



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 _____, 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) 251-2798
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hasteley, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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Valentine Joins Call To Preserve Small Farms

WASHINGTON (BP)—A leading Southern Baptist ethicist has joined representatives from 12 other faith groups in announcing support for public policy to preserve small and moderate-size family farms.

Foy Valentine, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission, was one of 15 individuals declaring that "as religious leaders, we view the deterioration of the family farm system with alarm and pain."

Noting that since its birth the nation "has drawn both physical and spiritual nourishment from an agriculture based on small and moderate-sized farms," the 15 Protestant, Catholic and Jewish leaders called for elimination of federal policy favoring large farming interests, stimulating absentee ownership or encouraging corporate control of farming.

The statement was issued during final hearings by the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the "structure of American agriculture and rural communities."

"Fueling the trend" toward fewer and fewer small farms, the religious leaders asserted, is federal agricultural policy which has benefited large farms at the expense of smaller ones, provided incentives for expansion and made it harder for young farmers to get started in the business.

By allowing and encouraging the deterioration of the family farm system, the religious spokesmen went on, the federal government must now take corrective steps to "actively encourage the preservation of an agriculture based primarily on small and moderate-sized family farms."

Among specific actions urged were restructuring tax laws to discourage large farming units, establishing programs to help new farmers acquire land, stopping loss of land owned by minority farmers, providing farm workers with privileges and protections provided other workers and creating extension, training and cooperative programs to help small farmers.

Valentine, the only Baptist signing the statement, said that "for more than a hundred years, some of Southern Baptists' most loyal support and most effective leaders have come from families and churches with their roots in small family farms."

The veteran Southern Baptist leader, who was himself reared on a small farm in Texas, went on to say that "it is right to work now for public policy which will continue to make possible in the future the contributions that have come in the past to our country and to Southern Baptists from small family farms."

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During its annual meeting last year in Houston, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution stating that "continued loss of family farms is a threat to rural communities, traditional values, a family-based food production system, and ultimately food security in this nation and around the world." The resolution supported efforts to preserve the family farm and urged Southern Baptists to press members of Congress for legislation supportive of family farms.

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Midwestern Dean's
Wife Dies May 2

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5/8/80

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)—Helen Elizabeth Seats, former missionary to Nigeria, died May 2 after an extensive illness.

Mrs. Seats was the wife of Lavell Seats, professor of missions, dean of students and registrar at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Kansas City.

The Seats were appointed as missionaries in 1941 and served until ill health forced them to return in 1958. At that time Seats began teaching as part of the original faculty at Midwestern.

Mrs. Seats, 65, is survived by her husband; one son, Paige of Houston; and a granddaughter.

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Rogers Explains Selection
Of Two Memphis Pastors

Baptist Press
5/6/80

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said he asked two leading Memphis pastors to serve as chairmen of two prominent denominational committees because he knows and trusts them.

W. Wayne Allen, pastor of the 1,800-member East Park Baptist Church, was appointed chairman of the 10-member SBC Committee on Resolutions, and Jerry L. Glisson, pastor of the 4,597-member Leawood Baptist Church, chairman of the 52-member Committee on Committees.

"I also appointed them because of their proximity, and because I communicate well with them," added Rogers, pastor of the 10,500-member Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis.

The theological viewpoints of the two pastors also was a factor in the selection, Rogers added.

"They believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures," the SBC president explained.

As chairman of the resolutions committee, Allen will guide a group considering resolutions offered at the annual meeting of the SBC June 10-12 at St. Louis.

Glisson will convene the Committee on Committees just prior to the SBC in St. Louis to name two persons from each of the 26 states qualifying for representation to serve on the SBC Committee on Boards. That committee, which will be listed in the Convention Bulletin at the

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St. Louis SBC, will propose a slate of nominees for trustee posts on the SBC's 18 agencies. The nominees will be voted on by messengers to the 1981 SBC in Los Angeles.

As pastor of East Park Church for the past 10 years, Allen has led the church in membership growth from 386 to 1,800. During his pastorate, the church has been among the top 25 churches in baptisms in the SBC during six of the last eight years.

Allen currently serves as president of the Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference and is moderator of the 120-church Shelby Baptist Association. He was the founder of the Briarcrest Baptist School system, reportedly one of the largest evangelical Christian schools in the world, with a current enrollment of 3,265.

According to biographical data Allen attended Memphis State University, Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Glisson earned bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Glisson was moderator of the Shelby Association in 1961-63 and president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, 1969-70.

A member of the SBC Brotherhood Commission during 1967-73, Glisson served a term as chairman of the agency's executive committee. He also has served on the SBC Christian Life Commission for three years.

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Research Group Will View
Social Values of the 1980s

Baptist Press
5/6/80

ST. LOUIS (BP)--A look at America's social values for the next 10 years and their implications for Southern Baptists will highlight a meeting of the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship on June 7 at Third Baptist Church, St. Louis.

Grady C. Cothen, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., will make the presentation, based on research findings of the Yankelovich Monitor, a nationally-renowned research firm.

