

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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New SBC President
Fields Variety of Questions

KANSAS CITY (BP)--Newly-elected Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Jimmy Allen in a press conference here, endorsed equal rights for women but rejected the rights of homosexuals to serve as models for children in public schools.

Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, fielded reporters' questions in the wake of resolutions presented earlier during the SBC on equal rights and Singer Anita Bryant's crusade against equal employment and housing opportunities for homosexuals in Dade County, Fla.

Allen said he feels Southern Baptists need to move toward opening new dimensions on opportunity for women throughout church life.

"We are missing a great untapped resource if we don't do that," he said.

He sees the issue of ordaining women as a matter a local congregation must determine for itself.

"I'm not as excited in the ordination of women as in freeing them for useful service," he said. "The question is, 'Are they allowed to be decision makers'?"

But Allen said he doesn't see the current efforts by militant homosexuals in the same light as women's rights.

He declined to comment on what action the convention might take on a proposed equal rights resolution later now in resolutions committee.

Asked his theological stance, Allen described himself as a theological conservative and a progressive in application of the Christian gospel.

"I believe in the authority of the Word of God, in the Bible ...I believe in putting the fundamental truths of God into healthy application in the power of the Holy Spirit to change human nature."

On the issue of changing the name of the Southern Baptist Convention, Allen said he thinks it is no longer a live option.

"The name has come to represent who we are and what kind of things we believe so that Southern Baptists couldn't afford to change it," Allen said.

Asked about the racial makeup and programs of the church he serves as pastor, Allen said First Baptist, San Antonio, "sort of looks like a little United Nations with black and brown and Oriental and Caucasian. He said the church has Mexican American deacons and teachers of ethnic background."

The church ministries include a medical clinic, a literacy program, ministries to internationals, a street ministry and counseling service and a community ministry which feeds 150 people a day.

Asked if he had an organization to get elected, he laughed and said many people had telephoned him, "and a number of folks did their own organizing," but he had no organization: himself.

Allen said today is a time of maturing for Southern Baptists. "It's a time for coming to grips with the world in a way we've never done before," he said, referring to a proposal by President Jimmy Carter, who has challenged his fellow Southern Baptists to double the mission force at home and abroad by 1982 through the use of volunteers.

Asked if Carter's involvement is a violation of church and state, Allen replied, "I see President Carter as a very sincere churchman. There must be someplace in the life of a public official to be the Christian participant his convictions lead him to be," he added, noting that Carter was an active Southern Baptist before his election.

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"I believe he wants to help the people to whom he belongs to face up to the challenge that belongs to us."

Another reporter asked Allen if Baptists would not have reacted negatively if former President Kennedy had spoken out as strongly influencing the Catholic Church.

"If President Kennedy had been as involved in his churchmanship as President Carter has been, we would probably have understood," he responded. "There may have been an emotional response . . . I don't know what the repercussions will be but we'll deal with them as they come."

Allen also fielded other question about homosexuality and the recent results of Anita Bryant's crusade.

"It is the right of a community to determine the kind of model it wants for its children," he said.

He said his church tries to deal with people in a compassionate way in all areas of their lives including their sexuality.

Concerning the present charismatic movement in many churches within the Southern Baptist Convention, Allen said he sees himself as being less threatened than many of his "brethren."

"There's been a real fresh moving of the Holy Spirit in a great many places within out fellowship for which I'm very grateful.

"There are some bizarre behavior patterns which create all sorts of controversy," he continued. "When that happens, I want to ask what the highest good is--what's happening in the total witness of their lives."

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SBC Urges Doubling Of
Gifts for 'Bold Mission'

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (SBC)--Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) voted here to provide the financial clout necessary to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world by the year 2,000 in a project known as Bold Mission.

The messengers at the 120th session of the SBC adopted five proposals presented by the Stewardship Commission.

Among the recommendations approved were the setting of a new goal to double total Cooperative Program gifts to state Baptist conventions from \$150 to \$300 million by 1982, and to increase it to \$1.2 billion by the year 2,000.

