



# -- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

## NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
Wilmer C. Fields, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

## BUREAUS

**ATLANTA** Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041

**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996

**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300

**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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82-110

SBC Must Face Problems,  
Draper Tells BSSB Trustees

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) -- The problems confronting the nation's largest Protestant denomination must be faced, Southern Baptist Convention President Jimmy Draper told trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

"I think we have got problems in the Southern Baptist Convention," he said at the trustees' August meeting. "I think we need to face the problems. They are not insurmountable ... they are not unscalable. But we do have some things which need to be addressed."

He said the factions in the 13.8 million member denomination can "keep on drawing our swords ... or we can do what the Bible says and work to find the common ground."

Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, was elected to a one-year term as president of the SBC during the denomination's 1982 meeting in New Orleans, winning a second ballot victory with 57 percent of the vote.

The visit to the trustees' meeting was the second Draper has made to the Sunday School Board in the two months since he was elected. Past presidents Bailey E. Smith spoke to only one trustee meeting in his two terms and Adrian Rogers did not attend any board meeting during his one-year term. The SBC president is an ex-officio member of the BSSB trustees.

Draper was introduced by BSSB President Grady Cothen, who nominated Duke K. McCall, retired president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, for the SBC presidency.

Cothen, who referred to Draper as "my president," noted the "tests" Draper will face during his presidency "will not be of the mind ... nor of religion (although that will be tried seriously) ... but the pressures brought to bear on him by all sorts of people to do all sorts of things for all sorts of purposes."

Draper, in his response, said problems often are of "perceptions" rather than "realities," and added: "Lots of folks have the perception that Grady Cothen and I are adversaries. We had coffee Sunday in New Orleans (before the convention began) and talked about what was going to happen. I know what he (Cothen) preaches and where he stands. I have great love for him."

Another "perception" he debunked is that he was "elected by Judge (Paul) Pressler," a Houston appeals court judge and a leader in the movement to turn the denomination to a more fundamentalist stance. "I haven't talked to Judge Pressler since the convention. In fact, I have talked to him only two times in my life. I am owned by only one person, Jesus Christ."

Draper acknowledged the pressures on him, from left and right and joked: "I figure if I work it right, I'll have everybody mad at me by Pittsburgh (site of the 1983 SBC)."

In a serious tone, Draper said: "There are some theological problems.... The blanket charge the seminaries are liberal is not true, nor is the blanket defense that there are no liberals. We do have some problems. We must look at them; deal with them."

He noted the SBC "is trying to discover who we are. The church historians tell us that every 40 or 50 or 70 years, we have to rediscover our theology," and commented that there have been "three or four views on alien immersion in the last 150 years."

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He said the views have covered the spectrum, from accepting to rejecting. Alien immersion is a term denoting accepting persons into membership of local churches who have been baptized in churches other than Baptist.

Draper commented that solutions to the problems will "take a great deal of patience," and warned: "We don't trust each other."

The problem is not whether someone is an inerrantist, holding a belief that the Bible, in its original manuscripts, is without error, Draper said. "It is not that simple ... it is not just inerrancy," he added.

He said he believes "Southern Baptists are at that place where the question is whether we are going to practice what we preach."

Acknowledging his relative youth for the important post of president of the SBC, he noted there is a "generation gap from (Herschell) Hobbs, (W.A.) Criswell, (Ramsey) Pollard down to where I am," and said he believes the job should go to a "denominational statesman."

Hobbs, of Oklahoma City, Criswell of Dallas, and Pollard, of Memphis, Tenn., all are past presidents of the denomination. All were elected when they were in their 50s and 60s.

"I am only 46. What business do I have being president of the SBC?" he asked, commenting that he is sure the "generation gap ... creates some unease."

He asked the trustees to pray for him, and not to "believe everything you read in newspapers, not even Baptist Press (the denomination's news service)."

"Also," he said. "when you get irritated with somebody, pray for them. It is hard to stay irritated when you are praying for them."

He gave some advice to the BSSB, which publishes books, literature and other materials for use by the churches, and which has been under fire from some segments of the denomination for being "liberal."

"Please do not greet questions with hostility; do not consider inquiries disloyalty," he said. "Do not assume that when inquiries come, that there is malice behind them."

He commented that the right to question is "an inherent right that all Southern Baptist have," and recounted an experience he had when he wrote a letter to the BSSB. He said the response was "defensive."

"Don't be defensive. We cannot be that way," he added.

Draper also encouraged trustees to give the Sunday School the "priority" in evangelism. "The Sunday School is the greatest evangelistic tool you can imagine ... and (that view) has a lot to do with the kind of literature you (BSSB) put out."

The Texas pastor flew into Nashville Tuesday afternoon, and left to return to Gulf Shores, Miss., where he was preaching, immediately after his speech.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Baptist Sunday School Board

Larry High Named North  
Carolina Managing Editor

Baptist Press  
8/4/82

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)--Larry E. High has resigned as editor of the Maryland Baptist to become managing editor of the North Carolina Biblical Recorder.

High, 32, has been editor of the 18,000-circulation publication of the Maryland Baptist Convention since October 1979. His resignation is effective Aug. 31. He will assume duties on the 116,500-circulation Biblical Recorder Sept. 13.

