



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355

W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2000
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

March 14, 1978

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Anita Bryant Featured
At Pastors' Conference

ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, which includes an opening night address by singer Anita Bryant, will emphasize the old fashioned evangelistic spirit when it convenes at the Georgia World Congress Center, June 11-12.

The conference is among a number of pre and post convention meetings surrounding the annual Southern Baptist Convention national sessions in Atlanta, June 13-15, at the Georgia World Congress Center.

Miss Bryant's address and sermons by Fred W. Sampson, black pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich., and John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, will highlight the conference's opening session, Sunday night, June 11.

Three more sessions on Monday, June 12, will also feature high powered preaching and a wide array of music, according to Pastors' Conference president, Bailey Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.

The conference, addressing itself to theme, "The Urgent Need for Christ Today," will close Monday night with a sermon by James Robison, evangelist from Hurst, Texas, "which we hope will send people away with a new excitement about sharing their faith," Smith said. "The world needs Christ, needs renewed emphasis on evangelism if Southern Baptists are to accomplish our Bold Mission Thrust goal to proclaim Christ to the entire world in this century."

Other program features include a second sermon by Sampson and sermons by Baker J. Cauthen, executive director, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; W. A. Criswell, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas; Don Moore, pastor, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith, Ark.; Billy Weber, pastor, Northway Baptist Church, Dallas; Jim Henry, pastor, First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.; Sam Cathey, evangelist, Owassa, Okla.; Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn.; James T. Draper Jr., pastor, First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas; and Tom Eliff, pastor, Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla.

Special testimonies will come from David Ring, an evangelist from Liberty, Mo., who suffers from cerebral palsy; Marolyn Ford of Huttig, Ark., pastors' wife and author of "These Blind Eyes See," who says a miracle returned sight to eyes not medically capable of seeing; and country music performer Wanda Jackson, who will sing, and her husband Wendell Goodman, a lay preacher, both of Del City, Okla.

A program of music, under the guidance of Pastors' Conference music director, Aubie McSwain, minister of music at First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, includes three selections by The Centurymen, 100 Southern Baptist ministers of music under the direction of Buryl Red of New York, N. Y.

Other music includes The Griffin Family, music evangelists, Rusk, Texas; the Oklahoma City Junior Symphony; The Bernard Family, music evangelists, Houston, Texas; three singing groups, including the chancel choir, from First Southern Baptist Church, Del City; the Roswell Street Baptist Church choir, Marietta, Ga.; and soloists, Richard Bradford, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N. M.; James Wright, music evangelist, Nashville, Tenn.; Jeanne Rogers, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City; John McKay, music director, James Robison Evangelistic Association, Hurst, Texas; and D'Arcy Hodges, music evangelist, Oklahoma City.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTORS' CONFERENCE

Georgia World Congress Center

June 11-12, 1978

Atlanta, Georgia

Theme: The Urgent Need for Christ Today

Sunday Evening, June 11

Bailey Smith, Del City, Okla., presiding

- 6:25 Welcome--Bailey Smith, Pastors' Conference president, and pastor, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.
- 6:30 Music--Roswell Street Baptist Church Choir, Marietta, Ga.
- 6:55 Congregational Singing (Commitment Medley)--Aubie McSwain, Pastors' Conference music director, and minister of music, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., director
- 7:00 Message--Fred W. Sampson, pastor, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich.
- 7:30 Testimony--David Ring, evangelist, Liberty, Mo.
- 7:45 Solo--Richard Bradford, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M.
- 7:50 Offeratory--The Witnesses, singing group, First Southern Baptist Church
- 8:00 Address--Anita Bryant, Miami, Fla.
- 8:30 Solo--D'Arcy Hodges, music evangelist, Oklahoma City
- 8:35 Message--John Bisagno, pastor, First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas
- 9:15 Benediction--Sandra (Mrs. Bailey) Smith, Del City, Okla.