A second recommendation calling for individuals to give more to the Cooperative Program through their church, and for every church to place the Cooperative Program in its budget on a percentage basis and increase gifts by some percentage each year.

The messengers asked their Executive Committee to work with the Stewardship Commission in formulating an annual reporting system for the Cooperative Program.

Also, the Executive Committee was assigned the responsibility of giving administrative leadership in promoting and coordinating all facets of Bold Mission program.

And finally, the Executive Committee was commissioned to adopt a single promotional theme for the convention's world mission goals.

In other action, the Southern Baptist Historical Commission was taken to task during its report by a messenger who claimed she had been wrongfully identified in a January issue of the commission's publication, "Baptist History and Heritage."

Mrs. Richard Sappington, of Houston, Tex., called for a clarification of the alleged mistake.

Following her remarks, Lynn E. May, executive director-treasurer of the agency, challenged messengers to gain a "better understanding of our Baptist heritage, so that we may strengthen our church even more."

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SBC Agencies Pledge Mission
Education Cooperation

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Executives of five Southern Baptist agencies pledged cooperation in mission education to more than 15,200 messengers at the annual Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) here.

The chief executives of the Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Baptist Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and Brotherhood Commission said they have agreed on a six-point strategy of missions education.

Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, said the report is in response to the report of the Missions Challenge Committee, presented at the 1976 SBC meeting in Norfolk, Va.

"Part of that report requested that the two mission boards--with the Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission and Baptist Sunday School Board--work together to discover and implement plans for a broad based mission education plan that will reach all members of the churches."

William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board, said the cooperative effort "heralds a new day in the life of the Southern Baptist Convention, where the emphasis is on cooperation."

Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the WMU, said the directors agreed "that a coordinated missions education curriculum design be developed..."

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission, said the leaders agreed "that a cooperative strategy be developed for communicating with pastors and church staff members..."

Grady Cothen, president of the Sunday School Board, said leaders agreed that a "national merchandising plan be developed to inform Southern Baptists of the availability of missions education materials and to effectively distribute these materials..." and to put the resources of the Sunday School Board at the disposal of the denomination.

Cothen said leaders agreed that a "comprehensive convention-wide plan be developed and implemented which would encourage every church to provide missions education for its members, and that the five agencies form a group to develop and coordinate a comprehensive missions education strategy."

He said the agreement had "come about through very careful work..." and urged messengers to pray for the agencies "as they work together in this very important responsibility."

Tanner said that while the agreements so far are general, "very specific projects will be developed from this."

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Criswell Urges Emphasis
Historical Christian Facts

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--When a man denies the virgin birth, he denies the Christian faith, W. A. Criswell, pastor of the 18,869 member First Baptist Church, Dallas, told Southern Baptist messengers here.

In an address on "Our Reason for Being," Criswell, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said men also deny the Christian faith when they deny the resurrection of Christ, the miracles of the apostles or the great revelation of God in human history.

"The man who denies the historical facts of the Christian faith denies the faith itself, because the faith cannot exist apart from the historical facts upon which it is founded," Criswell reasoned.

Criswell also gave the messengers some advice on what Baptist clergymen should preach.

"It is never philosophy, speculation, psychology, or any other of the speculative, hypothetical, theorizing academic approaches. He proclaims the historical facts of the Christian faith, grounded in history, grounded in what happened and what was done--the intervention of God from heaven in human life."

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The messengers also heard an address on "The World God Loves" by Frank Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.

"How vital it is we kindle a great sense of compassion for our own nation," Pollard said. "We must see our beloved country not only as the base for mission thrust but also as the objective of missions compassion."

Pollard said he hopes people are now aware that the United States has the best system of government in the world today and that "Communism has now shown itself to be nothing more than a dictatorial rip-off in the name of the people.

"It is at this point we begin to see the vital role our ministry plays in national survival. Astute students of government are beginning to recognize the great place Christian faith has in this nation from the founding fathers to now.

"They are saying that while there is no evidence Christianity is dependent upon democracy to survive, there is much evidence to support the fact that a republican form of government is dependent upon Christian principles to survive."

