



BAPTIST PRESS

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California Led
Messenger Total

LOS ANGELES (BP)--To no one's surprise, California led all state conventions in the number of messengers it sent to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Los Angeles in June.

Churches from the host state accounted for 1,984 of the unexpectedly large total of 13,529. Last year, when the meeting was in St. Louis, just 108 attended from California, according to statistics compiled by Lee Porter, SBC registration secretary.

Texas churches sent 1,841 messengers to Los Angeles, up from the 1,429 to St. Louis, and North Carolina sent 1,150, up from last year's 775 as the two active Baptist areas occupied second and third places. Baptist leaders from both states were heavily involved in "get out the vote" campaigns over the issues of inerrancy and trustee elections.

Georgia and Tennessee were fourth and fifth respectively, with 871 and 856 messengers.

The only states not represented were Maine, Vermont and Rhode Island. Two messengers came from as far as Puerto Rico.

Other top 10 states and the number of messengers sent to the convention were: South Carolina, 713; Alabama, 685; Virginia, 631; Kentucky, 607; and Oklahoma, 594.

Others were: Florida, 519; Missouri, 510; Louisiana, 436; Mississippi, 353; Arkansas, 319; Arizona, 198; New Mexico, 144; Maryland, 131; Ohio, 98; Illinois, 98; Colorado, 84; Oregon, 83; Washington, 72; Nevada, 69; Indiana, 69; Kansas, 45; West Virginia, 43; District of Columbia, 34; Hawaii, 33; Utah, 31; Michigan, 29; Alaska, 27; Wyoming, 26; Montana, 20; South Dakota, 19; Iowa, 18; New Jersey, 15; New York, 10; Pennsylvania, 9; Connecticut, 9; Idaho, 8; Minnesota, 8; Wisconsin, 8; Nebraska, 6; North Dakota, 4; New Hampshire, 4; Massachusetts, 4; Delaware, 2.

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Reagan Skirts Challenge
On 'Social Issue Agenda'

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10/5/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Reagan declined to say whether he will actively push Congress for legislation on issues such as abortion, prayer in public schools and busing during his Oct. 1 news conference.

Asked by John D. Lofton Jr., editor of the Conservative Digest, if he will give more than

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"rhetorical support" to such a "social issue agenda," Reagan avoided a direct answer. He replied instead that he has made his position clear on those issues and would be "happy to see them come to my desk for a signature."

The Conservative Digest has criticized the president since before the inauguration for allegedly short-changing his New Right supporters and their causes.

Specifically, leaders of the conservative movement have challenged the president to push for new laws outlawing abortion and school busing and permitting states and local school boards to require school prayer. They have accused some of Reagan's staff of insisting that he give "rhetorical support" to each of those causes, while at the same time refusing to push Congress on them.

During his eight months as president, Reagan has asked conservative leaders in Congress to withhold major pushes on their favorite issues so his economic recovery program can remain at center stage.

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Iowa Southern Baptists Vote
1982 Year of Awakening

Baptist Press
10/5/81

WATERLOO, Iowa (BP)--Iowa Southern Baptists declared 1982 a year of prayer for spiritual awakening in a resolution adopted at their annual meeting in a black Baptist church in Waterloo.

One hundred thirty messengers convened at Faith Temple Baptist Church for the 10th annual meeting of the fellowship that is aligned in a sister relationship with the Missouri Baptist Convention. An earlier goal announced last year of attaining state convention status by 1984 was not discussed at the meeting.

Messengers adopted a 1982 budget of \$563,330, anticipating Cooperative Program income of \$214,084. Ten percent of the Cooperative Program receipts will establish a new convention start-up fund, and 40 percent will go to the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Mike McKinney, pastor of Ashworth Road Baptist Church in Des Moines and acting executive director of the fellowship the past 10 months, was elected president. Lonnie Hulsey, pastor of First Baptist Church, Albia, was elected vice president and Dorothy McNeil, member of First Baptist Church, Fort Dodge, was elected secretary.

McKinney presented Webster Brown of the Missouri Baptist Convention a check for \$13,600 to repay an interest free loan Missouri made to Iowa a year ago to enable the fellowship to purchase an office building. Brown, Missouri's program coordinator, then gave McKinney a check for \$13,600 to follow up Project 55, the states' combined effort to establish a Southern Baptist witness in the 55 Iowa counties that currently are without.

Messengers also adopted a resolution encouraging churches to focus attention on the role of parents to help their children know God, provide home and private worship experiences and to provide a sound education for them. It also challenged church members to make a "positive, Christ oriented influence on all educational institutions in the community."

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Ground Broken on Baptist
Pavilion at World's Fair

By Jim Newton

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Declaring that God is the source of all energy, Southern Baptists broke ground for a Baptist pavilion at the 1982 World's Fair site in Knoxville, Tenn.

Energy is the theme of the fair, scheduled May 1-Oct. 31, 1982. The Baptist pavilion, near the site's center, will focus on "spiritual energy."

During groundbreaking ceremonies, World's Fair President S.H. "Bo" Roberts, a Baptist layman, said fair exhibits will deal with all types of energy, "including the creative energy of man and the spiritual energy of God."

Knoxville Mayor Randy Tyree told about 200 persons gathered for the groundbreaking it would not truly be a "world's" fair without the representation of religious groups.

Representatives of Knox County Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention also participated in the groundbreaking.

David Peach, executive director of Baptist Ministries at the 1982 World's Fair, expressed appreciation for the support of Baptists at all levels for a Baptist ministry at the fair.