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In North Carolina he will work with R.G. (Gene) Puckett, recently elected editor of the news journal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

It will mark the second time the two have worked together. In Maryland High was associate editor. When Puckett resigned in 1979 to become executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, High was named acting editor and then was elected editor.

Puckett, who assumed the North Carolina editorship Aug. 1, said High's title of managing editor "was deliberately chosen to reflect the maximum responsibility of the job."

High, a native of Baltimore, is a graduate of the University of Maryland with a bachelor's degree in journalism and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., with a master of religious education degree.

While in seminary he was an intern on the Western Recorder, journal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Following graduation he was news director of the seminary from 1974 until he joined the Maryland Baptist in 1975.

His wife, Jan, has been director of Mission Friends, Girls in Action and Acteens for the Maryland convention. She also has resigned.

After High's departure, Lyn Sheehan, assistant editor, will function as editor. The Maryland Baptist committee, a group of 10 pastors and lay persons from across the state, has appointed a five person editorial board to assist Sheehan in her duties. Chairman is Beryl Little, a layman from Columbia, Md.

A new editor probably will not be sought until a successor to Roy Gresham, Maryland executive director, has been named. Gresham will retire Dec. 31, but his successor is expected to be named before the annual state convention in November.

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Wilkey Named By  
Education Commission

Baptist Press  
8/4/82

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Lonnie H. Wilkey, 24, has been named director of communications for the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

He will assist in design and production of Education Commission publications, displays and promotional materials; be associate editor of The SBC Educator and staff writer.

A 1978 graduate of North Greenville College, Tigerville, S.C., Wilkey earned his bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of South Carolina. After graduation in 1980 he became news editor of the Northwest Sentinel in Travelers Rest, S.C. At the same time he was public information coordinator for North Greenville College.

Wilkey became assistant director of public relations of Baptist College at Charleston in 1981.

He is married to the former Joyce Day of Greenville, S.C.

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S.C. Choir Performs  
For U.N. Community

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press  
8/4/82

NEW YORK (BP)--A one- and one-half-hour concert by the youth choir of First Baptist Church, Columbia, S.C., attracted more than 1,000 United Nations delegates and workers.

"New Creations," an 80-voice group directed by Jon Blouin, performed a variety of sacred, gospel, secular and patriotic music, Steve Ware, minister to youth at First Baptist and one of the coordinators for the group's New England tour, said.

Ware estimated crowds of 1,000-1,500 attended the afternoon open-air performance on the United Nations' premises. The group distributed several hundred copies of Good News for Modern Man to persons requesting Bibles.

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The audience was "very open" to the choir's presentation, which included a brief message on peace by First Baptist's pastor Marshall Edwards, Ware said. Choir members then shared how they found peace in Jesus Christ.

"I am excited and grateful that the choir came," said Elias Golonka, Southern Baptist home missionary to the United Nations and internationals. "This was a tremendous opportunity to reach a large number of people." Response from the U.N. community had been positive and future performances by Baptist groups are already being discussed with United Nations personnel, he added.

Golonka gained several new contacts with U.N. officials and a few of them requested copies of the Bible in their native language, he said.

The U.S. mission to the United Nations sponsored the event, the second such concert by a Baptist group in as many years. Last year the choir of First Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas, performed for the U.N. community.

The choir concluded its tour with performances at the White House and the Senate office building.

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Missionary's Son Found  
After Eight-Hour Search

Baptist Press  
8/4/82

DENIA, Spain (BP)--Searchers found missionary kid John Whitten, 21, alive and well after he had been lost eight hours on Montgo Mountain near Denia.

Whitten, son of Southern Baptist missionaries Charles W. and Indy Whitten, was hiking with a friend in the early afternoon July 21, when the two became separated and the friend returned to the Baptist camp in Denia. Whitten waited at a formerly agreed-upon place until 7 p.m. He then became confused and took a path leading away from the camp.

Meanwhile missionaries, gathered for the annual meeting of the Spanish Baptist Mission, began looking for Whitten. Others prayed for his safety. A pastor and civil guards from Denia organized a search party which continued until 3 a.m. The search was called off until daybreak but a few continued to look.

At 4 a.m. they saw a lighted match in the distance and Whitten answered their calls. It is assumed he had heat exhaustion and was unable to call to the search party earlier. He has recovered.

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Mississippi Pastor's Son  
Missing in Pensacola, Fla.

Baptist Press  
8/4/82

BROOKSVILLE, Miss, (BP)--A \$2,500 reward has been offered by Brooksville Baptist Church for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone connected with the disappearance of Frank Ivan Zgarba, son of the pastor.

Jerry Zgarba confirmed his son disappeared June 4 in Pensacola, Fla. where he was working for the summer and living with the parents of a friend, Greg L'Orange.

Zgarba, 22, left work that day with about \$15 in his pocket, telling co-workers he would see them the next day. He has not been seen or heard from since. His car was found in Pensacola June 21, minus the battery.

A Zgarba Search Fund has been established at the Merchants and Farmers Bank in Meridian, Miss. where the elder Zgarba was pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church, 1967-75.

Zgarba, a student at East Mississippi Junior College, is six feet tall, has dark eyes and hair, a mustache, olive complexion, and weighs 155 pounds. Friends of the family say there is no reason to believe he would disappear voluntarily.

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