Monday Morning, June 12

Bailey Smith, presiding

- 9:15 Hymn
- 9:20 Prayer--Morris Chapman, pastor, First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N. M.
- 9:25 Music--The Centurymen, Buryl Red, New York, N.Y., director
- 9:30 Message--Don Moore, pastor, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith, Ark.
- 9:55 Music--The Centurymen
- 10:00 Message--Billy Weber, pastor, Northway Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas
- 10:25 Music--The Centurymen
- 10:30 Message--Jim Henry, pastor, First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla.
- 10:55 Offering
- 11:00 Music--The Griffin Family, music evangelists, Rusk, Texas
- 11:05 Message--Sam Cathey, evangelist, Owassa, Okla.
- 11:30 Solo--James Wright, music evangelist, Nashville, Tenn.
- 11:35 Message--Fred W. Sampson, pastor, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Detroit, Mich.
- 12:05 Benediction--Bill Lewis, pastor, North Main Baptist Church, Jonesboro, Ark.

Monday Afternoon, June 12

Bailey Smith, presiding

- 1:45 Music--The Oklahoma City Junior Symphony and The Witnesses, Del City, Okla.
- 1:55 Congregational Singing (Name of Jesus Medley)--Aubie McSwain, director
- 2:00 Message--Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn.
- 2:25 Solo--Jeanne Rogers, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.
- 2:30 Message--James T. Draper Jr., pastor, First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas
- 2:55 Congregational Singing (Cross Medley)--Aubie McSwain, director
- 3:00 Election of Officers
- 3:10 Offeratory--The Revolution, singing group, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City.

Monday Afternoon Continued

- 3:20 Message--Baker J. Cauthen, executive director, SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.
 3:45 Music--The Bernard Family, music evangelists, Houston, Texas
 3:50 Broadman Press presentation of book, "Real Evangelism"--Joe Johnson, Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.
 3:55 Message--W. A. Criswell, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas
 4:30 Benediction--Rod Masteller, pastor, First Baptist Church, Jenks, Okla.

Monday Evening, June 12

Bailey Smith, presiding

- 6:30 Song and Testimony--Wanda Jackson and Wendell Goodman, husband and wife team, Del City, Okla.
 7:00 Congregational Singing (Return of Christ Medley)--Aubie McSwain, director
 7:05 Scripture and Prayer--Robert Harris, Del City, Okla.
 7:10 Message--Tom Eliff, pastor, Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla.
 7:40 Award Winning Sermons presentation--James C. Barry, Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.
 7:45 Solo--John McKay, music director, James Robison Evangelistic Assoc., Hurst, Texas
 7:50 Testimony--Marolyn Ford, Huttig, Ark.
 8:10 Offering and Congregational Singing (Grace Medley), Aubie McSwain, director
 8:15 Music--Chancel Choir, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., Aubie McSwain, director
 8:50 Message--James Robison, evangelist, Hurst, Texas
 9:35 Benediction--O. S. Hawkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Ada, Okla.

Pastors' Conference Officers

President--Bailey Smith, pastor, First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla.
 Vice president--Homer Lindsay Jr., pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
 Secretary-treasurer--John Hatch, pastor, First Baptist of Lakewood, Tacoma, Washington

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Arizona Pastor to Launch 6
 Sunday Schools By September

By Bracey Campbell

Baptist Press
 3/14/78

CHANDLER, Ariz. (BP)--Don Reed turned down a request a year ago to organize some new Sunday Schools in this community adjacent to Phoenix, Ariz., but now he and his staff at First Baptist Church plan to start not one, but six new ones before September.

Originally, Reed, the pastor, told Sunday School Board consultant, Howard Halsell, that his congregation and staff were neck-deep in a self-help building program and didn't have time to do a good job in other areas.

But now the former basketball coach and his staff see their way clear to help start the new Sunday Schools as part of Southern Baptists Bold Mission Thrust goal to tell everyone in the world about Christ by the close of the century.

"Our staff and people have had more than we could handle over the last three years in the relocation of our church and the construction of this plant," said Reed, a native Texas, whose church is still building. "But now the time has come to reach out beyond our present limits and spread God's word in this area."

"I don't know of any other pastor or church that has taken on such an ambitious goal," said Halsell, whom Reed asked to return to the community to help. The Sunday School Board will supply lesson materials and other program assistance for the fledgling Sunday Schools, which may grow into churches.

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The Chandler church has selected six sites in the Hightown, Stella Park, Norton's Corner, Williams Air Force Base and Arizona Boys' Ranch areas and has begun initial work to launch the Sunday Schools, according to educational director, Larry Jordan.

"We're not going to be content just to go in and get a group organized and then pull out. There have been too many average Southern Baptist Sunday Schools and churches started," Reed added.

The pastor said the goal was to give the Sunday Schools an excellent foundation with a "mind for missions" uppermost at every location. "Our basic philosophy in beginning these Sunday Schools will be to start strong and stay strong," Reed said.

