



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Brotherhood Commission
Plans Scripture Distribution

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Directors of the Brotherhood Commission, meeting for their semi-annual conference, agreed to personally underwrite the cost of scripture distribution efforts in Pittsburgh this summer, put into motion the implementation of a Fellowship of Baptist Men and elected 1982-83 officers.

The scripture distribution project is part of a saturation evangelism campaign planned for 40 sites in the Pittsburgh area the week prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, scheduled June 14-16. The scripture portions would be given out by volunteers going house to house witnessing and inviting people to evangelistic rallies.

Brotherhood Commission Executive Director James Smith reported the commission has pledged to enlist 1,600 volunteers to help with the evangelism project. Enlistment of volunteers will be coordinated by Baptist Men's director Douglas Beggs and state Brotherhood leaders.

Recommendations on implementing the Fellowship of Baptist Men came to the commission from a lay advisory committee formed to seek ways to involve more laymen in Southern Baptist Convention activities.

The commission voted to form the fellowship as a part of the Brotherhood Commission. Initial officers of the fellowship—president, vice president, secretary and treasurer—will be elected by the Brotherhood Commission at its April 1983, meeting. Future officers will be elected by the fellowship.

The lay advisory committee (15 laymen, four commission directors, four commission staff members and four representatives of state's Brotherhood offices) will recommend specific bylaws to the commission, at the April meeting.

The commission also approved the formation of a lay speaker's bureau. The bureau, which will be compiled at the Brotherhood Commission, will identify outstanding lay speakers who could speak on a variety of subjects at conventions and other Southern Baptist meetings.

Suggestions for speakers would come from the lay advisory committee, state Brotherhood personnel and Brotherhood Commission staff.

The Brotherhood directors elected James Gardner, a layman from Blytheville, Ark., as 1982-83 chairman, Carl Doda, a layman from Alexandria, La., as vice chairman and Fred Harris, a layman from Hatch, N.M., as recording secretary.

In other action the directors voted to change the titles of the commission's top four staff members. James Smith's title will be changed from executive director to president; associate executive director Norman Godfrey will become first vice president, Jack Childs, support services director, will become vice president for support services and business services and director Lynette Oliver will become vice president for business services.

The directors also approved an amendment to the commission's bylaws calling for election of 10 at-large members based on state Brotherhood enrollment, heard a report that the completion of the Glendon McCullough Conference Center is expected this fall and reviewed annual reports from the commission's three divisions.

Iowa Southern Baptists
Set 1984 Convention Date

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DES MOINES, Iowa (BP) — Iowa Southern Baptists are planning toward organizing as a state convention on Oct. 20, 1984, the 150th anniversary of the first Baptist services in the state.

During the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship at Crestwood Baptist Church, Executive Director/Treasurer Robert H. Stuckey told 130 messengers that the Fellowship "is now able to seriously consider a date in the fall of 1984 to become a state convention."

Oct. 20, he said, will mark the 150th anniversary of the "first Baptist services west of the Mississippi ... near what is now Danville, Iowa." He added the 1984 constituting date also coincides with the 30th anniversary of Southern Baptist work in the state.

"Southern Baptist work began in Iowa with Southern Baptists who were transferred into the state. The more formal services of existing churches did not meet their spiritual needs so they began meeting together in homes. On June 12, 1954, the first Southern Baptist church in Iowa was organized near Anamosa (now Fairview Baptist Church of Great Rivers)," Stuckey added.

In their annual meeting, Iowa Baptists were told they have topped the 10,000 member mark the first time. According to reports from the 76 churches, membership is 10,088. Under SEC rules, a fellowship must have either 10,000 members in 75 churches or 12,500 in 50 churches to be able to receive recognition.

Stuckey, who has been Iowa executive since November 1982, unveiled steps which will lead to constituting, including a new staff structure and a plan for the fellowship to function financially like a state convention during the next two years. Under the staff structure, two divisions will be created, one dealing primarily with Home Mission Board programs and the other with Baptist Sunday School Board programs.

"The new structure will allow us to move directly into state convention status without having to change our structure," he said.

The fellowship adopted a \$704,107 budget, of which \$141,240 will come from the churches and missions of the Fellowship. The budget compares with a \$563,930 in 1982, an increase of 24.9 per cent. Stuckey said much of the increase is attributed to HMB contributions, which this year will provide \$432,611, up from 333,000 last year.

