



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Michigan Baptists Admit Canadian Baptist Church

LINCOLN PARK, Mich. (BP)--The Baptist State Convention of Michigan, celebrating its 20th anniversary here, became the second Southern Baptist-related state convention to admit a Canadian church, passed a resolution against homosexuality, and discussed ambitious growth plans for the future.

The convention admitted Evangelical Baptist Church, Amhurstberg, Ontario, Canada, just across the river from Detroit, which had affiliated with Michigan's Macomb Baptist Association in October. Orville Bell, a former Michigan Baptist pastor, serves as pastor. The Northwest Baptist Convention, which covers Baptist work in Oregon and Washington, has admitted some 35 churches in Canada's four western provinces to affiliation over the years.

The resolution on homosexuality called for "compassion for persons trapped by the homosexual lifestyle, while at the same time believing that redemption (for homosexuals) is available through Jesus Christ." The convention also resolved to "stand against any movements that support the homosexual lifestyle."

Another resolution opposed efforts by the Internal Revenue Service to define the purpose and mission of "integrated auxiliaries" of churches, calling such action in violation of constitutional provisions for separation of church and state.

The convention voted a \$1.4 million budget for 1978, with \$668,676 of that amount expected to come through the statewide Cooperative Program giving of Michigan Baptist churches. The convention will give 23.5 percent of the Cooperative Program figure to world missions through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national Cooperative Program unified budget.

Messengers to the 20th annual convention also elected David Ray, pastor of New Prospect Baptist Church, Ypsilanti, Mich., as president and heard leaders from the early days of Southern Baptist work in Michigan.

Fred Hubbs, who pioneered Baptist work in the Motor Cities Baptist Association, 1952-57, and served as the convention's first executive secretary, 1957-70, and H.T. Starkey, first president of the new state convention in 1957, spoke and were honored.

They heard reports of formation of 30 new churches or missions in the past year, largest in the state's history, and plans for forming 58 more in 1978. The convention, which began with 53 churches and 8,400 members and now has 183 churches with 43,000 members, emphasized participation in the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust and in the North Central Mission Thrust. Bold Mission Thrust seeks to proclaim the message of Christ to all the world by 2000. North Central Mission Thrust seeks to double congregations and reach everyone with the message in seven north central states by 1990.

Other resolutions included statements opposing legalization of casino gambling in Michigan, particularly Detroit, and encouraged Michigan Baptists to support the electoral process with prayer and active involvement.

The 1978 convention will be Nov. 14-16 at First Baptist Church, Clio, Mich.

Arkansas Baptists Oppose Ordination Of Women

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--The Arkansas Baptist State Convention voted to set up an office for crisis ministry, expressed support of Anita Bryant and her opposition to the gay rights movement, and voted opposition to support of an ordained woman by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

In other action at the annual session, registered "messengers" passed resolutions opposing pornography and ABC-TV's controversial "Soap" series, urging churches to work toward alleviation of world hunger, opposing on-premises beer in Arkansas motion picture theaters, and urging alcohol to be labeled as harmful to health.

The resolution involving the Home Mission Board, passed in a sparsely attended closing session of the convention, went on record "as looking with disfavor toward... (the) practice" of the board giving financial support to an ordained woman. Some 450 messengers out of about 1,100 registered for the convention voted about three to one against tabling the resolution and then approved it by the same margin.

The resolution referred to the board's partial support, with the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention, of Suzanne Coyle, under Home Mission Board appointment as a church extension specialist in Philadelphia.

In response to the resolution, William Tanner, the board's executive director-treasurer, told Baptist Press: "Ordination was not a prerequisite for Miss Coyle's service and is not a requirement for her continued service."

He said that Miss Coyle, who was first appointed by the board and the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Convention in 1974, "was ordained by her home church (Beech Fork Baptist Church, Gravel Switch, Ky.) upon her initiative in 1977" and that she continues to be supported jointly.

"The Home Mission Board did not request ordination for Miss Coyle and does not require ordination for women missionaries," Tanner declared. "She is the only ordained woman assisted by the Home Mission Board as far as our record shows."

Tanner noted that the Chaplaincy Commission, located at the board, provides denominational endorsement for those who serve as chaplains. "These chaplains are not paid by the Home Mission Board, but are paid by the agencies employing them," Tanner said.

Earlier, the South District Baptist Association in Kentucky, which had given the Beech Fork church a year to rescind Miss Coyle's ordination, voted to remove the church from its fellowship after it refused to comply.