Pollard praised the work of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in channeling funds for world hunger and its 1975 efforts which, he said, resulted in 80,747 baptisms at a cost of \$645 per person.

"Just think, in recent years we taxpayers sent thousands of young men overseas, many of them to their death, and paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to kill a person that maybe could have been won to Christ for \$645.

"I keep remembering how, in our callous sinfulness and unconcern, we American Christians keep refusing God's call, some of us to go, others to send our sons and daughters with bread and Bibles. Then inevitably we have to send our sons with bayonets and bombs. And the tragic irony of it is that unless we drastically change our ways we will be destroyed by the people we could have won."

The messengers also received annual reports from two of their 19 agencies, the Stewardship Commission and Historical Commission.

The stewardship report said total Southern Baptist giving in 1977 should reach \$1,600,000,000, up more than \$300,000,000 from the previous year.

The Historical Commission reported successful completion of a two-year test of a computerized Baptist information retrieval system (BIRS).

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Bond Association
Elects Bennett

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Harold C. Bennett of Jacksonville, executive secretary of the Florida Baptist Convention, has been elected president of the Association of Baptist State Convention Bond Plans.

The association, formed four years ago, is composed of those conventions in which bond programs are backed by the conventions. Ten conventions are involved, including Alaska, Ohio, Florida, Illinois, New Mexico, Northwest (Oregon-Washington), Indiana, Missouri, Maryland and Michigan.

Elected vice president was Arthur Farmer, director of special ministries for the Illinois Baptist State Association, and secretary-treasurer, Rheubin L. South, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

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SBC Approves Carter Proposal,
Views Satellite Interview

Baptist Press
6/15/77

By Catherine Allen

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--A videotaped message from the White House and a prayer via satellite television hookup between Hong Kong and Kansas City propelled the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) into plans to reach all people everywhere with the gospel by 2000 a.d.

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Baptist layman Jimmy Carter convinced some 16,000 of his fellow Southern Baptists to launch a new plan for massive use of volunteer missionaries above and beyond current plans of the SBC's Bold Mission effort.

Speaking in a brief videotaped message during the SBC's annual session in H. Roe Bartle Convention Center, President Carter promised personally to support a volunteer missionary for two years and said his pastor, Charles Trentham of First Baptist Church, Washington, would do the same.

"I am proud of our Southern Baptist Convention, our spirit, our growth, and our accomplishments. Compared to our great potential our achievements are small," Carter told his fellow Baptists. "This is the best time we will ever have for a quantum step forward in our effort to be leaders in a much needed worldwide spiritual program."

Carter challenged the messengers to launch a program to put youths, widows, retired persons, seminary professors, pastors, and others into short-term volunteer missionary work as a routine part of their careers. Carter himself has done volunteer missions work.

Following the address, messengers willingly approved a recommendation from the SBC Executive Committee that calls for 5,000 new short-term volunteer missionaries to be enlisted by 1982, along with necessary financial support.

The recommendation also urged major increases in the Cooperative Program (the SBC's plan for denominational and missions support).

Finally, it established a workgroup of state convention executive directors, representatives of the Executive Committee, representatives of the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood, and Sunday School Board, and others to complete plans for the new volunteer effort by September.

Carter's address was introduced by his Sunday School teacher, Fred L. Gregg, Jr., an insurance executive who sparked Carter's interest in plans resulting from the convention's missions challenge report.

Carter's proposal dovetails with the SBC's already approved Bold Mission effort to evangelize the world by the close of the century. That goal, approved last year in Norfolk, includes doubling the SBC's overseas professional mission force already about 2,500, and doubling the home mission force, currently at about 2,200 by that time.

The Bold Mission proposals include unprecedented mobilization of denominational resources at all levels.

At Carter's request, Gregg arranged a White House luncheon June 7 with SBC missions leaders and laypersons. Carter urged the group to put more boldness in their plans, and they arranged for Carter's challenge to the convention.

The Carter presentation followed a lengthy multimedia presentation of plans of the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board and Radio and Television Commission for bold mission.

The program was anchored by NBC news commentator Ray Cullin, a Southern Baptist. Cullin is a member of the First Baptist Church of Van Nuys, Ca., an independent Baptist congregation with Southern Baptist connections.

