



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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79-194

Kentucky Baptists
Confront World Hunger

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The election of a president, adoption of a resolution on world hunger, and approval of a five-year series of simultaneous fund raising campaigns among its educational institutions highlighted the 142nd annual session of the Kentucky Baptist Convention at Louisville's Walnut Street Baptist Church.

The presidential balloting involved a five-man contest which eventually saw John Dunaway, pastor of Corbin's First Baptist Church, defeat Wayne Dehoney, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church, in a runoff. Other candidates were LaVerne Butler, pastor, Ninth & O Baptist Church, Louisville; Harold Barnes, director of missions, Liberty Baptist Association, Glasgow; and Guy Gordon, pastor, First Baptist Church, Earlington.

Messengers adopted resolutions dealing with such subjects as appreciation for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the educational institutions of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, concern over the developing Iranian crisis, reaffirmation of the SALT II treaty (it received a number of negative votes), and opposition to laws which tax salaries of foreign missionaries.

In a resolution dealing with world hunger, churches were urged to be as generous as possible and send gifts to the Foreign Mission Board. The convention called upon President Carter and Congress to do all in their power to bring changed attitudes in the countries of Indochina "in order that they might let us help the malnourished and starving" of the world.

The convention, which commended Mrs. Jimmy Carter in her call for prayer and help for the people of the world, especially Cambodians, spent time in prayer for world hunger and collected an offering of \$2,248 for that purpose.

The convention adopted a \$9 million basic budget for 1980-81, with 35 percent going for world missions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program.

The convention will meet in 1980 at First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Ky., Nov. 11-13.

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Northwest Disfellowships
Church for 'Deviation'

Baptist Press
11/19/79

SPRINGFIELD, Ore. (BP)--The Northwest Baptist Convention refused to seat messengers from a church "deviating from accepted Baptist practices," welcomed back a church treated similarly in 1970 and voted to consider whether a church must be in fellowship with local associations before affiliating with the convention.

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The messengers also voted a resolution interpreting "truth without mixture of error" in the 1963 statement of Baptist Faith and Message to mean that the Bible in its original autographs (manuscripts) is without error "doctrinally, philosophically, historically and scientifically."

Similar wording about the Bible being errorless "doctrinally, historically, scientifically and philosophically" was used by Wayne Dehoney of Louisville, Ky., at the 1979 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston last June in discussion preceding the convention's vote on his motion to reaffirm the Baptist Faith and Message statement.

Calvary Baptist Church, Eastside, Ore., earlier disfellowshipped by the Myrtlewood Baptist Association, was denied seating in a dispute over "deviating from accepted Baptist practices" and "Pentecostal tendencies." A spokesman said the church was involved in the practice of charismatic gifts, including healing and tongues speaking.

Woodland Baptist Church, Seattle, refused affiliation in 1970 for the same thing, was welcomed back. It has ceased such practices, a spokesman said.

By a slim 131 to 128 vote messengers sent a proposal to the convention's constitutional committee to consider requiring affiliated churches to be members of and in fellowship with the local association.

Because it involves a constitutional change, it would require convention action in 1980 and a two-thirds vote to be approved.

Tying membership in a state convention to associational membership runs counter to Baptist history, according to Walter P. Shurden, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. He called such linkage a "semi-Presbyterian form of church government" and a "dangerous trend toward centralization of church government and loss of autonomy."

"Generally speaking in Baptist history, each unit in Baptist life--local church, association, state convention and national convention--determines its own membership," he said. "The local church has typically been the only unit in Southern Baptist life which determines membership in any of the other three units."

A spokesman said the constitutional change to link associational membership to state convention membership in the Northwest has little chance of approval.

In other action, messengers admitted Easthaven Baptist Church, Kallispell, Montana, formerly associated with the Northern Plains Baptist Convention, Rapid City, S.D. The church cited difficulties in travel and long distances in winter in seeking the change.

They also passed resolutions supporting President Jimmy Carter in dealing with the Iranian crisis, urging the Southern Baptist Convention to establish a "cooperative capital funds program" to assist in the purchase of land and building of first units for missions in the U.S. and Canada, calling for support for efforts dealing with the Cambodian refugee and hunger problems, and opposing lifestyles and pornography depicted in movies such as "The Life of Brian."

The convention heard a progress report from a committee searching for an executive director-treasurer following the resignation of Dan C. Stringer in October. The committee indicated there was "no frontrunner" for the position at the present time.

Richland Baptist Church in the tri-cities area of eastern Washington will be the site for the 1980 convention, Nov. 11-13.

California Baptists
Oppose Gay Rights

SAN JOSE, Calif. (BP)--California Southern Baptists passed a strong resolution opposing homosexuality and asked a special committee to define "a cooperating Baptist church."

The messengers commended Santa Clara County Baptists for their efforts to stop local pro-gay bills and urged Baptists **get out and vote** against Proposition AB 1, which would give gays minority status.

A resolution also urged Baptists "to oppose any other attempt in the state legislature or in any city and county in California to make homosexuality or any other sexual practice a legally protected minority status under the Fair Employment Practice Act of the state, cities or counties."

The perennial question of what constitutes a "cooperating Baptist church" surfaced again in California. In 1978 the convention eliminated article 3, section 3 from its bylaws which refused seating of messengers from churches accepting "alien immersions" (baptisms by immersion from other denominations) and practicing "open communion."

That action, however, left the convention without a definition of what a cooperating church is.

Convention parliamentarians ruled a motion out of order which sought to nullify last year's action in deleting article 3, section 3.

