



# - - BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 25, 1983

83-47

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST PASTORS CONFERENCE

June 12-13, 1983

Pittsburgh Civic Arena, Pittsburgh, PA

Sunday Evening, June 12 - Fred Wolfe, Pastors Conference president and pastor, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, AL, presiding

6:30--"Come Before His Presence with Singing"--Jerry McGrath, evangelistic singer, Marietta, GA

6:40--Invocation--Ellis M. Bush, executive secretary-treasurer, Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey

Welcome--Fred Wolfe

6:45--Congregational Hymn--Ed Keyes, associate pastor in music, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, AL

6:50--Special Music--Vernard Johnson, music evangelist, Ft. Worth, TX

7:00--Message--Arthur Blessitt, minister of Sunset Strip, Hollywood, CA

7:45--Congregational Hymn

7:50--President's Remarks--James T. Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention

7:55--Testimony "Tried By Fire"--Mark Stone, evangelist, Virginia Beach, VA

8:20--Congregational Hymn

Offertory Prayer--Al Jackson, pastor, Lakeview Baptist Church, Auburn, AL

Offering--Combined youth choirs, Lakeview, Auburn, AL, Cottage Hill, Mobile, AL, First Baptist, Orlando, FL., Shades Mountain, Birmingham, AL

8:40--Special Music--Vernard Johnson

8:45--Message--Charles F. Stanley, pastor, First Baptist Church, Atlanta, GA

Benediction--Don Chasteen, pastor, East Pickens Baptist Church, Pickens, SC

Monday Morning, June 13 - Ron Herrod, Pastors Conference vice president and pastor, First Baptist Church, Kenner, LA, presiding

8:45--"Come Before His Presence With Singing"--James Wright, music evangelist, Oklahoma City, OK

8:55--Invocation--Steve Brumbelow, pastor, Cross Lanes Baptist Church, Cross Lanes, WV  
Congregational Hymn

9:00--Special Music--New Song, music evangelists, Valdosta, GA

9:05--Message--Fred Lowery, pastor, New Pisgah Baptist Church, Spartanburg, SC

9:30--Congregational Hymn

9:35--Special Music--Ed Keyes

9:40--Message--Ron Long, pastor, Glenwood Hills Baptist Church, Lithonia, GA

10:05--Congregational Hymn

10:10--Offertory Prayer--Joey Hancock, pastor, Ash Street Baptist Church, Forest Park, GA  
Offering

10:15--Special Music--Adult choir, First Baptist Church, Kenner, LA

10:25--Message--Morris Chapman, pastor, First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls, TX

10:50--Congregational Hymn

10:55--Special Music--James Wright

11:10--Message--Jim Hylton, pastor, Lake Country Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, TX

11:35--Benediction--Jack Smith, director of evangelism, Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey

Monday Afternoon, June 13 - Fred Wolfe, presiding

1:30--"Come Before His Presence With Singing"--R.L. and Beth Sigrest, evangelistic singers, Yazoo City, MS

1:40--Prayer--Hayes Wicker, pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Enid, OK  
Congregational Hymn

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1:45--Special Music--Jerry McGrath  
 1:50--Message--Charles Campbell, foreign missionary to Argentina  
 2:15--Congregational Hymn  
 2:20--Special Music--Ray Jones, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Kenner, LA  
 2:25--Message--Ron Herrod, pastor, First Baptist Church, Kenner, LA  
 2:50--Congregational Hymn  
 2:55--Offertory Prayer--Richard Lee, pastor, Rehoboth Baptist Church, Tucker, GA  
     Offering  
     Special Music--Jeoff Benward, evangelistic singer, Houston, TX  
 3:05--Election of Officers  
 3:20--Special Music--New Song  
 3:25--Message--Len Turner, pastor, First Baptist Church, Merritt Island, FL  
 3:50--Congregational Hymn  
 3:55--Special Music--Yoido Women's Choir, Korea  
 4:00--Message--Mike Gilchrist, evangelist, Shreveport, LA  
 4:25--Benediction--Roddy Turner, pastor, Bethel Baptist Church, Greenville, SC