Cullin interviewed executives of the three agencies, talked about the Biblical imperative of missions with retired foreign missions executive Cornell Goerner, and linked together numerous filmclips showing Baptist potential to use new means to reach every person in the world with the gospel by the end of the century.

World peace was the theme, "...not just political peace but spiritual peace," according to Cullin. Speaking as an observer of world affairs and as a Southern Baptist, Cullin narrated a world tour, including scenes from Baptist operations in Yemen, Bangladesh, Grenada, Thailand, Washington state, Rio Grande, Pennsylvania, and Flagstaff.

One cited example of cooperative expertise among the three agencies was a new satellite program to bring religious television programs to islands around Puerto Rico.

Then the Baptists got a personal taste of a satellite communications when Chinese Baptist pastor and a missionary in Hong Kong appeared on two giant image magnification screens.

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It was 8:35 p.m. in Kansas City and 9:35 a.m. the following morning when Missionary Jerry Juergens said "Good Morning" from Hong Kong.

The audio and video originated with a Hong Kong television station, zipped through Hong Kong communication lines to a satellite 22,500 miles above earth, entered the United States through a San Francisco television receiver, raced through American Telephone and Telegraph lines to a domestic satellite, dropped to a Chicago satellite receiving station, took telephone landlines to Kansas City, and through specially installed lines into H. Roe Bartle Hall.

Cullin conversed with the Hong Kong crew, sending his comments back to Hong Kong via undersea cable. It was a first in Southern Baptist Convention programming. Cost for the cable hookup was estimated at \$6,000.

David Cheung, president of the Hong Kong Baptist Convention, told Southern Baptists to consider satellites as a futuristic means of missions, and pointed out that U. S. medical expertise, among other things, could be transmitted instantaneously into remote jungles.

Then, in the first known attempt to share prayer audibly around the world, Hong Kong and Kansas City Baptists recited together the Lord's Prayer.

Cullin called it "a prayer that literally wrapped the world up in our arms."

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Runnels, Sutton, Porter
Bradley, Routh Elected

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--A Missouri pastor and a Kansas orthopedic surgeon were elected to the first and second vice presidencies of the Southern Baptist Convention here following the election of Jimmy Allen, San Antonio pastor, as president of the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Olan Runnels, pastor of Swope Park Baptist Church, Kansas City, Mo., was elected first vice president, narrowly defeating Milton Morales, a financial and real estate consultant from Peyton, Mo., 3,556 to 3,532.

Dr. Richard Sutton of Topeka, Kan., was elected second vice president, winning in a run-off over John F. Gibson, pastor of Weleyan Drive Baptist Church, Macon, Ga., 2,266 to 1,814.

In other election results, Martin B. Bradley was chosen as recording secretary; Lee Porter as registration secretary and Porter Routh was re-elected as treasurer.

Bradley, manager of the Research Services Department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, was elected by a 4,841 to 3,100 margin over Searcy Garrison, executive secretary of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Porter, consultant for senior adults for the Sunday School Board won in a runoff with Larry Maddox, pastor of Maywood Baptist Church, Independence, Mo. Porter had 4,253 votes to Maddox's 2,758.

Routh is executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, Nashville, was unopposed.

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SBC Approves Prayer Day
For Bold Mission Thrust

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Messengers to the 120th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention gave tacit approval to a motion to set aside a day of prayer for Bold Mission Thrust.

Messenger Paul C. Lawson, pastor of Spurgeon Memorial Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., had asked that the Sunday immediately prior to the 1978 and 1979 annual SBC meetings be set aside as a day of prayer for Bold Mission Thrust, that a prayer meeting time be set aside in the two annual meetings and that appropriate agencies develop guidelines for the day of prayer in local churches.

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Messenger William Self, pastor of Wieuca Road Baptist Church of Atlanta, Ga., made a substitute motion that the matter be referred to the new officers of the convention for implementation.

"That means we give it tacit approval and refer it to the appropriate people for implementation."

