120th annual session of the 132-year-old Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) convenes here June 4, some 2,680 of more than 16,000 expected as "messengers" will already be registered.

Last year, the convention in Norfolk asked the SBC Executive Committee to study pre-registration on a trial basis. The process has been worked out in cooperation with W. Fred Kendall of Nashville, SBC registration secretary.

In the pre-registration process, messengers have received badges and computer card ballots. Some 1,600 Books of Reports also were sent in advance to those requesting them and paying the \$1 cost.

Billy D. Malesovas, director of financial planning and assistant to the treasurer of the Executive Committee, said the pre-registration deadline is past.

Pre-registered messengers have been warned in advance by Kendall that no extra ballots or messenger badges will be available for those who lose them or leave them at home.

"We must limit them one set to a messenger because of expense and the need to maintain the security of the voting procedure and have a legitimate convention," Kendall said.

Although 16,000 total registrations are predicted, an all-time record 18,637 registered last year in Norfolk.

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First Cambodian Church
In Thai Refugee Camp

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KLONG YAI, Thailand (BP)--The first Cambodian church organized in Thailand was constituted in a refugee camp here, on the second anniversary of the fall of Cambodia.

The Klong Yai Baptist Church's charter membership of 251 includes Vietnamese, Chinese and Cambodians, with the majority being Cambodians, according to Maxine (Mrs. Robert R.) Stewart, Southern Baptist missionary press representative.

Has Savile was chosen by the church to serve as pastor while he is in the refugee camp. Church members were meeting in a building originally built for living quarters.

A total of 584 persons have been baptized by Southern Baptist missionary Daniel R. Cobb and Savile in the Klong Yai camp since the beginning of Southern Baptist ministries there with the refugees. Many of the new Christians have since gone on to other countries.

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The refugee ministry extends to three camps in the Chanthaburi-Trad provinces where some 1,235 have been baptized by Cobb, Savile and Southern Baptist missionary Ronald C. Hill, according to Mrs. Stewart.

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Conflict of Rights Seen
At 'Child Porn' Hearings

Baptist Press
5/25/77

By Carol Franklin

WASHINGTON (BP)--Conflict between children's rights and First Amendment rights flared frequently during two days of hearings on child sexual exploitation here. Witnesses pled for a law to protect children from sexual abuse while legislators weighed the need for federal intervention in the sensitive area.

The Subcommittee on Crime of the House Committee on the Judiciary held two days of hearings on child sexual exploitation and abuse. Rep. John Conyers Jr., (D.-Mich.) is subcommittee chairman.

Frank Osanka, associate professor of social justice and sociology at Lewis University, Glen Ellyn, Ill., told the subcommittee he would not be satisfied with the laws until there were "fail-safe safeguards for our children" against sexual molestation.

"The law should be so specific that even the act of selling such pornography be interpreted as a party to child abuse and neglect. I realize that these are extreme measures, but the socially corrupting nature of child pornography and the current inability of the criminal justice system to stop it, demand strong protective legislation," Osanka said.

"In my view, a person who purchases child pornography is a party to child abuse since his purchase will insure a profit for the pornographer and thereby guarantee abuse of additional children through the production of new items," he continued.

Members of the subcommittee objected strongly to Osanka's position, while agreeing that the situation is "reprehensible." Rep. Allen E. Ertel (D.-Pa.) said Osanka seemed to "advocate over kill. We would have to go for the consumer as well as bookstore managers and producers."

Heather Grant Florence of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) distinguished between two aspects of the problem. "I shy away from the phrase 'child porn' as that confuses two distinct issues--child abuse which is unlawful activity and the dissemination of printed or visual materials which is constitutionally protected," Florence testified.

"The ACLU wholeheartedly joins with the many legislators, private individuals and community groups in condemning the sexual exploitation of children for any purpose, including commercial purposes . . . (We) strongly urge that criminal laws prohibiting child abuse and contributing to the delinquency of a minor should be vigorously enforced," she went on.

Florence noted, however, that "the Constitution requires that any legislation designed to cure these evils not trample on First Amendment rights in the process."

Chairman Conyers raised a number of questions. "Are these abusive practices in fact growing like wildfire, or is the appearance of such increases in large part due to the fact that public attention has at last been focused on practices which have long existed but have been ignored or attention to them suppressed? . . . Is the problem we are addressing really a monolithic one, or is it in fact three distinct and separable problems of sexual child abuse, prostitution, and pornography?"

Conyers also raised the question of what motivates children to become involved in such activities. "Some persons who have concerned themselves with these matters are convinced that material attractions are quite significant in inducing children into such conduct; other students of the problem assert that children care very little about money, but are primarily looking for happiness, security, and love."

"The most essential question which must be addressed . . . is, of course, whether additional federal criminal legislation is needed . . . establishing that objectionable conduct--even revolting conduct--is taking place does not necessarily establish the need for new federal criminal laws," Conyers asserted.

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Robert F. Leonard, prosecuting attorney, Genesee County, Flint, Mich., and president-elect of the National District Attorneys Association, told the subcommittee, "Our local experience clearly illustrates the need for a federal attack on the problem."

Leonard also stressed, however, that "in responding to public concern over child pornography and abuse we should not prohibit offensive conduct by trampling upon the rights of expression guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution."

Charles Rembar, a New York attorney, said, "Many of my clients are writers, publishers, and in the film and television business. Many might oppose this bill (H.R. 3913). They would be wrong. The First Amendment is enfeebled by stretching it too far. It should not be abused."

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States May Not Forbid
Abortion to Minor Wards

Baptist Press
5/25/77

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP)--State welfare officials cannot forbid young women who are wards of the state to obtain abortions, the U. S. Supreme Court ruled here.

The high court affirmed without comment a ruling by a three-judge federal district court in Connecticut. The lower court had ruled that a Connecticut State Welfare Department regulation giving its top official the right to refuse an abortion to a young woman during the first trimester of her pregnancy violates the woman's constitutional right to an abortion.

Francis H. Maloney, Connecticut's commissioner of welfare, had forbidden a young ward of the state, identified in court as "Lady Jane," from obtaining an abortion early in her pregnancy. The woman's physician had agreed to perform the abortion if the commissioner gave his approval, as required by the state regulation.

Maloney refused, however, arguing that the state should not be prohibited from denying abortions to minors for "medical safety" reasons. The state also argued that a guardian is needed in such cases to help minor wards in making their decisions about abortion.

The Supreme Court's action means that young women who are wards of the states are entitled to the same access to abortions as other women.

The high court ruled four years ago that the state has no compelling interest in forbidding abortion during the first trimester of pregnancy and that a woman, in consultation with her physician, has a constitutional right of privacy which enables her to make that decision without state interference.

In other actions, the high court:

--Agreed to hear an Oakland, Calif., case involving the right of the media to access to jails. A U. S. district court there ruled earlier that television station KQED should be given greater access to the Alameda County Jail than the sheriff grants to members of the general public. The court acknowledged that while both the media and the public theoretically have equal access from a constitutional standpoint, the media must sometimes be given special privileges in carrying out their duties to the public.

--Declined to hear arguments that accused criminals are always entitled to know the religious preferences of potential jurors. Two men convicted of receiving stolen property had claimed that their constitutional right to trial by an impartial jury was jeopardized by their inability to learn the religious affiliation of jury members. The government disagreed, saying that the two men had failed to give any "specific reason" for the request and had actually conceded that "religion was not an issue" in their case.

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