Plans call for converting three of the Sunday Schools to churches after gaining sufficient members and momentum, he said, noting that partial staff for them will come from his 1,500-member congregation which has doubled in enrollment in seven years.

The other staff members will come from Baptists in the areas the Sunday Schools will serve. "We know that it will be more effective to find and train workers who live in the Sunday School areas," said Jordan. "This will not be a slipshod operation; we plan to go out and say what God wants us to say."

"This is open territory for Southern Baptists," Reed said. "There's so much to be done."

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

Israeli, Christian Leaders
Meet To Discuss New Law

By Elizabeth F. Smith

Baptist Press
3/14/78

JERUSALEM (BP)--In an unprecedented consultation between evangelical Protestant leaders and high government officials, Aharon Barak, attorney general of Israel, assured a delegation from the United Christian Council meeting in his office that a recent law regarding change of religion "applies in both letter and spirit to all men and all religions equally and without discrimination."

As he answered questions of the delegation, which included Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative, Robert L. Lindsey, Barak said the only aim of the law, passed by the Knesset (parliament) last December, is to prevent the giving of or the taking of material bribes to bring about the change of religion.

(After the meeting, wire services reported, the Israeli minister of justice sent a letter to Richard Maass, president of the American Jewish Committee, stating, "There is no intention whatsoever on the part of the Israeli government to restrict in any way religious freedom of the Christian community or any other community in Israel." Maass had protested that the "sweeping provisions" of the law appeared to be "intended to intimidate the Christian community.")

Lindsey, Baptist leader in Israel for 34 years, pointed out in the March 9 meeting that even though the Christian community in Israel appreciates the assurances given by the attorney general to help prevent harassment and false accusations under the new law, Christians, as well as other religious minorities in Israel, are still without legal basis for protection since Israel has no written constitution.

"We are being defamed publicly, and we are helpless to change the myth held by 90 percent of the Israeli public that Christians have unlimited sums of money which they use to bribe people to convert and then to leave the country," Lindsey said.

"Only the passage of a constitution with clauses similar to that of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights and guaranteeing freedom of religion and thought can give us the protection we need," Lindsey stressed.

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Barak told the delegation that he is presently involved in drafting a constitution containing such features and that he hopes the Knesset document will pass at the earliest possible time.

Barak, scheduled to accompany Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan to the United States for meetings with President Carter and other top government officials, told Christian leaders that the police have been instructed to relay all complaints related to the law directly to him or to State Attorney Gavriel Bach. Bach was present in the meeting, along with Meir Gabal, director-general of the Justice Ministry.

Paul Swarr, general secretary of the Christian Council, said that although the meeting with the attorney general was positive, the council would continue to work for the repeal of the law which has the potential to limit Christian activity and endanger religious liberty in this country.

A three-man delegation representing the 20 member bodies of the council has just returned from Europe where "extensive and significant" contacts were made with leading officials in Protestant and Catholic groups. The council is considering sending a delegation on a similar mission to the United States. It is also studying the possibility of setting up a liaison office to coordinate all Christian groups in Israel to monitor the local scene and to disseminate information abroad.

Baptists, among the founding members of the council in 1956, have cooperated with its other members in the struggle against the law. In addition to the Israel Baptist Mission (known locally as the Baptist Convention in Israel), local Baptists are members of the council through the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel.

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Baptists Dig Out From
California Flooding

Baptist Press
3/14/78

FILLMORE, Calif. (BP)--Southern Baptist work teams joined neighbors and stricken families in this fruit-growing town 10 miles from the Pacific to dig out after the usually tame Sespe River flooded.

The west side of the town of 9,000 was inundated when a debris dam formed at a bridge, blocking overflow water rushing downstream from the Piru Reservoir. Engineers bulldozed the bridge to release the water, but not before flood waters moved into the town, leaving mud and silt in an estimated one-fourth of the homes.

The parsonage and homes of 20 families of the First Southern Baptist Church and homes of members of nearby Santa Paula Church were damaged. No lives were lost.

Baptists moved quickly to aid fellow Baptists and others. Wade Thomas of Oxnard, director of missions for Harmony Baptist Association, organized a work team of 13, including six local pastors.