Bold Mission Thrust is the Home Mission Board's strategy designed to "evangelize and congregationalize" the nation by the end of the decade.

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Bob Thornton's 'Beaming'--
In More Ways Than One

By Larry Crisman

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Bob Thornton, television producer at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission in Fort Worth, is "beaming"--literally and figuratively.

He should be.

During the Tuesday night meeting of the 120th Southern Baptist Convention in H. Roe Bartle Convention Center here, Thornton and a Radio and Television Commission crew successfully beamed a five-minute live transmission from Hong Kong to Kansas City.

"The feat climaxed almost four months of work, if you take into account all the other preparation that went into this convention," Thornton said.

The live telecast via satellites also climaxed a combined effort of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board and Radio and Television Commission.

The effort demonstrates the potential of using live telecasts via a multi-satellite process to flash the message of Jesus Christ around the world.

"The process we used to telecast the brief segment from Hong Kong is rather complicated," said Thornton, "but we feel that with practice it can almost become routine."

The segment contained remarks and answers to questions by two Southern Baptists who serve in mission positions in Hong Kong.

Both Jerry Juergens and Daniel Cheung answered questions asked them by Ray Cullin, NBC news correspondent from Los Angeles who is also a Southern Baptist.

Cheung and Juergens also joined messengers in the convention center in reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Juergens, a seminary professor and chairman-elect of the Hong Kong Mission, told messengers, "It's already morning in Asia."

Thornton explained the telecast showed a street scene in Hong Kong at about 8:15 a.m.

"It's as though we've broken through the final communications barrier," Juergens remarked.

Cheung, president of the Hong Kong Baptist Convention and pastor of the Kowloon Baptist Church, described the people of Hong Kong as members of a "stone age" in terms of their knowledge of Jesus Christ.

"But with satellite communications," he said, "we can reach from the heart of God to the heart of Man."

Juergens then spoke of a "world brotherhood" through the gospel of Christ. He hopes the joint recitation of the Lord's Prayer can represent God's wrapping the whole world in his arms.

Thornton described the process of beaming a live segment from Hong Kong via satellites as involved.

He said the Radio and Television Commission coordinated the telecast with the Rediffusion Limited Television network in Hong Kong.

Briefly, here's the process used Tuesday night:

The Rediffusion firm fed the action to the Hong Kong Cable and Telegraph Company which used an "uplink transmitter to relay the scene from ground level to the first satellite.

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This satellite "downlinked" the scene to ground in San Francisco. From there the transmission reached another satellite over the U. S., which shuttled it to Kansas City via Chicago.

A highlight of the transmission involved a conversation between Cullin and Juergens and Cheung.

The telecast spiced a media presentation by the Radio and Television Commission, Foreign Mission Board and Home Mission Board. The presentation was called "Let the Church Reach Out--By All Means--To All People--Everywhere!"

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Wanda Allen: Pilgrimage
Of A Pastor's Wife

By Bonita Sparrow

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Wanda (Mrs. Jimmy) Allen of San Antonio, wife of the newly-elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is as honest as Texas sunshine and as beautiful as courage always is.

She is honest about her emotional breakdown--caused by the pressures of the pastorate, "Those pressures fed the rebellion I had over my husband's going back into a church situation."

They were living in Dallas where he was executive secretary of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission "and I had my own identity as a teacher. After our boys had gotten older I had begun teaching second grade in the Dallas Independent School district, and I loved it.

"I'll be honest. I didn't want him to go back into the pastorate, but he felt it was God's will. It took us a great deal of time to work through this but our church was wonderfully supportive of us both during this time."

Mrs. Allen is courageously candid about her illness and recovery after 19 months of hospitalization and psychotherapy.

A striking brunette with a quick smile, Mrs. Allen has a vivacious manner and the ability to meet and react to total strangers with ease and warm acceptance.

"But I am still in the process of finding myself as a pastor's wife," she said openly. "I am me, Wanda Allen. I don't teach a Sunday School class and I pick the WMU meetings I am interested in to attend, and people like and accept me as me.

"I want my church life and my marriage to be independently dependent. I was not called to be the pastor. I just happen to be married to the man who is called to be the pastor.

