



# -- 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** Richard T. McCartney, 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) L. Bracey Campbell III, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

November 20, 1978

78-189

N. C. Baptists Narrowly  
Pass Wake Forest Study

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP)--Writing another chapter in the continuing saga of Wake Forest University, North Carolina Baptists voted 1,276 to 1,048 to approve a substitute motion to study whether the university's status should be changed.

The current episode in the years of continuing debate over the university and its relationship to North Carolina Baptists developed with a request by the university that it be allowed to elect its own trustees, possibly including some non-Baptists and out-of-state residents.

The convention's general board and Cecil A. Ray, general secretary-treasurer, interpreting Article 12 of the state constitution, said approval of such an action would equal severance of the university from the convention.

Wake Forest and its president, James Ralph Scales, turning to the constitution's Bylaws 4 and 5, said it would not be severance but merely a change in status to affiliate relationship.

At a meeting before the convention, the general board called on the convention's Council on Christian Higher Education to study the Wake Forest request under the concept of severance. The board brought that report for the convention's consideration.

But messengers voted instead to accept a substitute motion by Frank Campbell, chairman of the Council on Christian Higher Education, which asked for the study based on the concept of change of status. The substitute motion was seconded by Charles Dorman, chairman of the Wake Forest/Convention Relationship Committee, which, before the convention, had opposed continuation of the study as originally interpreted.

Dorman said the committee opted, however, to "back out of the picture...since there is much confusion." He said, "Our committee has never been asking for no study, but for no action which could be interpreted as severance. We remain on call until you (North Carolina Baptists) make a wise and deliberate decision."

In the midst of the complex proceedings, which a veteran Baptist observer called "the most confusing convention I've ever participated in," a motion urging out-right severance, presented by M. O. Owens, pastor from Gastonia, N. C., was ruled out of order because the substitute was on the floor. Owens did not bring the motion back for later consideration.

Any severance or change of status action would require a vote of two successive conventions.

Messengers also voted to urge leadership of the convention to continue to address itself to the matter of trustee selection and urged Wake Forest to continue to address itself to the matter of faculty selection and seek to bring additional Christians to the faculty.

The trustee request relates to efforts to broaden the range of people from churches of 400 resident members, and the faculty selection request rates to criticism of Wake Forest in recent years that it has hired faculty members without regard to their Christian commitment.

In other convention actions, messengers re-elected C. Mark Corts, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, as president, voted a \$16.5 million budget, brought the retirement age of its general secretary in line with federal retirement guidelines, prohibited state convention employees from serving on boards of state Baptist agencies, and voted resolutions opposing additional liquor-by-the-drink outlets and condemning immoral TV programming and urging support for world hunger relief.

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S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Messengers ticketed 34.33 percent of the first phase of the 1979 budget--\$15.5 million--for worldwide Southern Baptist Convention causes through the national SBC Cooperative Program and 50 percent of phase two--\$1 million--for SBC causes.

The 1979 convention will be held Nov. 12-14 in Winston-Salem.

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California Baptists Delete  
Doctrinal Penalties

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

ANAHEIM, Calif. (BP)--California Southern Baptists dropped a constitutional clause imposing penalties on churches accepting "alien immersions" and practicing open communion and expressed disapproval to leaders--including President Jimmy Carter--who spoke in favor of California's Proposition 6 on homosexual rights.

Elected "messengers" to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California voted 469 to 179 to drop the clause prohibiting the seating of messengers at annual sessions from churches admitting persons with alien immersions or which allow open communion. The vote required a two-thirds majority.

But, reflecting the difficulties of previous unsuccessful efforts to change the constitution, the action did not come easily. In the initial voting in a morning session, both motions to define alien immersion and open communion and to delete the clause failed, with the motion to delete missing the necessary two-thirds majority by 20 votes.

During the afternoon session, following an impassioned plea by Doyle Phillips of Carmichael for reconsideration of the earlier action, messengers reversed themselves, deleting the clause.

The resolution on homosexuality, one of two passed on the subject, expressed "disapproval to political leaders and entertainment personalities who publicly encouraged people to vote against Proposition 6," an issue defeated by California voters which would have made it easier to fire homosexual school teachers who openly advocate their lifestyle.

The resolution specifically cited President Carter, California Gov. Jerry Brown, former California Gov. Ronald Reagan and TV star Ed Asner.

"We express our grave disappointment to President Jimmy Carter for his public opposition to an issue so strongly supported by his fellow Christians and Baptists," the resolution declared.

Meanwhile, a second resolution affirmed opposition to any law which might be proposed to make homosexuals a legal minority under the Fair Employment Act of California, but urged that Christians "continue to love the individual homosexuals and attempt to point them to Christ as Lord as we continue to deplore the sin of homosexuality." It further affirmed "our opposition to any laws that give special privileges to homosexuals that heterosexual adulterers do not have."