Pointing toward convention status, the new budget provides that the division of funds will be 60 percent for the ISEF, 30 percent for the Missouri Baptist Convention, parent organization, and 10 percent for a new convention fund. Some 10.9 percent will be sent to support the world-wide causes through the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program, a decrease from the 14 percent of 1981.

Also, pointing toward convention status, a lay task force for the state mission offering was unveiled, and Stuckey told messengers the churches have already reached approximately 45 percent of a five year, \$100,000-plus goal in just under two years.

Half of the mission offering will be used to start new churches, with the remainder being divided between language missions, Christian social ministries and Baptist student ministries, he said.

Tom Nesbitt, pastor of Grand Avenue Baptist Church of Ames, was elected president in a runoff election with John Adams, pastor of Crestwood Baptist Church of Des Moines. Adams then was elected vice president.

Nesbitt replaces Mike McKinney, pastor of Ashworth Road Baptist Church of Des Moines, who served two terms. McKinney also was interim executive director/treasurer until Stuckey was called to head the work.

The 1983 annual meeting will be in Grand Avenue Church in Ames, Oct. 22-23.

SEC President Helps
Constitute New Church

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas (BP)—James T. Draper Jr. has been much in demand since his election as president of the Southern Baptist Convention last June, but on Oct. 24 the pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, scheduled a day at a church with only 132 members.

"He (Draper) told us he wanted to emphasize the importance of starting new churches when he accepted our invitation," said Euclid Moore, pastor of Oakwood Baptist Church. "He said this is what we (Southern Baptists) are all about."

Draper preached from Matthew 16:16 and told the 450 people who attended the dedication service the church is not a defensive organism but is designed to move forward and present the message of Jesus Christ boldly.

Bob Kiesling, a charter member of Oakwood church, and Draper are both members of the Baylor University board of trustees.

Oakwood church began as a mission of First Baptist Church, New Braunfels, just seven months ago, and according to Moore, is located in a strategic growth area of New Braunfels, a town just north of San Antonio, Texas.

"First Church sacrificed a great deal for us," Moore said. "We started the mission with 49 members from there—and they weren't just nominal members. That group included six deacon families, some of the church's best Sunday School teachers and they were all tithers."

Despite spinning off so many key members, First Baptist Church has continued to grow and even oversubscribed a recent building fund drive by \$50,000, Moore said. And Oakwood church has already raised \$25,000 to build its own building on a seven acre site.

The church is presently meeting in a rented building, "but I hope we are in our own building sometime within the next year," he added.

Moore and his wife were foreign missionaries in East Africa for 14 years. He served as a consultant to the missions committee of First Baptist Church when the Oakwood mission was started and was called as pastor of the mission last February.

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Lack Of Evangelical Zeal
Hurting SEC, Draper Insists

By Mike Davis

Baptist Press
10/25/82

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Southern Baptist President James T. Draper Jr., speaking to directors of the Brotherhood Commission, lashed out at complacency in Southern Baptist churches and warned that Bold Mission Thrust will fail unless the convention regains a zeal for evangelism.

"At the rate we're winning people to Christ today," Draper predicted, "it would take 9,000 years to win the current population of the world.

"Bold Mission is a farce," he continued, "unless we once again become a people who are zealous for the gospel, who are zealous for evangelism."

Draper outlined for the Brotherhood Commission directors and staff during the commission's semi-annual meeting in Memphis what he considers the four most pressing crises facing the Southern Baptist Convention.

He labeled a lack of concern for lost people as the greatest crisis.

"While we're debating everything else as Southern Baptists, we need to get back to a basic concern that people be introduced to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour." "That crisis is gr ater than any theological crisis we might face."

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Concerning the current theological debates in the convention, Draper shared that the question he is most often asked is: Are there really differences among Southern Baptists or is it just a power struggle.

"Folks," Draper emphasized, "I want to tell you there are tremendous differences among Southern Baptists. The one thing that we have been able to ascertain in all the meetings we've had with the various educational, pastoral and lay leaders of our convention is that there are tremendous differences in our convention.

"We are a diverse group and that diversity has not been truly recognized in every area," he continued. "It's only recognized in pockets. We're in the throes of the pressure of trying to get the pockets together."

The convention is also facing a crisis of conviction, according to Draper.