In the action to set up an office for crisis ministry, Arkansas Baptists expressed a need for counseling for pastors, church staffers and their families when they request it. They also approved employment of a coordinator, who would be assisted by Christian counselors throughout the state.

Messengers to the convention also elected Johnny Jackson, pastor of Forest Highlands Baptist Church, Little Rock, as president. Other officers include James Hampton, a furloughing foreign missionary living in Little Rock, who was elected second vice president. Hampton, a missionary to Tanzania, was recently elected by the Foreign Mission Board as its field representative for Eastern Africa.

Messengers to the convention approved a record \$5.88 million budget of which 41.18 percent will go to worldwide mission causes through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program unified budget. Next year's Arkansas convention will meet Nov. 7-9, at Beech Street First Baptist Church, Texarkana.

Colorado Baptists Speak On
Energy, TV, Bold Mission

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. (BP)--The Colorado Baptist General Convention, in its 22nd annual session here, adopted a \$1.3 million budget, passed resolutions on energy, television awareness and pornography, and laid major emphasis on Southern Baptists' worldwide Bold Mission Thrust effort.

Speakers through the three-day event at Bookcliff Baptist Church spotlighted the need for a renewed, aggressive and "bold" proclaiming of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need for bold giving of time, talents and money of both clergy and laity. The 12.9 million-member Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is involved in a worldwide effort to evangelize the world by the year 2000.

The record \$1.3 million budget includes \$658,589 expected from Colorado churches through the state's Cooperative Program unified budget. The percentage to world mission causes through the national Southern Baptist Cooperative Program was raised from 24 percent to 25 percent.

"Messengers" elected John G. Upchurch, pastor of Denver Temple Baptist Church, as president and adopted a series of resolutions.

The resolution on energy said, "The world faces a crisis in the availability of energy which forebodes untold human suffering" and that "all of the energy resources which we have wastefully misused actually belong to God as part of His creation." It urged churches to take bold steps to reduce energy use in churches and programs and to view conservation as "a matter of Christian responsibility." It urged Congress to adopt a strong energy policy.

Other resolutions urged laws prohibiting pornography and supported the SBC Christian Life Commission in its "efforts to raise television awareness among our members in order to evaluate programs and make decisions concerning TV viewing and the effects upon our children and our Christian values." Colorado Baptists urged their people to incorporate information in the commission's recently-released television awareness packet to exercise the proper Christian judgment in utilizing and responding to television.

The Bold Mission resolution urged Baptists in the state to support the state and worldwide effort of Southern Baptists by each church beginning "a new outreach through a mission or ministry, that would use God-given talents and resources of lay people." The utilization of lay persons in ministry and missions, the need for sacrificing and even suffering for Jesus Christ--if necessary--and the need to incorporate lay persons into the mainstream of mission involvement--with all talents usable--were stressed in convention presentations.

Next year's convention will be Nov. 7-9, 1978, at First Baptist Church, Aurora, Colo.

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New Mexico Baptists Renounce
Homosexuality, Immoral TV

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CLOVIS, N. M. (BP)--Registered "messengers" to the Baptist Convention of New Mexico denounced homosexuality as an alternate lifestyle, commended Anita Bryant's stand against "evils inherent in deviate moral behavior," and condemned "immorality on television" during the convention's annual meeting here.

The Southern Baptist body also voted a \$1,125,798 budget, of which 29 percent will go to worldwide mission causes of the Southern Baptist Convention, and re-elected Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, as president.

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The resolution on homosexuality called it "a sin and not an alternate life-style," citing Biblical admonitions in Romans 1:24-32. The statement said: "Campaign is being waged to secure legal, social and religious acceptance for homosexuality and deviant moral behavior at the expense of personal dignity."

It further declared that "the success of those advocating such deviant moral behavior would necessarily have a devastating consequence for family life in general and our children in particular" and that "the radical scheme to subvert the sacred pattern of marriage in America has gained formidable momentum by portraying homosexuality as normal behavior."

The television resolution called on Baptists to join "efforts to condemn immorality on television... (and urged) church members to write all sponsors of objectionable TV and radio programs and request that they desist from sponsoring such programs." New Mexico Baptists also authorized a telegram to officials of ABC, CBS and NBC expressing "concern for ethical and moral programming."

Another resolution urged opposition to any efforts of New Mexico government to breach the principle of separation of church and state through interference with free exercise of religion.

The 1978 convention will be Nov. 14-16 at First Baptist Church, Albuquerque.