In other action, California Baptists voted a \$6,278,205 budget for 1979, of which \$3,587,000 is expected in Cooperative Program contributions from California churches. Messengers voted to increase from 26 percent to 26.5 percent the amount of the Cooperative Program goal going to worldwide Southern Baptist missions causes and set 1981 as the target date for the total percentage to reach 33 percent.

Messengers also adopted actions to financially assist churches in northern Nevada, who will leave California convention affiliation Jan. 1, 1979, to join the newly-formed Nevada Area Baptist Convention. They voted a cash gift of \$11,200, return of all gifts from Nevada churches to California's 1978 state missions offering, and establishment of a special missions offering for the Nevada convention, Feb. 4, 1979.

They elected James Morton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Livermore, Calif., as convention president and set Nov. 13-15, 1979, as the date for next year's meeting in San Jose.

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Indiana Baptists Urge  
Indiana As Seminary Site

EVANSVILLE, Ind. (BP)--Indiana Baptists, celebrating their 20th year as a convention, underlined 1979 as a year of evangelism in Indiana and six other North Central states and urged consideration of their state as a possible site for a seventh Southern Baptist seminary.

The convention, part of the North Central Missions Thrust which seeks to double churches in the seven states by 1990, emphasized evangelistic growth and accepted an offer of assistance from Southern Baptists in Arkansas.

Charles Ashcraft, executive secretary of the Arkansas Baptist Convention, told Indiana messengers that Arkansas voted to join with Indiana in its year-long emphasis in 1979 to evangelize and congregationalize its state.

He said Arkansas churches have expressed willingness to send as many as 150 pastors to assist in revivals during a simultaneous crusade set for April 1-8, 1979. Goals call for starting more than 100 new mission points in Indiana.

The seminary action grew out of a study underway by the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to determine the feasibility of beginning an SBC seminary in the northern part of the nation. The study was requested by the SBC in annual session in June. The Illinois Baptist Convention has already suggested Chicago as the site for a new seminary.

In other action, Indiana Baptists voted a record budget of \$1,429,891, of which \$972,500 will come through Cooperative Program contributions of Indiana churches. Thirty-one percent of the Cooperative Program figure will go to SBC worldwide mission causes.

Indiana Baptists also honored their long-time executive secretary, E. Harmon Moore, who has headed work in the convention since its formation, Jan. 1, 1958. They gave him \$2,000, representing \$100 for each year the convention has existed.

In a series of resolutions, Indiana Baptists opposed parimutuel gambling, sex and violence on television, pornography, and homosexuality and commended the SBC Christian Life Commission for its stand on moral issues.

Messengers elected Robert Nall, pastor of Vann Avenue Baptist Church, Evansville, as president and set the 1979 convention, Nov. 6-8, New Albany, Ind.

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Florida Baptists Boost  
Bold Missions, Askew

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

LAKELAND, Fla. (BP)--Florida Baptists voted ambitious Bold Mission Thrust goals and commended outgoing Florida Gov. Reuben Askew for his leadership in the recent defeat of casino gambling in the state.

Elected "messengers" to the Florida Baptist Convention's annual meeting adopted an \$8,800,000 budget, with 48 percent--up one percent from last year--ticketed for worldwide mission causes through the Southern Baptist Convention's national Cooperative Program.

But messengers, overriding a motion of objection, approved a recommendation from the state mission board to keep gifts exceeding the budget goal in the state for missions and institutions, rather than sending 48 percent of the overage to SBC causes.

The state missions board and Florida Baptist executive secretary-treasurer Harold C. Bennett indicated it was necessary to keep all gifts over the budget in the state to help with present needs and commitments.

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In keeping with the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust goal to proclaim the message of Christ to the entire world in this century, the Florida convention accepted a number of challenges for 1979-82. They include 20 percent increases in both Bible study enrollment and baptisms, establishment of 200 new churches and church-type missions, starting of 100 new Sunday Schools and 300 other ongoing mission ministries, setting a goal of 1,600 commitments to career missions and other church-related vocations, seeking of 500 volunteers for the SBC's new Mission Service Corps, increasing both the number of tithers and mission offering gifts by 30 percent, and increasing gifts from churches to the state Cooperative Program each year by one percent.

In other action, the convention authorized the state board of missions to borrow \$325,000 for construction of a Baptist Book Store building on convention property in Jacksonville. The Baptist Sunday School Board, which operates Baptist Book Stores, will pay \$40,880 annually to lease the building.

The convention also elected N. B. Langford, pastor of First Baptist Church, Panama City, Fla., as president and set the 1979 convention Nov. 12-14 in Jacksonville.