Pastor Monty McWhorter of First Southern Baptist Church in Santa Paula loaded the church bus with volunteers and concentrated on helping members of their church living in Fillmore. The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board sent \$10,000 in disaster relief for the area. The Baptist General Convention of California has appropriated \$500 for Fillmore residents.

Ralph Longshore, director of missions for Southern Baptists in California, said other volunteers are being enlisted for longterm assistance and that Bob Williams, state Baptist director of Christian Social Ministries, was coordinating relief and disaster aid.

The 19 churches of the Harmony Association are collecting a special offering to replace the First Southern pastor's home furnishings. Mattresses and box springs were put on top of the house to dry; carpets had to be ripped out and placed in the street to be picked up with other debris.

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Thomas will aid in the distribution of Baptist disaster funds, with no regard to religious affiliation. "But since most of our contact is with Baptist families it will be easier to help them," he said.

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Baptists Aid
Flood Victims

Baptist Press
3/14/78

TIAJUANA, Baja, Calif. (BP)--Baptists have begun dispensing aid in the wake of torrential rain and mud slides which claimed lives and property in Tiajuana, Baja, Calif.

David Daniel, mass media consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said 30 persons were killed and 23,000 forced to leave their homes when a rain-swollen reservoir overflowed. One hundred persons are still missing. Daniel said 10 Baptist families were left homeless, 11 others lost most of their possessions and Eben-ezer Baptist Church was rendered unusable in the March 4 disaster.

The Baptist families are being housed in the homes of fellow Christians, Daniel said. Southern Baptist missionary nurse, Kay Weldon, from Abilene, Texas, used Foreign Mission Board disaster relief funds to distribute \$3,000 worth of clothing, bedding and food to the 21 affected Baptist families plus five other needy families.

Baptists in Tiajuana have organized a relief committee to administer donations of food and clothing. The Mexican government is promising to relocate the homeless in new homes. The church probably will be allocated a new tract of land but will face the construction of the building on its own.

The heavy rains followed two-and-a half months of precipitation, which broke a five-year drought in the Tiajuana area.

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Representatives Optimistic
About BMT Progress Overseas

By Irma Duke

Baptist Press
3/14/78

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Sixteen field and mass media representatives brought an optimistic, up-to-date report on Southern Baptists' overseas efforts to carry out the denomination's ambitious Bold Mission Thrust goal.

The missionaries, who gathered from around the world for a series of meetings in Richmond, Va., with the Foreign Mission Board's overseas division and other home office personnel, reported increased numbers of baptisms, churches and opportunities.

Many of the 90 missions (organizations of Southern Baptist missionaries) have set objectives in direct relationship with the board's part of the denominational Bold Mission Thrust goal to give everyone in the world the opportunity to hear the gospel by the year 2000.

Finlay M. Graham reported from the Middle East that doors have opened in the Muslim world as never before. Jibla (Yemen) Baptist Hospital, for example, has more patients than it had six months ago even though it had to raise fees considerably, Graham said.

He said the new Israeli law aimed against proselyting has backfired. Concerned believers are getting together for prayer and Bible study and their witness is strengthening. The action of the Israeli Knesset (parliament) makes it an offense punishable by five years imprisonment to offer anyone benefits to convert. Some missionaries fear that preaching and charitable acts may be interpreted as such "benefits."

Village evangelism provides a cause for excitement in Bangladesh, reported James F. Kirkendall, field representative for South Asia, who said 80 to 90 percent of the people there live in villages. Strategy for winning these people includes witnessing from village to village, discipling the new believers and enabling them to lead their own people.

The field representative for Southern Africa reported a new prominence for Baptists there. Marion G. (Bud) Fray said he believes "this is God's hour for Southern Baptists in Southern Africa." He backed up his statement with incidents of conversion and spiritual enrichment, especially among people in Rhodesia and Bophuthatswana, the newest mission field for Southern Baptists.

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Several of the mass media representatives reported strides being made in their areas. Zebedee V. Moss said the use of cassette players has expanded recently in Eastern and Southern Africa because of high illiteracy rates.

Many of the countries in South America report phenomenal church growth. Don R. KammerDiener, field representative for Eastern South America, said new congregations not planned by the convention or the mission are popping up throughout Paraguay. He said the missionaries' first contact with these new congregations in many cases comes when they ask the mission for help.