"I think the breakthrough in my spiritual recovery was psychotherapy but I do not recommend psychotherapy for everyone. In my case, however, it gave me an insight on how to pray."

She also cited the book, "When All the Bridges Are Down" by Ida Nell Holloway as "another breakthrough" in her recovery.

"I realized when I read it that I was not in this alone," she said. "Here was someone else who could not pray her way out of depression. I had thought I was the only one.

"One of the things that happens to you in this kind of an illness is a loss of self-confidence," she continued. "I do not say I'm well now, but I am able to share some of my experiences with younger women, younger pastor's wives.

"One of my first public speeches after my recovery was at a 'God Takes Over' retreat. I changed my subject to 'God Is Taking Over.' He's not through with me. I'm still on pilgrimage.

"But I do feel that God has led me through this Gethsemane for a purpose. And I'm finding opportunities to minister to younger pastor's wives who have some of the same resentments I had."

Her face grew thoughtful.

"But I never could have come through this without the support of our church friends and my husband. You know, it's very difficult for a man who is a counselor to face the fact that his wife is in a hospital. But he was wise enough to realize when he was out of this area of expertise and he was willing to go for help when I needed it.

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"Our friends and members of the church in San Antonio were contributing factors, too, in my recovery. When I was out of touch with God these people, through their concern and prayers, were keeping God in touch with me."

Wanda Allen, who met her future husband while she was a freshman at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Tex., (he was a senior) did not expect to be a pastor's wife when she was growing up.

"But it's okay to be the pastor's wife if you love the pastor," she quipped.

Her other loves include the couple's three sons, Michael, 25, who lives in San Antonio; Skip, 23, a student at Houston Baptist College, and Scott, 21, at Baylor University in Waco, Tex.

"I've lived in a men's dorm during our 28 years of married life but I'm the biggest football fan in the family," she declared. "On Superbowl Sundays, if it looks like Jimmy will preach overtime, I'm practically standing in the pew waving for him to finish."

Her favorite teams are the Dallas Cowboys, although there is a strong feeling for the Houston Oilers, too.

She is understanding of the fishbowl existence some pastor's families endure.

"Some day I am going to write a book called 'Get Me Off This Pedestal'," she smiled. "Seriously, I think a pastor's family is often put on a pedestal and this is unfair. I am a member of the church and I want to be available to the people of the church as a person."

Mrs. Allen does think, however, that the problem isn't as acute in the '70s as it was in the 40s and 50s.

"I believe our denomination is growing out of that. We seem to have come to the point where we don't expect as much in the way of perfection for the pastor's family as we did. We realize that others are human, too."

She will be traveling "some" with her husband while he is president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"But he was the one the convention elected as president, not me. I'll accompany him when I can and I won't worry about it when I can't. I'll simply play it by ear."

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SBC Grants Aid to
Canadian Baptists

By Stan Hasteley

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention voted here to provide help to Baptist congregations in Canada upon request.

The unanimous action by messengers attending the 120th session of the nation's largest Protestant denomination came after more than 20 years of internal debate over what to do about Canadian churches which ask for Southern Baptist aid.

The action follows a year of intense study of possible implications for the convention. Most concern centered on possible reaction from other, more established Canadian Baptist groups.

A special committee appointed by the SBC Foreign Mission Board to study the matter emphasized, however, that its recommendation came with the full support of Canadian Baptist leaders.

J. R. White, pastor of First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala., who chaired the committee, quoted Baptist Federation of Canada leader Fred Bullen as saying the action would meet "with our 100 percent approval."

White said Michael Steeves, an area representative in western Canada for the Baptist Federation, told him that Canadian Baptists "welcome Southern Baptists...we cannot do it all."

Dan C. Stringer, executive secretary of the Northwest Baptist Convention, praised the SBC's action and the spirit in which the decision was made. The action is "something we have looked forward to for over 20 years."

Stringer predicted that work in Canadian Baptist churches "will be greatly strengthened" because of research and planning resources which Southern Baptist agencies, particularly the Home Mission Board, will now be allowed to provide.