Theme for the Baptist pavilion will be "The Word is Energy," said Peach, "because we believe God is the source of all energy, and we base this on his Word--the Bible."

Pointing to the 266-foot "Sunsphere," the golden-glass dome tower which is the symbol of the fair, Peach told the crowd to look up and see something "far more powerful--the sun, which God made."

Peach said programs presented in the Baptist pavilion and exhibits on display will show the energy of creation, revelation and proclamation.

Plans call for a multi-media presentation and musical drama, puppetry, performances by Baptist choirs and musicians, and numerous other programs in the pavilion's 265-seat theater.

Southern Baptists were the first private, nonprofit group to break ground on their own pavilion. So far only two religious groups--Southern Baptists and the Churches of Christ--have signed contracts for pavilions.

An ecumenical group of about 10 religious groups is planning an exhibit in the technology and lifestyle building called "The Church's Presence at the 1982 World's Fair."

To be built at a cost of \$115,000, the Baptist pavilion was designed by Orr/Houk Associates of Nashville, headed by Baptist laymen Frank Orr and Ed Houk, so that it could be moved to another location after the fair closes. Construction will be done by Retenbauch Engineering Co. of Knoxville, headed by another Baptist layman, William Fortune. Fortune recently submitted preliminary plans for a possible new building for the Executive Committee in Nashville.

Total budget for the World's Fair Baptist Ministries project is just under \$400,000. Knox County Baptist Association is handling finances for the project through its World's Fair committee, headed by James McClusky, pastor of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church.

Peach said about \$290,000 has been committed toward the budget, including \$100,000 from local churches individually, \$90,000 from the SBC Home Mission Board, \$40,000 from the Knox County Baptist Association, \$32,500 from the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and about \$25,000 from individuals.

World's Fair Baptist Ministries is in the midst of a "Mission 300" fund raising project seeking 300 individuals to give \$500 each.

Although all the financial support has not yet been raised, Peach said, "I believe the Lord is in it, and it will be a strong Baptist witness to the 11 million people expected to attend the fair."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Livingstone To Head
Materials Services

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Charles R. Livingstone, a 16-year veteran of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has been elected manager of the board's materials services department.

Livingstone, 52, will direct the department which oversees the processing, filling and shipping of all church literature orders. Approximately 160 persons are employed in the department which fills between 95,000-105,000 orders each quarter.

Since 1976 Livingstone, a native Kansan, has been resource and services analyst in the management services division. Earlier, he was assistant to the director of the church services and materials division, leader of the church program organizations group and manager of the Sunday School department.

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

New Orleans Circuit Court
Denies Seminary's Request

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans has denied a request by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for a hearing before the full court in the seminary's four-year-old lawsuit with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Seminary President Russell H. Dilday Jr. said the seminary has not decided what action to take next. No reason for the denial was given by the court.

In a July 17 decision, the circuit court had ruled the seminary was a "wholly" religious institution entitled to the status of a church, but that employees who performed tasks which "are not totally ecclesiastical or religious" were not ministers entitled to First Amendment protection.

The ruling was made on an appeal by EEOC to the Fifth Circuit Court. A lower court decision by U.S. District Judge Eldon Mahon of Fort Worth in January 1980 had refused to grant EEOC's request to force the seminary to file employee information forms on all personnel.

Dilday said the seminary now must decide within 90 days whether to appeal the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

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"Should the decision of the appeals court stand," Dilday said, "the district court in Fort Worth would work with us to determine which staff positions would fall under EEOC jurisdiction."

The seminary then would be required to file with EEOC employment information on those designated as non-ministers, Dilday said.

Dilday said the decision on whether to appeal would be made in consultation with the seminary's legal counsel and the presidents of the other five Southern Baptist seminaries. The seminaries all have been involved financially in the lawsuit from the initial stage, with Southwestern serving as the test case.

"The implications of our next move are broader than just the seminary," Dilday said. "What is decided will have an effect on other denominational agencies, schools and institutions, as well as our churches. It is a decision that will affect other denominations, as well."

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Only 77, Frith Named
'Father of the Year'

Baptist Press
10/5/81

ROANOKE, Va. (BP)--At 77, Clifford Field Frith finally received a title he spent most of his life earning--Father of the Year.

The Merchants Association of the Roanoke Valley honored Frith, a former Southern Baptist pastor and chaplain, for the area award. Besides raising three children of his own, Frith reared 60 others who were poor, rejected or handicapped.

And when his wife died and the last of his big brood was grown, he spent more than 10 years on the board of American Missions International, helping American Indians overcome social and economic barriers.

"All my life I've had a soft spot in my heart for children, especially orphans," he recalls.

Frith returned from World War II determined to help the homeless and parentless. He became pastor of churches in Virginia and Maryland, but in 1956 became disgusted with "too much time in meetings and putting out bulletins." He and his first wife, Ruth, opened Belle Haven Children's Home in "the biggest house I could find" on 184 acres in Rockbridge County, Va.

The Friths kept 15 kids at a time, ranging in age from two to 16. They supported themselves by raising Angus cattle, drawing disability pension for the eye he lost in World War II and collecting \$12.50 a month per child from the government welfare department.

Through the years, he followed one philosophy in raising the children: "Be honest, fair and firm, with a little Bible instruction as a reference point."

He closed the children's home in 1969, shortly after Ruth died. Then he criss-crossed the country several times, directing food, clothing and funds to needy Indians. Since 1975, he's had the help of his second wife, Irene.

"Retire is not in my vocabulary," he says. "I don't have time for it."

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