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Arizona Baptists Celebrate  
50 Years, Honor Sutton

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

PHOENIX (BP)--Arizona Southern Baptists celebrated their 50th anniversary as a state convention, disagreed with an Internal Revenue Service ruling on private schools and honored their retiring executive director.

In other action, "messengers" to the convention re-elected Wayne North, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Tucson, as president and voted a \$2,089,843 annual budget, of which \$1,216,700 will come from Cooperative Program contributions of Arizona churches. Twenty-five percent of the latter amount will go to worldwide missions causes of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The resolution on the IRS opposed a recent ruling that private schools must prove their innocence of racial discrimination in their enrollment practices in order to retain their tax exempt status.

Messengers honored Roy F. Sutton, 70, who will retire Dec. 31 as executive director-treasurer, at each of the convention's five sessions. Gifts to Sutton, who began work with Arizona Baptists 32 years ago and has been executive director since 1970, included a Cadillac to replace the convention-owned one he drives, a \$300 per month annuity supplement during the lifetime of him and his wife to make his retirement more adequate, expenses for the Suttons to attend annual meetings of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, and secretarial assistance.

Sutton came to Arizona in 1946 for health reasons after a doctor told him he had only a brief time to live. But he recovered and has played an integral part in the convention's growth and outreach to other western states, serving in a wide range of capacities, in church, associational and state convention posts.

Observers had expected debate over the search committee's failure to have a successor for Sutton ready to nominate at the convention, but that never materialized as messengers apparently were determined to have a harmonious convention. At an earlier special called convention, Arizona Baptists turned down the search committee's first choice.

Meanwhile, J. L. Canafax, associate executive director-treasurer and state missions director, has been named interim executive director-treasurer, effective Jan. 1, 1979, in the event an interim is needed.

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The convention marked the last time churches in northern Nevada, now affiliated with Arizona Southern Baptists, will send messengers to the Arizona annual meeting. Recently, the Nevada Area Baptist Convention was formed, mainly from churches in southern Nevada, now affiliated with California Southern Baptists, and the churches in northern Nevada. It will begin operation, Jan. 1.

The 1979 annual meeting of Arizona Southern Baptists will be Nov. 13-15 at First Southern Baptist Church, Yuma.

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Iowa Fellowship Names  
Parker Executive Director

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

DES MOINES, Iowa (BP)--Wilson Parker, missions division director for the Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention, has been named executive director of the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship, effective Jan. 1.

The Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship, headquartered in Des Moines, hopes to organize as a state convention related to the work of the Southern Baptist Convention, which now has 34 state conventions covering all 50 states. The SBC Home Mission Board works with Iowa churches, in cooperation with the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Although Iowa Baptists, who number more than 8,000 originally hoped to organize a state convention in 1979 or 1980, they have no current target date, according to John Tanner, chairman of the search committee which nominated Parker.

"We feel Rev. Parker has the qualifications to lead us to eventual status as a convention," says Tanner, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Cedar Rapids.

Parker, 61, succeeds David Bunch, now Mission Service Corps coordinator for the Home Mission Board in Atlanta. He had been in the Penn-Jersey Convention post since March, 1978, following two years as director of associational missions for the neighboring New York Baptist Convention.

He also has served as director of missions, stewardship and Brotherhood for the Northern Plains Baptist Convention; area missionary for Montana; area missionary for South Dakota; and pastor of churches in Illinois, Nebraska, Tennessee and Montana.

A native of Jamestown, Tenn., Parker is a cum laude graduate of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn., and is also an alumnus of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Ill., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

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Joiner Leaves 'Index'  
For Editor-Publisher Post

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

ATLANTA (BP)--W. D. (Dub) Joiner, associate editor of "The Christian Index," state newspaper for Georgia Baptists, has resigned to become editor and publisher of a South Georgia weekly newspaper.

He joined the Georgia Baptist publication in Sept. 1977, after serving for four years as bureau chief in Waycross, Ga., for "The Florida Times Union." Previously, he worked for newspapers in Atlanta, Ga.; Statesboro, Ga.; Alma, Ga.; and DeLand, Fla.

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Missouri Voters Approve  
Sweepstakes Gambling

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Voters in Missouri have legalized sweepstakes gambling by a vote of 953,610 to 359,665.

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The Missouri action, opposed by Missouri Baptists and other concerned citizens, made the state the only one of four states considering gambling in November elections to vote in favor of it.

Florida rejected casino gambling. Virginia defeated parimutuel gambling. New Jersey refused gambling on jai alai. Earlier in the year, Texas voted down parimutuel gambling.

Missouri voters adopted a proposed constitutional amendment which allows sweepstakes gambling when there is no direct exchange of money or other items of value for the opportunity to participate.

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Thousands of Decisions Made  
During Hong Kong Crusade

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

HONG KONG (BP)--Baptists in Hong Kong recorded more than 2,500 decisions for Christ during a recent seven-day evangelistic crusade held in the British crown colony.