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Allen Schmidt, a Canadian native who serves as pastor of Royal Heights Baptist Church, Vancouver, B.C. and is currently president of the Northwest Convention, said the convention's decision is "thrilling."

Citing the unanimity of the action, he said that the Canadian question is settled "for now." He observed that "Canada is more interested in the Gospel now than ever before."

Schmidt said Canadian Southern Baptists are not presently concerned with being seated as messengers to the SBC annual meeting, now prohibited by the body's constitution because they are outside the U.S. and its territories.

"We did not seek" seating as messengers, he said, adding the view that it "may come" as a natural result of today's convention action. "We do not want...to upset the convention and create an issue," he said.

White said that the action to provide help to Canadian churches was providentially-directed. "It is God's time," he emphasized, "and Baptists need to join hands all across the world" in fulfilling their common tasks.

William O. Crews, editor of the Northwest Baptist Witness, said the decision is "significant in light of Bold Missions," Southern Baptists' plan to evangelize the world before the end of the century.

"It would have been almost hypocritical" for the convention to turn down the recommendation, he added.

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New SBC President to Seek
Carter's Ideas on Missions

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Jimmy Allen, newly-elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said here he plans to talk with President Jimmy Carter concerning his ideas about what Southern Baptists should be doing in missions.

Allen said he will be talking with President Carter about suggestions Carter made for Southern Baptist missions efforts in a videotaped message to the convention.

Carter called for massive use of volunteer missionaries on a short term basis. Carter, who has done volunteer missions work himself, called for putting youth, widows, retired persons, seminary professors, pastors and others into volunteer missions assignments.

Following Carter's message, messengers approved a recommendation from their Executive Committee for enlisting 5,000 new volunteer missionaries by 1982.

Allen, pastor of the 9,000-member First Baptist Church of San Antonio, also gave his views on abortion.

"I don't believe aborting a fetus before viability is murder theologically," the Texas pastor said. "I do not believe in abortion on demand. Society has a role in preserving the sacredness of life.

"I would be for aborting a fetus where there are circumstances that justify preserving the finest quality of life for the person aborting."

He defined viability as being the point at which the fetus could survive apart from the mother's body.

In his second press conference since his election as SBC president, Allen echoed the missions challenge.

"No group of Christians has yet imagined what God has in store for us in a day of mass communications and a shrinking world," Allen said.

The new SBC president was asked to clarify his earlier statements on equal rights for women.

"I don't think we're going to solve the issue (equal rights for women) in the voting booth," he said. "It's more a matter of attitude and providing women with opportunities such as leadership.

"I'm more concerned about the use of the opportunities by the women themselves."

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Allen also told reporters he wants Southern Baptists to continue to emphasize heterosexuality as being "God's design" while implementing such an understanding with compassion and concern.

"We as Christians have the responsibility to respond with Christian insight to the public's concern," he said. "After all, since God thought up the idea of sexuality in the first place, we ought to apply his principles to it."

Asked about an earlier statement he had made about his conservative framework for leading the convention, Allen responded, "A true conservative in Biblical understanding is a progressive, active applier of the Gospel in our kind of society."

"I'm going to take, as the Southern Baptist mainstream always has, the Bible as authoritative and move aggressively to apply that to whatever issues we face in society and in our lives."

He also indicated an eagerness to respond creatively to the world hunger problem on all levels and on the total application of the Gospel to life. This, he believes, will result in a high profile for evangelism because "when you authenticate the Gospel with action, you can explain it" so even sceptics will respond.

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SBC Refuses to Limit
President's Term of Office

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Southern Baptists reemphasized here they will determine the length of their president's term of office as they always have.

"They'll let the man in office decide whether he wants to seek election to subsequent terms.

They won't be bound by a constitutional bylaw which expressly limits the term of office.

These decisions were made by majority vote of the 120th Southern Baptist Convention's messengers in a miscellaneous business session in H. Roe Bartle Convention Center.

The vote overturned a resolution presented to the convention Tuesday by R. G. Puckett of Maryland, editor of the Southern Baptist state newspaper, Maryland Baptist.

