



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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North Carolina Votes New  
Wake Forest Relationship

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)--Wrangling until literally the 11th hour, North Carolina Baptists approved a new relationship between the state convention and Wake Forest University which will allow one-third of the school's trustees to be from "any evangelical Christian body."

Messengers also elected Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, as president and passed a \$17.5 million budget, including an allocation of 34.66 percent for world missions through the national Cooperative Program, up .33 percent over last year.

The Wake Forest solution, which wasn't cemented until 11 p.m. on the second day of the convention, changes the previous agreement between the school and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina which said all 36 trustees must be North Carolina Southern Baptists.

The plan, effective Jan. 1, 1981, will stop regular Cooperative Program contributions to Wake Forest. After that date, churches must designate Wake Forest as a recipient if they wish the school to share in their gifts through the state convention. Wake Forest will receive \$1,057,000 from the convention budget in 1980.

The amendment specifying that out-of-state trustees be evangelical Christians was an attempt to salvage the proposal after an earlier amendment had made it unworkable in the eyes of the convention leaders who spent the past 14 months negotiating it. The early amendment would have required the 12 out-of-state trustees to be Baptists.

Inclusion of non-Baptists on the board would be a "reversal of Baptist principle and practice," said Forrest Feezor, who offered the amendment. "It will not contribute anything to Wake Forest University unless it is some money, and I believe we're not ready to sell our practice and principle on that basis."

Wake Forest University President James Ralph Scales said regular contributions to the university from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, which are tied to and match those from the state Baptist convention, would not diminish. The Baptist contributions amount to four percent of the Wake Forest undergraduate campus budget.

"I've always wanted to keep this a Baptist school and it's still very much that way," said Scales after the convention. Scales, in his 13th year as Wake Forest president, said the relationship between the school and convention has never been stormy, "except in newspapers."

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Trustees elected their own successors at Wake Forest between 1834 and 1927, a period Scales called the most productive and harmonious time in the Wake Forest and convention relationship.

Controversy has arisen periodically between the school and convention. The latest developed after the trustees voted to accept, without restriction, a \$299,600 grant from the National Science Foundation, contrary to a directive by messengers to the 1977 meeting of the convention.

Messengers said then the school was not to accept \$85,000 of the grant because it was designated for construction of a greenhouse, as part of a research project, which the messengers said did not adhere to the "for services rendered" stipulations on the acceptance of federal grants.

Scales said the grant had already been accepted when the messengers acted. He said Wake Forest, to comply, then hired additional researchers and used school funds to construct the greenhouse.

Messengers to the 1979 convention refused to pass a resolution recommending the adoption of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) II treaty. They did pass a resolution urging churches to study the needs of migrant, seasonal farm workers in their state and bring a report to the convention in 1980 with proposals to improve and expand ministries to those groups.

Messengers sent a telegram to President Carter telling him of their prayer support "in these days of crisis in Iran," held a special prayer session for the hostages in the American embassy in Tehran, and collected an offering of over \$5,000 for Cambodian hunger relief.

The 1980 convention will be Nov. 10-12 in Greensboro.

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Louisiana Baptists  
Start Church Plan

Baptist Press  
11/15/79

MONROE, La. (BP)--Louisiana Baptists adopted an \$11.2 million budget and approved a new "church site plan" during their 132nd annual convention.

Elected messengers also heard Charles W. Colson, convicted after his Watergate involvement, challenge them to resist the current "me" generation by following the biblical imperative of "serving God as we serve our fellowman."

The 1980 budget includes a \$900,000 challenge goal and allocates 33.25 percent of the basic budget to world missions causes through the national Cooperative Program, an increase of .25 percent over the current year.

The church site corporation, a wholly owned, non-profit, subsidiary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention's executive board, will provide funds to acquire property for construction of new churches. Funds will be obtained from interested persons who will donate \$25 "shares" into the corporation.

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Messengers elected John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, as president and elected their second woman officer in two years when they chose Mrs. Beverly Durham of Bunkle as second vice-president. She is vice president of the trustees at Louisiana College. Sarah Frances Anders, a professor at Louisiana College, was second vice-president in 1978.

Messengers passed resolutions to alert Baptists in Louisiana of the moves to spread legalized casino-type gambling in the state, and that encouraged churches to support efforts to help the desperate people of Southeast Asia.