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D.C. Convention Urges Male-Female Equality In Ministry

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WASHINGTON (BP)--The District of Columbia Baptist Convention proposed a name change to be voted on next year and passed resolutions on men and women in the church, terrorism and torture, and taxation of churches. A resolution on forced busing was tabled.

The proposed name for the D. C. Convention is the Baptist Convention of Greater Washington. James A. Langley, executive director of the D. C. body, said the name change would reflect the reality of the convention. Churches affiliated with the D. C. Convention are located in suburban Maryland and Virginia, as well as D. C.

Following up on a resolution passed by the convention in 1974, the convention passed a resolution to "encourage men and women to share as co-equals in church leadership and in all the tasks of facilitating the ministry of the church, including roles that formerly may have been assumed to be exclusively male or female responsibilities."

They also passed a resolution opposing all forms of terrorism and torture. The resolution stressed the responsibility of the media to "exercise discretion and restraint in their coverage of terrorist activity." It also called on each person to "seek ways of dealing with our own disappointments and disillusionments which avoid jeopardizing the rights of others who hold different views."

The resolution on taxation and the churches called on the D. C. Baptist Convention and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington to "seek the withdrawal of regulations or statutory revision of the federal tax laws which would involve the possibility of government intervention in church affairs." The Baptist Joint Committee was also commended for its recent conference on "taxation and the free exercise of religion."

On the controversial subject of busing school children, the convention heard opponents of a 1975 resolution which supported "a reasonable amount of busing" where housing patterns interfere with quality education. Both in 1976 and again this year, attempts were made to bring a resolution opposing all forced busing. Last year the measure was defeated. This year the matter was tabled when discussion became prolonged.

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Alvin West, attorney and member of First Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., was elected president of the convention. Next year's convention will be held at the First Baptist Church of Wheaton, Md., Nov. 9-10. The convention sermon will be preached by Charles A. Trentham, pastor of President Carter at First Baptist, Washington.

The budget approved by the convention is for \$712,056. Of that, \$250,000 will go to national and international missions through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Churches (ABC) in the U. S. A. Most D. C. churches are aligned with both the SBC and the ABC.

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Northwest Baptists Commit
To Bold Mission, Mission Corps

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SPOKANE, Wash. (BP)--With repeated calls to "Bold Mission" as the background, the Northwest Baptist Convention responded by adopting its first \$1 million Cooperative Program budget, re-elected Canadian pastor Allen Schmidt of Vancouver as president, and made commitments of personal involvement in the Southern Baptist Bold Mission Thrust and Mission Service Corps efforts.

The Cooperative Program goal from convention churches involves a 34 percent increase over 1977 receipts--"probably the largest percentage attempted by any state Baptist convention in a single year," a spokesman said. The total budget amounts to \$1.56 million, with the balance coming from other sources such as the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Home Mission and Sunday School Boards.

The Northwest Convention, made up of churches in Oregon, Washington and Canada, will give 28 percent, or \$295,000 of the \$1 million figure to the SBC's worldwide mission efforts. That represents more than the entire budget of \$292,000 for the Northwest Convention in 1971.

In other action, messengers voted resolutions protesting network television programming "for its portrayal of illicit sex and inhuman physical violence," and failed in an attempt to change the convention's statement of faith.

The attempt to change, although gaining a 211 to 116 favorable vote, fell eight votes short of the required two-thirds majority. The changes had been suggested by a special study committee following the convention's refusal last year to seat messengers from a church in Seattle because of differences over the acceptance of alien immersions.

Responding to a call by executive director, Dan Stringer, messengers made specific commitments for personal involvement in Bold Mission Thrust, the SBC effort to reach all the world with the message of Christ by 2000, and Mission Service Corps (MSC). MSC is an effort to recruit 5,000 volunteer missionaries for one to two years service at home or abroad by 1982, and to find churches, groups or individuals to support them.

Eight persons volunteered during the convention for MSC service, 41 persons indicated willingness to support an MSC volunteer, and 72 persons volunteered to find a place for MSC volunteers to serve. Representatives of 94 churches indicated a desire to sponsor a church-type mission, as part of the Bold Mission Thrust effort to congregationalize the nation, and 108 churches said they would lead their members to increase contributions to the Cooperative Program by two percent over the next three years.

Next year's convention is set for Nov. 14-16, 1978, in Seattle, Wash.

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Brotherhood Commission Lists
250 Bold Mission Projects

MEMPHIS (BP)--Unveiling a wide range of proposed new projects to involve more men and boys in the denomination's "BoldMission" effort, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Brotherhood Commission approved a list of more than 250 goals, objectives and specific plans for 1978-79.