Traditionally, the president of the largest Protestant denomination in the nation has served a one-year term, then has been re-elected to the post almost automatically.

The Southern Baptist constitution does not expressly give a person the right to a two-term office. But it's traditionally worked out that way.

Puckett explained the reason for his motion involves his wish to see the office shared by as many capable Southern Baptists as possible. He said he believed the office should be looked on as an "honorary" post.

He referred to the 132-year history of Southern Baptists, saying that only about 40 presidents have served in that time span. This, he believes, is too few.

Puckett's resolution read as follows: "The term of office for the president is limited to one year, and he shall not be eligible for re-election until as much as one year has elapsed from the time his successor is named."

Puckett reiterated the same reasons for his motion that outgoing Southern Baptist Convention president James L. Sullivan of Nashville had related to the convention earlier.

In a prelude to his final speech as president of the convention, Sullivan cited scheduling and travel pressures, as well as a fierce administrative load, as reasons for his not wanting to seek another term of office. Sullivan was elected president in last year's convention in Norfolk, Va.

Herschel Hobbs, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and a long-time leader, spoke against Puckett's motion.

He said he opposed limiting the president's term to one year during the 1965 convention in Houston and that he still opposes it.

"I speak as one who has served in this office," Hobbs said. "We don't elect men to this office to honor them, but to give them a responsibility." It's a place of leadership by influence--not authority but influence."

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Hobbs explained that any SBC president who feels he is not physically or otherwise able to serve beyond a single year can so inform the convention at the end of the 12-month period. Then the convention can select a new president.

Hobbs stressed that the convention could "conceivably" reach a time when it's to the organization's advantage to serve more than one year.

A bylaw limiting the term to only one year would put the convention into a "straight-jacket," Hobbs said.

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Southern Baptists Must
Take Risks, Self Says

Baptist Press
6/15/77

KANSAS CITY, MO. (BP)--Southern Baptists were told here that the 13 million members of the Southern Baptist Convention, thrust into the national spotlight by President Jimmy Carter, must be willing to take risks in order to answer the world's question, "Is there a God, and does He care?"

William L. Self, pastor of Wieuca Road Baptist Church, Atlanta, told messengers attending the 120th session of the Southern Baptist Convention that Baptists "must use our massive organizational ability to break new ground with the gospel."

Self reminded the convention that Baptists have not arrived where they are "by our organizational ability," but rather "Baptists are on the national scene by the providence of God."

"We are a common people in the average walk of life, but God has a way of endorsing that," Self said. "The source of Baptist strength is in the resurrected Christ," he added.

Self cited two basic needs in today's world. "First of all, the world has lost its sense of meaning. Secondly, it is trying to survive.

"Man today lives longer, and better, but he also is more frightened and disturbed, more rebellious and alienated," he said.

"We are learning that men can bear great physical and spiritual hardship but he cannot bear a sense of meaninglessness."

Self urged Baptists to lose their "massive, corporate inferiority complex. The world is learning that Baptists are not a bunch of Billy Carters, standing in front of the service station with red necks, white socks, and blue garters.

"We are a diverse people, united but autonomous, cooperative but independent, regionally named but worldwide in vision.

"We have budgets that stagger the imagination, programs that IBM would be proud of, and institutions that would be the envy of any federal bureaucrat.

"Out of this diversity and organization," Self said, "Baptists have the ability to meet needs but these needs must be met by rediscovering the resurrection of Jesus as the core and power of our faith."

He urged Baptist agencies to be willing to take risks. "Let's be like Babe Ruth, who always went to bat expecting a home run. He was the home run king and we sometimes forget that he also had more strike outs than any other player. The important thing is that he got up and made bold efforts."

Self urged Baptist agencies not to make the denomination's 1978 "Bold Mission" effort theme "just another empty phrase."

"When the people on the streets of the world are asking, 'Is there a God and does he care?' there are 12 million Southern Baptists commissioned by God to answer, 'The Bible says yes, there is a God. He cares.'"

"Who knows, we Southern Baptists may be like Esther, called to prominence for such a time as this," Self concluded.

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