The 1980 meeting will be Nov. 10-12 at First Baptist Church, New Orleans.

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Maryland Convention  
Re-elects President

Baptist Press  
11/15/79

BEL AIR, Md. (BP)--Messengers from Maryland and Delaware re-elected James Willey, pastor of Middle River Baptist Church, Middle River, Md., as president of the Baptist Convention of Maryland and adopted a \$2,335,560 budget at their 144th annual convention.

Baker James Cauthen, retiring executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, led in the commissioning of 15 student summer missionaries who will go to Panama and Appalachia. He was recognized with a gift for his 26 years as a missions leader, as was Albert McClellan, director of program planning for the SBC Executive Committee, for his 30 years of service with that agency.

The 1980 budget includes anticipated receipts from Maryland and Delaware Baptist churches of \$1,586,300, of which 40 percent is designated to world mission causes through the national Cooperative Program.

Women played a major role in the meeting, leading in prayer at the opening of all sessions. Alma Hunt, retired director of the Woman's Missionary Union, conducted opening devotions for each session.

Messengers adopted resolutions expressing opposition to the legal sale of non-prescription drug paraphernalia and urged their state legislatures to end it; urging churches, individuals, associations and the state convention to utilize their resources to help Asian refugees; and urging churches to use the channels of the Foreign Mission Board to help Cambodians.

The 1980 convention will be Nov. 10-12 at First Baptist Church, Laurel, Md.

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Alabama Baptists  
Plan Big Increases

Baptist Press  
11/15/79

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (BP)--Alabama Baptists strode toward their commitment to Bold Mission Thrust by approving a \$14,030,000 budget, significantly upping the percentage going to world-wide causes, and adopting a program for the eighties aimed at strengthening the local church for growth in mission service and financial support.

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In other business, the 1,700 registered messengers to the 157th annual meeting of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, elected Drew J. Gunnels Jr., pastor of Spring Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, as president, then refused to give the president voting privileges on all convention committees and boards of agencies and institutions.

The new budget allocates 45 percent (\$5,280,954) to Southern Baptist Convention causes after both conventions share in the cost of promoting, collecting and disbursing the funds. If the goal is achieved, because of the increase of 15 percent in base budget and the increase of the percentage to world causes, Alabama's gifts to the national Cooperative Program will increase by 18.8 percent in 1980.

The budget also calls for increasing the amount to SBC causes by 0.5 percent each year until the division of funds is 50-50 after general denominational causes. Previously, 35.5 percent of the Cooperative Program budget gifts were designated for the SBC.

Specific plans were adopted for churches and individuals to increase in membership and giving toward the goal of doubling Cooperative Program receipts two-and-one-half times by the year 2000.

In his presidential address, Harper Shannon, pastor of Huffman Baptist Church, Birmingham, called the current "Good News Alabama" evangelistic effort "the most significant thing that Alabama Baptists, both black and white, have ever attempted to do together in the history of our denomination."

In the presidential election, Gunnels defeated fellow Mobile pastor, Jerry Vines of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, in a runoff. Gunnels is a former president of the Foreign Mission Board and is currently president of the Alabama Baptist State Executive Board.

Messengers changed their minds and rejected a constitutional amendment that would have given the convention president voting rights on all its committees and boards of agencies and institutions. The amendment was introduced last year and adopted but after considerable debate, the action, which required two-thirds majority vote, was defeated on the second reading.

In a resolution accusing Iranian leader Ayotollah Khomeini of committing an "inhumane act" in refusing to lead in freeing American embassy personnel, the messengers called for support and prayer for President Jimmy Carter and other leaders during the crisis.

Another resolution called for Baptists to miss one meal per week and give the money saved to relief efforts of Cambodian refugees, while another sharply criticized the Alabama legislature for its "frivolous and callous disregard for the facts about the destructive force of beverage alcohol." It also asked that a bill be passed next session raising the legalized drinking age to 21.

The 1980 Convention will meet Nov. 14-15 at Samford University, Birmingham.

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Georgia Editor Harwell  
Survives Ouster Attempt

Baptist Press  
11/15/79

SAVANNAH, Ga. (BP)--Jack U. Harwell, editor of Georgia Baptists' newspaper, The Christian Index, survived a heated attempt to have him fired because of his alleged liberal views toward the infallibility of the Bible at the Georgia Baptist Convention annual meeting.