In other action, messengers designated 1980 as a year of celebration of California Southern Baptists' 40 years as a state convention, honored E. J. Combs, director of language missions, who is retiring after 24 years service, took an offering of \$868 for hunger relief in Indochina, and voted to accept a credentials committee recommendation not to seat messengers from Calvary Community Church, Benicia, Calif.

The committee said the church has created a "fellowship problem" in the North Bay Association since 1974 and that the association voted not to seat its messengers in the associational annual meeting in 1977.

Although the committee did not identify the "fellowship problem," which it said creates difficulties in the association, it is believed to include charismatic practices. The committee indicated it would continue to work "in a spirit of love" with the church and seek reconciliation.

Messengers also adopted a budget of \$6,881,675, of which \$3,598,484 is anticipated from California churches as Cooperative Program contributions. Twenty-seven percent of the latter amount will go to world mission causes through the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

James Morton, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Livermore, Calif., was re-elected president. Next year's convention will meet Nov. 11-12 in Bakersfield.

Michigan Baptists
Name Woman VP

ROYAL OAKS, Mich. (BP)--The Baptist State Convention of Michigan elected as president Howard Clark, pastor of First Baptist Church, Guinn, Mich., and named its first woman vice president.

Mrs. Fern Dannelly of Midland, Mich., was elected vice president, becoming the first woman to serve Michigan Southern Baptists in any major office other than recording secretary.

The convention was highlighted by dedication of a \$250,000 four-apartment complex, the brainchild of former SBC President Owen Cooper which will house mission volunteers in Michigan to work with the state staff. That would include furloughing foreign missionaries, Mission Service Corps volunteers and others.

In other action messengers donated \$400 to world hunger and participated with Baptist Student Union members in a "Read-the-Bible-Through" effort to raise money for summer missions and kick-off the 1980 Southern Baptist emphasis on reading the Bible through.

The convention adopted a budget of \$1,762,712, with 25.5 percent going to world missions through the national Southern Baptist Cooperative Program and set Nov. 11-13, 1980, as the date for next year's convention at Harvey Baptist Church, Marquette, Mich.

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Arizona Baptists Support
Carter's Iranian Efforts

Baptist Press
11/19/79

YUMA, Ariz. (BP)--The Arizona Southern Baptist Convention voted to support Jimmy Carter's efforts to settle the Iranian crisis, elected a new president, adopted a \$2,663,000 budget, and set a harmonious tone for the convention's 52nd year.

The messengers instructed the convention's recording secretary to send a telegram to Carter expressing prayer support of his efforts.

They also elected Wendell Freeze, a public school administrator and a deacon in Yuma's First Southern Baptist Church, as president.

The budget calls for churches to contribute \$1,260,000 through the Cooperative Program, with 25 percent of undesignated Cooperative Program gifts to go to worldwide mission causes through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program.

The next annual sessions of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention are scheduled at First Southern Baptist Church, Tucson, Ariz., Nov. 11-13, 1980.

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D.C. Convention Supports
Seminaries; Elects Layman

NEW CARROLLTON, Md. (BP)--The District of Columbia Baptist Convention adopted resolutions supporting Southern Baptist Convention seminaries and opposing proposed lobby disclosure legislation and tuition tax credits during its annual meeting.

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Delegates to the 102nd session of the convention, which includes churches in the District of Columbia and suburban Maryland and Virginia, also elected a prominent layman, Robert R. Hudson, as president. Hudson is president of Landmark Financial Services, Inc., a parent company with several subsidiaries in the southeastern United States.

The D.C. convention, dually aligned with American and Southern Baptists, also centered attention on world hunger. They gave more than \$1,000 in a series of special offerings and adopted a strong resolution on world hunger.

Other resolutions opposed a local District of Columbia gambling proposal which will come before the voters in a referendum and called on churches and the denomination to give increased attention to ethnics, particularly in assigning delegates to the annual meeting and in the production of denominational literature.

In addition, delegates adopted a 1980 budget of \$765,626, up from \$711,715 in 1979.

The 1980 meeting is scheduled Nov. 13-14 at Briggs Memorial Baptist Church, Washington, D.C.

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Methodist Resort Town
Falls in Final Appeal

Baptist Press
11/19/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected a claim by a United Methodist camp meeting that it should be reinstated as a legitimate local government with police powers.

The high court's action in effect leaves standing a ruling earlier this year by New Jersey's supreme court striking down a state law which conferred municipal status on the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting, a seaside resort town run by Methodists since 1870.

Questions concerning the constitutionality of Ocean Grove's special status arose in 1976 after town police picked up Louis J. Celmer Jr., charging him with driving while intoxicated, speeding and disregarding a traffic signal. When the local court convicted him, Celmer appealed in Monmouth County Court. That court held that the Ocean Grove Municipal Court was not lawfully established and was therefore without jurisdiction in the case.

The state of New Jersey then appealed to a higher state court which reversed the county court. But that court was in turn reversed by the state supreme court, setting the stage for a final appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ocean Grove was settled around 1870 by a small group of Methodist clergymen. Although it has served as something of a resort retreat center ever since, the town itself was incorporated in 1870 and was gradually given increased authority to run its own affairs, including having a police force and municipal court.

In 1894 similar police powers were expanded by the state legislature to apply to "any camp meeting association or other corporation...for the purpose of providing any religious body or society with a permanent camp meeting ground or place for religious service."

The Ocean Grove Association argued unsuccessfully in a written brief submitted to high court justices that all powers specified in the law were "secular in nature, directed toward the good order, health and welfare" of the town.

In its 7-0 decision last June striking down the law, the New Jersey high court ruled that "in effect, the legislature has decreed that in Ocean Grove the church shall be the state and the state shall be the church."

Ocean Grove, which was recently listed in the national registry of historic places, has now been placed under the jurisdiction of surrounding Neptune Township.

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