The 51-member group of Southern Baptist research specialists also will hear detailed progress reports of research underway and planned at the Sunday School Board and at the Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

Orrin Morris, director of the research division at the Home Mission Board, will describe the SBC Uniform Church Letter indices for planning, while three of his associates will share research on church growth, evangelism and missions.

Martin B. Bradley, director of the research services department at the Sunday School Board, will outline the methodology and nature of findings of Yankelovich Monitor. Three of his associates will discuss the Uniform Church Letter and general research in progress.

Other program features include election of officers for two-year terms, presentation of charter membership certificates and other recognitions. Leonard Irwin, director of the planning section of the Home Mission Board, is president.

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Cothen Back At Work
Following Surgery

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Sunday School Board President Grady C. Cothen returned to his office Monday morning, May 5, for the first time in six weeks following surgery in which 70 percent of his stomach was removed.

Cothen will work on a part-time basis, until his strength returns enough for him to be in the office on a full-time basis. He said his physicians told him he should be able to function normally as soon as his metabolism and system adapt to results of the surgery.

"There's every expectation of complete recovery," Cothen said. "I express my gratitude to Southern Baptists for the many hundreds of communications, including calls, telegrams, cards, flowers, books and good wishes. The Lord's people are the best and I am grateful for their ministry to me during these difficult days."

Cothen plans to attend the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis in June and expects to address the Pastors' Conference as scheduled.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

California Baptists
Add Ethnic Staffers

Baptist Press
5/6/80

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)--Ethnics have been elected to head two major program departments of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California which relate to ethnic and language work.

Willie T. McPherson, 40, of Long Beach, Calif., was elected director of black church ministries, and Lonnie S. Chavez, 50, of San Diego, Calif., was elected director of language missions.

"We have sought to find the person with the best abilities, preparation, background, and experience. And we have found these qualities in Willie McPherson and Lonnie Chavez," observed state convention Executive Director Robert D. Hughes. "The fact that both men are ethnic was only a bonus to their qualifications."

As director of black church ministries, McPherson will provide educational resources to the 120 black Southern Baptist churches which are affiliated with the state convention. He also will be the liaison to the four National Baptist Conventions located in California.

Chavez--who is bilingual in Spanish and English--will be responsible for coordinating the start of mission churches among California's language groups. In addition, Chavez will direct the work of five general missionaries who provide special expertise and assistance to local churches and associations in identifying language groups and developing ministries to them.

Both men replace two long term Anglo directors who recently retired. McPherson replaced Jack O'Neal who pioneered in the development of black church ministries during the past 18 years. Chavez replaced Jack Combs, who 25 years earlier started the language missions work of California Southern Baptists.

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The Southern Baptist General Convention of California is the largest evangelical denomination in the state with over 1,000 multi-ethnic and multi-racial churches, with 325,000 members. Currently, 40 different language and cultural groups comprise the convention.

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North Greenville
President Resigns

Baptist Press
5/6/80

TIGERVILLE, S.C. (BP)--George Silver, president of North Greenville College, has resigned to become president of Ocean City College in Toms River, N.J.

Silver was president of the Southern Baptist junior college in Tigerville since August 1975. He is a native of Trenton, N.J.

Silver said North Greenville College lacks only money to accomplish its plans, "and it will take a great amount of money to assure the school's present and future." North Greenville is one of seven Southern Baptist junior colleges.

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BWA Offers To Move
Mrs. Tolbert From Liberia

Baptist Press
5/6/80

WASHINGTON (BP)--In a cable to Samuel Doe, new head of state in Liberia, the Baptist World Alliance has offered to take responsibility for moving Victoria Tolbert, wife of the late President William Tolbert, to another country.

As of May 6, the BWA headquarters in Washington had received no response from its May 1 cable to Master Sgt. Doe who led a coup against Tolbert, April 12. The coup resulted in the assassination of Tolbert and others.

Mrs. Tolbert was jailed immediately following the coup but later was returned home under house arrest, the BWA said.

Robert S. Denny, BWA general secretary, said the Alliance's offer was in keeping with a proposal by Cyril Black of London who agreed to underwrite the cost of such a move.

Tolbert was president of the BWA, 1965-70, and was also a Baptist minister and president of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention.

The telegram to Doe said: "We are pleased to learn of progress toward normalization of life in Liberia, and continue to pray for the peace and well-being of all peoples there. In the name of mercy, we offer to settle Mrs. Victoria Tolbert in England, the United States, or some other country."

Southern Baptists have active mission work in Liberia and the BWA is currently involved in three relief and development projects within the country. A vocational training school has been built at Kwendin, and is operating with an enrollment of 275. Supplemental funding is being given a child health center at Nimba.

A BWA immunization project is in the third and final phase of a program aimed at immunizing all children against six childhood diseases. Dr. Robert A. Hingson, founder-director of Brother's Brother Foundation, and leader of this program, hopes to complete the project under the new government. It was a cooperative project with the Liberian Ministry of Health.

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