Similar groups of believers are forming in Peru, according to H. Robert Tucker, field representative for Western South America. Some groups of Christians meet around radio programs. When one group was asked what kind of Baptists they were, they said, "The kind that the radio preacher is." Tucker said radio is actually being used for church establishment.

Samuel M. James, field representative for East Asia, reported that on the average, one church was established per week in Korea last year. He said a three-year urban evangelization project by Baptists in Korea has resulted thus far in unbelievable response. He said Baptists in Japan have the best opportunities for growth since postwar days.

Isam E. Ballenger, field representative for Europe who recently was inaugurated as president of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, said his most exciting report comes from Spain where people are experiencing freedoms they have not known for centuries. He said Baptists there are working to take advantage of the new freedom.

Problems reported in mission work, such as difficulty in obtaining visas, war and uncertainty, and lack of personnel seemed small against such progress reports, even though the problems are a sobering reality in many areas.

Missionaries and other Christians in some countries in the Middle East and Africa are continuing to minister in the midst of war and uncertainty. In Uganda, for instance, churches are not allowed to meet. As a result, Southern Baptist missionaries now work in social ministries and encourage Ugandan Christians.

In other areas, uncertainty in obtaining resident visas looms over the possibilities of expanding work and making bold new plans. Some of the representatives expressed new fears that visas may be a problem in their areas.

The representatives reported the continuing need for more personnel throughout the world. That need causes concern in Japan, according to James, where half of the missionary force will retire in the next 13 years. He said many of the missionaries to Japan came in right after World War II and approach retirement with a dim hope of replacement.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state editors by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

Religious Leaders Deplore
Abortion Issue Violence

Baptist Press
3/14/78

WASHINGTON (BP)--Twenty-six American religious leaders deplored the use of violence over the issue of abortion rights and called on all Americans to settle their differences by words rather than by unlawfulness, in a joint statement released in Washington.

Noting the escalating number of violent incidents, including the fire bombings of family planning clinics, the Protestant and Jewish leaders said, "We deplore the use of fear, intimidation and harrassment to establish public policy on serious social questions."

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While no American Catholic bishops joined in the call, Bishop James Hickey of the diocese of Cleveland issued an independent statement advocating peaceful discussion of the issue of abortion following the February 15 burning of a clinic in that city.

The violence protested by the American church leaders has been directed toward both clinics and patients. In one year, seven clinics have been bombed, firebombed or set on fire; death threats have been made against clinic personnel and their children; gun shots have been fired through clinic windows; and numerous clinics have been vandalized. In several instances surgical procedures were interrupted, posing a clear threat to the health and even the lives of the patients, according to reports.

The appeal said, "Our Judeo-Christian heritage teaches us to resolve conflicts by non-violent means, with love and respect for each other. The democratic traditions of this country are founded in temperate and thoughtful debate. Adherence to these principles has made this country and its people unique—a nation which governs by the will of the majority, while extending tolerance, compassion, understanding and opportunity to the minority."

Commenting on the attacks on family planning and abortion clinics, Rabbi Richard S. Sternberger, chairman of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, said, "The violence is unforgivable. Throwing a firebomb into a medical facility is hardly an indication of respect for life! I hope that the Catholic hierarchy will follow Bishop Hickey's example in imploring all Americans to debate the issue of abortion peacefully and within the law."

Signers of the "Appeal for Non-Violence" included the following: Bishops James Ault, James Armstrong and Wilbur W. Y. Choy of the United Methodist Church; John T. Conner, moderator of the United Presbyterian Church, U. S.A.; Ann Herbert of the United Presbyterian Women; Leona F. Chanin of the American Jewish Congress.

Also Barbara Gerlach and Valerie Russell of the United Church of Christ; Rabbi Balfour Brickner of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; William Lazareth of the Lutheran Church of America and Doris Anne Younger of the American Baptist Churches.

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Texas Pastor Named
Tennessee Consultant

Baptist Press
3/14/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Jerry M. Self, pastor of Austin Heights Baptist Church in Nacogdoches, Texas, has been named to fill the newly created position of public affairs and Christian Life consultant for the Tennessee Baptist Convention beginning March 20.

Self is a graduate of Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, and received the doctor of theology degree in ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Self will use his new position to help churches and the Tennessee Baptist Convention in areas of family life, alcohol and drug abuse, citizenship, human relations, and other moral and social issues. He will be assigned to the office of the Baptist and Reflector, Tennessee's state Baptist newspaper, although he will not have any responsibility for the publication.

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