Although it was set for four nights, Hong Kong Baptist pastors unanimously voted after the second service to extend the crusade three additional nights in the 9,500-seat stadium. Total attendance was 59,000.

John R. Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, was the main speaker. Five Chinese Baptist pastors from California, Texas and Canada participated and Winnie Chan, Miss Hong Kong of 1978, gave her testimony two nights.

The stadium crusade was part of a larger Hong Kong for Christ crusade which included Witness Involvement Now (WIN) schools, a church growth seminar and church crusades following the stadium crusade. The whole emphasis is part of a major city evangelization program sponsored by Southern Baptists in an effort to reach all the people in major cities of the world for Christ.

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S.C. Baptists Study  
Women, Elect Immigrant

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

MYRTLE BEACH, S. C. (BP)--South Carolina Baptists narrowly approved a special seven-member committee to study the role of women in the churches and elected an immigrant pastor as president and a woman as first vice president.

In other action, elected "messengers" to the South Carolina Baptist Convention adopted a Cooperative Program budget of \$11.5 million and passed resolutions urging support of world hunger and controls on beverage alcohol.

Approval of the study committee, which came on a vote of 352 to 309, had been urged editorially by the "Baptist Courier," state Baptist news publication, before the convention.

A former state convention president, S. George Lovell of Conway, urged passage of the study, noting that women have held positions of leadership in Baptist churches on mission fields for 100 years but have been denied such places at home.

Two other men, a pastor and a layman, opposed the study for two reasons. They said the Bible clearly states the "subordinate" role of women and said committee recommendations would be contrary to the Baptist polity of local church autonomy.

The committee will be asked only to make a study and submit its findings. It is not expected to make recommendations. It will be appointed by the outgoing president, J. K. Lawton, who leaves office Dec. 31.

Alastair Walker, a native of Scotland and pastor of First Baptist Church, Spartanburg, S. C., was elected president to succeed Lawton. He is the first immigrant elected president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

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Loulie Lattimer Owens of Greenville, S. C., became only the second woman in the convention's history elected first vice president. She is the wife of the retired annuity secretary for South Carolina Baptists and has been a leader in the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society for about 30 years. For 20 years, she wrote a column in the "Baptist Program," called "Minnie Belle, Wife the Rev. Percy Vere."

South Carolina Baptists voted to give 35.5 percent of the basic portion of their Cooperative Program budget--\$10.5 million--to worldwide Southern Baptist Convention causes and 50 percent of the challenge portion--\$1 million--to the SBC.

The 1979 convention is set for Nov. 13-15 in Greenville, S. C.

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Northern Plains Will  
Assist Minnesota Work

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

MANDAN, N. D. (BP)--The Northern Plains Baptist Convention re-elected its president, adopted a record budget, and voted to assist mission work in Minnesota during the annual meeting of the four-state convention.

John Herrington, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church, Riverton, Wyo., was named president for a second term by elected "messengers" to the convention, which covers Southern Baptist work in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana.

They also voted a budget of \$853,075 and voted to increase percentage from the Northern Plains Cooperative Program for worldwide mission causes of the Southern Baptist Convention from 16 percent to 16.5 percent.

The convention also approved an agreement with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Fellowship, the SBC Home Mission Board, and the Baptist General Convention of Texas to begin working in at least 10 northwestern Minnesota counties where little Baptist work exists. Churches in Minnesota and Wisconsin are affiliated with Texas Baptists.

An autograph party at the convention launched the sale of "The Thirtieth Child," a history of the Northern Plains Convention by Nicey Murphy, which recounts development of the convention since it became the 30 of what are now 34 state Baptist conventions covering Southern Baptist work in all 50 states.

The next annual meeting of the Northern Plains Convention will be Nov. 13-15, 1979, in Rapid City, S. D.

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New Mexico Baptists  
Elect Don Cartwright

Baptist Press  
11/20/78

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M. (BP)--Don Cartwright, pastor of First Baptist Church, Carlsbad, N. M., was elected president of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico in its 1978 meeting at the First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N. M.

The convention also approved the 1979 state Cooperative Program goal of \$1,306,148, of which 29 percent will go to the national Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program unified budget.

The convention will meet Nov. 6-8, 1979, at First Baptist Church, Hobbs, N. M.

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#### CORRECTION

In BP of 11/16/78, story entitled "Va. Baptists Continue, University Support 606-434", graph 12, line one, should read "In other actions, messengers rejected overwhelmingly and..." instead of "In other actions, messengers approved overwhelmingly and..."

Thanks, Baptist Press

**(BP)**

**BAPTIST PRESS**

*460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

LYNN MAY  
HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
127 9TH AVE NO  
NASHVILLE TN 37203

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