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The number of messengers who swarmed to the 158th annual meeting for the predicted confrontation topped by 800 the previous record of 2,279 who met in Atlanta in 1977. Prior to the convention, a group orchestrated by William A. Powell, editor of the Southern Baptist Journal and long-time critic of Harwell and his editorial policies, announced plans to seek Harwell's dismissal.

The Georgia Baptist Convention's executive committee met before the annual session and voted to ask its own administrative committee to meet with the board of directors of the Christian Index to consider the charges against Harwell and to bring a report back to the executive committee at its Dec. 11 annual meeting.

When that action was presented to the convention messengers "as a matter of information" a messenger moved that the Georgia convention reaffirm once again the Baptist Faith and Message statement as its only theological guideline for fellowship and employment.

Harwell's critics opposed that motion, charging that "at least one denominational leader does not believe it." But the convention overwhelmingly approved the motion.

Then, W. Henry Fields, chairman of the Christian Index board of directors, told the convention that Harwell had repeatedly affirmed his loyalty to that Baptist Faith and Message. Fields asked the convention to "express our full confidence in the personal and professional integrity of the editor so that the executive committee in its deliberations will know the sentiments of the messengers."

After brief but heated debate, Fields' motion was resoundingly approved on standing vote. Observers guessed the vote to be about 2,500 for and about 500 votes against the motion.

Twice during later sessions of the convention, Powell's followers sought to raise the issue again, but each time were defeated. They also sought to pass several other motions related to such matters as "the infallible Bible in its original autograph" and to denominational employees taking part in ordination of women. But messengers overwhelmingly defeated each of their motions.

Harwell termed the outcome of all the parliamentary wrangles and votes as a significant demonstration for freedom of believers, the lordship of Christ, the place of creedalism in Baptist life, and the role of trusteeship procedures for dealing with employees.

Powell told news reporters, however, that he had won a major victory because he had forced the Georgia executive committee to admit that there might be a theological problem with the editor that needed investigation. Harwell has been on the Christian Index staff 22 years, the past 13 as editor.

In the midst of all the debate, a messenger moved that the executive committee "tell the world" that the name of Powell's publication, the Southern Baptist Journal, has no connection whatever with the Southern Baptist Convention, and that they ask Powell to remove that name from his masthead and logo. The motion was greeted with enthusiastic applause and immediately approved.

Later, Powell told the press that he has no intention of dropping the name "Southern Baptist Journal," and that nobody has the power to make him do so. He started it in 1973.

A related topic of major debate was a move to require that Georgia Baptist colleges hire only Baptists as faculty members. The issue was raised in 1978, drew hot debate then, and was referred to the executive committee for study and 1979 action.

After all the discussion, the convention accepted its executive committee report which stated that at times the schools might be "unable to employ Baptists with expertise to meet all the needs of the colleges."

The statement did remind college administrators and trustees that the convention expected all convention school employees to have "character, ideals and personal commitment consistent with the purpose of the college and the purpose of Baptists in supporting Christian educational institutions."

A resolution on rights of denominational employees to take part in ordination of women also drew angry debate. Harwell and several other Georgia convention employees have taken part in ordination services for female ministers and deacons for several years. Powell and his group have bitterly attacked this practice.

When the dust settled, the convention reaffirmed its 1977 position that ordination is a matter for local churches to decide without denominational interference, and declared that denominational employees have the same rights as any other church member to decide about participation in ordinations. Harwell called this vote also a clear defeat for Powell and his fundamentalist coalition.

A resolution which also sparked brief but heated debate asked Georgia messengers to call on the Georgia General Assembly to pass a bill which would require schools that teach evolution to teach the theory of scientific creationism. Some wondered if Christians would teach creationism; some said they were "tired of their children being taught that they come from monkeys." Finally, the motion was easily passed.

Another resolution urged Georgia Baptists to give more money for world hunger relief, and to channel it through Southern Baptist Convention Home and Foreign Mission Boards.

Messengers adopted a 1980 budget of \$15.4 million, an increase of \$1.4 million over 1979. After deduction of 10 percent for shared promotion-administration expenses, the total is divided equally between Georgia and Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Jim N. Griffith, pastor of Beech Haven Baptist Church in Athens, was elected as Georgia Baptist Convention president for a second term.

The 1980 convention will be Nov. 10-12 at Rehobath Baptist Church, Tucker, Ga.