Meeting in semi-annual session here, trustees of the Brotherhood Commission also voted to request \$800,000 from the SBC's national Cooperative Program budget in 1978-79 to finance the projects as a part of a proposed projected budget of \$2.4 million. The Cooperative Program allocation must be approved by the SBC Executive Committee before recommendation to the convention in Atlanta next June.

More than two-thirds of the projected budget of \$2.4 million would come primarily from sales of Brotherhood periodicals and merchandise. Although the proposed budget would be an increase of \$400,000 over the 1977 budget of \$2 million, the proposal was not officially adopted by the trustees, pending approval of the Cooperative Program request by the convention.

As a part of the budget proposal, the list of 250 objectives, goals and action plans for 1978-79 called for a wide range of projects to support the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust effort to proclaim the message of Christ to all the world by the year 2000.

Included were such proposals as: Help involve 50,000 volunteers in mission projects in their state, nation, and overseas; enlist 750 volunteers and 750 sponsors in the new Mission Service Corps program devised by the convention to recruit 5,000 volunteer missionaries by 1982; conduct Cooperative Program prayer breakfasts for 400 Baptist associations to help double Cooperative Program gifts by 1982; complete development of a comprehensive mission education strategy with Woman's Missionary Union, Home Mission Board, and Sunday School Board.

Also, increase to 575,000 the number of men and boys involved in Brotherhood work, and to 18,500 the number of Southern Baptist churches with Brotherhood work; lead 500 pastors and lay leaders to discover together their personal ministry and the use of their gifts to develop ministering churches; involve 500 churches in a study of the theology of the laity; and conduct pilot projects in three states to involve and train couples and families in missions projects.

In other actions, the commission trustees re-elected officers, made plans for a national Bold Mission Rally and 18 simultaneous prayer breakfasts in Atlanta, June 16, following the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, studied results of a public relations survey, and named two persons to staff positions.

In restructuring commission staff, the trustees voted to create a new department of customer relations as a part of the communications section, and named Jack Childs of the commission staff to fill the position. Trustees also voted to divide the responsibilities now assigned to the service section between the communications section and business section.

Named editor of Crusader magazine, published by the Brotherhood Commission for boys ages 6-12, was Phil Burgess, former staff writer for the Western Recorder, Baptist state paper in Kentucky. Burgess, 30, will succeed Childs, who assumes the new position in customer relations.

Re-elected officers of the commission were William Hardy of Columbus, Miss., chairman; Everett LeMay of Mt. Vernon, Ill., vice chairman; Ernie Castro, Wichita, Kan., recording secretary; and Glendon McCullough, executive director of the commission, as treasurer.

Cumberland Facilities
Help Whitley County

WILLIAMSBURG, Ky. (BP)--Friday afternoons at Cumberland College are a treat for about 25 Whitley County Kentucky special education students.

In response to a recently passed congressional act requiring an individualized education meeting the specific needs of the handicapped, the Southern Baptist college in Williamsburg, Ky., has offered its services and facilities to Whitley County.

There Jim Simpson, a special educator, and Walter Mathes, physical education instructor, head a weekly training and assessment program for the county's trainable mentally handicapped students.

For the students it is an hour of singing, fun and challenging games. But for the instructors it is the best method available for assessing the children's specific physical problems.

"In regard to physical education," says Simpson, "no longer can we say Johnny is spastic or uncoordinated. We have to be able to pinpoint where the specific movement difficulties lie.

"For example, body localization. Do they know where their eyes are located or do they know the difference between their left arm and their right arm?"

All this, says Simpson, has a direct carry-over to reading, writing and arithmetic. "If a child doesn't know his left from his right he'll have problems reading across a page because we read from left to our right."

At Cumberland, the instructors assess the special student's physical strengths and weaknesses, something that "can't be done in a group," says Simpson.

In one corner of the college's lower gym an instructor will engage the students in a game of throwing a rubber ball at a target on the wall. In another corner students attempt to put together a puzzle comprised of the different parts of the body.

The instructors record the children's problems in tests such as these, and later the results are tabulated to prescribe treatment or training to correct the problem.

"To begin with we're assessing," says Simpson. "The rest of the program will focus on building the weaknesses we detected earlier through assessment."

The weekly trips to Cumberland are a break in the daily routine and the "children enjoy the program tremendously," he says.

But the daily training the students receive is something the Whitley County educators don't want to end with the afternoon bell.

"Hopefully," says Whitley County special education teacher Ginger Brashear, "it will lead to more parent involvement and more education for a child of this type, regardless of their handicap."