"There needs to be a conviction about our message," he said, "I don't care whether you use the word inerrancy or whether you use the word infallible or inspired or whatever word you use about the Bible. I don't care what you call it, we just need to have a message that says men are lost, they need to be saved and we need to introduce them to Jesus—that's the task of the church."

The convention also faces crises of contact and commitment, Draper pointed out, charging that Southern Baptists have "spectatoritis."

"I've come to the place where I've tried to decide in my own ministry whether I want to build an audience or an army," Draper said, "I've discovered that most people are audiences. We gather people in our churches who agree with our viewpoints, people who like to interpret the scripture like we do and we've got great audiences. We've got spectatoritis. We are not committed to what God wants us to do. I believe God wants to build an army not an audience."

Draper called for Southern Baptists to learn how to contact people around them.

"We're the best trained, best equipped, most inept generation that has ever lived," he said. "It is a rare church that can get anybody to visit. It's a rare church that builds much of an attendance for outreach activities. We just don't know much about contact.

"We need to once again become people with one-track hearts, one-track minds, loving the lost, reaching the world with the gospel." Draper concluded, "That's the real crisis we face as Southern Baptists."

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Car Accident Injures
Beth Elliff In Zimbabwe

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Baptist Press
10/25/82

GWERU, Zimbabwe (BP)—Beth Elliff, 14-year-old daughter of missionaries Tom and Jeannie Elliff of Oklahoma, is hospitalized in Gweru, Zimbabwe, with multiple fractures of the pelvis and burns after an Oct. 21 automobile accident.

The girl, initially listed in critical condition by the hospital, is now doing well, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board representative Bud Fray reported Oct. 25, but may need skin grafts.

Fray, associate to the director for Southern Africa work, said her only broken bone was her pelvis but her legs and thighs were burned when the car engine fell on her after she was thrown from the vehicle.

Fray also reported that the mother, Jeannie, suffered a mild concussion but appears to have recovered. Mrs. Elliff is staying with her daughter in the hospital in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital. Her father, Tom Elliff, has taken the couple's other three children (who suffered only sprains, burises and bumps) to the family home in Bulawayo so they can return to school.

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Mrs. Elliff reportedly lost control of her car en route from her home in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, to Harare (formerly Salisbury). She was taking her four children to a retreat for Southern Baptist missionary children. Her husband was attending a church development conference in White River, South Africa.

Beth and Jonathan, age 6, were reportedly thrown from the car, which rolled over several times. Amy, 12; Sarah, 7, and Mrs. Elliff remained inside.

Missionaries in Harare sent a small plane to Gweru, Oct. 22, to fly Beth to Harare for hospitalization and consultation with an orthopedic specialist and with missionary physicians Giles and Wana Ann Fort.

Missionary nurse Pam King, of Marlin, Texas, will provide personal nursing care for Beth as long as she needs it. Though stationed at the Sanyati Baptist Hospital, King had traveled to Harare before the accident to meet with officials of Zimbabwe's ministry of health.

Elliff was in South Africa attending a conference at the time of the accident. He is the brother-in-law of former SEC president Bailey Smith and was pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., before the couple's appointment in 1981.

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Church Pays Salary
After 49 Year Delay

Baptist Press
10/25/82

RUBY, La. (BP)—Forty-nine years after R.H. Whittington served as pastor of Pine Grove Baptist Church, the church paid his salary.

Whittington, who was to preach the special 86th Homecoming sermon, was called to the platform by Gene Wilson, pastor. Then A.B. Porter came to the front and said, "We have something for you."

Porter read from the minutes of 1933 which showed the church was behind in Whittington's salary. "We owe you \$75 and this morning I have a check here to pay our debts."

Wilson asked Whittington if he had anything to say. Whittington said, "No, I'm speechless."

Whittington, who retired from the Louisiana College religion faculty in 1970 after 25 years of teaching, recalled the story.

He became pastor in 1931. In 1933 they were behind in the salary of \$15 per month. "I remember one time they proposed to pay \$7.50 on the salary and \$7.50 on the debt. I tried to get them to cancel it. But the debt remained through the years."

When Whittington finished college in 1933 he entered New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and completed studies there in 1935. During this time he was pastor of four churches, one of which was Pine Grove. All the others had paid, he said.

When Whittington received the \$75 back pay someone in the congregation asked if that included interest.

"No," Wilson said, "we wouldn't have enough money."

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