Monday Evening, June 13 - Fred Wolfe, presiding

6:30--"Come Before His Presence With Singing"--Combined adult choirs, Cottage Hill, Mobile, AL  
     First, Kenner, LA, Eastside, Marietta, GA  
 6:45--Prayer--George Worrell, director of evangelism, Missouri Baptist Convention  
     Welcome--Fred Wolfe  
 6:50--Special Music--Jerry McGrath  
 6:55--Message--Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN  
 7:20--Congregational Hymn  
 7:25--Special Music--Jeoff Benward  
 7:30--Message--Edward V. Hill, pastor, Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Los Angeles, CA  
 7:55--Congregational Hymn  
 8:00--Offertory Prayer--Roger D. Roberts, pastor, First Baptist Church, Fairborn, OH  
     Offering  
     Special Music--Adult choir, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, AL  
 8:15--Message--Stephen Olford, evangelist with Encounter Ministries, Wheaton, IL  
 8:40--Introduction of 1984 Officers  
 8:45--Benediction--President of 1983-1984 Pastors' Conference  
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Conference Officers

Fred H. Wolfe, president; pastor, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, AL  
 Ron Herrod, vice president; pastor, First Baptist Church, Kenner, LA  
 Steve Brumbelow, secretary-treasurer; pastor, Cross Lanes Baptist Church,  
     Cross Lanes, WV

Walk Through Park  
 Pastors Meet Feature

Baptist Press  
 3/25/83

PITTSBURGH (BP)--A walk through Point Park, with evangelist Arthur Blessitt carrying a large cross, will be a featured event in the annual Pastors Conference June 12-13 prior to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Blessitt, who made headlines by carrying the cross across the United States, will lead the walk beginning at 4 p.m. Sunday (June 12) which will go through Point Park and end at the Pittsburgh Civic Arena, where the conference will be held.

The Pastors Conference is one of the meetings held in conjunction with the annual convention of the nation's largest protestant denomination, which will meet in the Civic Arena June 14-16.

"We hope the walk through the park will encourage people to come to the conference in the Arena," said Fred H. Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., and president of the Pastors Conference. "We hope to reach some unchurched people. That is the purpose of the walk."

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Wolfe said an art festival will be underway at the park during the walk, and "thousands of people will be there."

"It is our prayer that the walk of the cross will attract the people to the Civic Arena to hear Arthur Blessitt preach and will result in many coming to Christ in salvation," he said.

"We hope a number of people will come and walk with us and the cross," Wolfe said. "It will be a very low key thing...people mingling in the streets. There is no way of knowing how many people will join us, but we are hoping for a good group."

Blessitt will be one of 14 speakers featured at this year's conference. Of those, Wolfe said, 10 have never spoken at the national meeting before. "One of the criticisms (of the conference) has been that the same people speak over and over again. I believe it encourages pastors of smaller churches to be able to speak at the meeting," Wolfe said.

He commented he believes "the Pastors Conference is a time of inspiration and encouragement for the pastors...its purpose is to inspire, encourage and edify the ministers." Another purpose, he added, is "to set a good spiritual climate for the convention."

"I believe it will be a very positive Pastors Conference. We have no axes to grind; we'll just be trying to build a positive spirit going into the convention," he added.

In addition to Blessitt, those who previously have addressed the meeting include Adrian Rogers, former president of the SBC and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tenn.; Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta and Stephen Olford.

Evangelists Mark Stone from Virginia Beach, Va., and Mike Gilchrist of Shreveport, La., and Charles Campbell, a SBC foreign missionary to Argentina, and James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, and president of the 13.9 million member SBC also will speak.

Others on the program include Fred Lowrey, pastor of New Pisgah Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S.C.; Ron Long, pastor of Glenwood Hills Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga.; Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas;

Jim Hylton, pastor of Lake Country Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas; Ron Herrod, pastor of First Baptist Church of Kenner, La., and vice president of the Pastors Conference; Len Turner, pastor of First Baptist Church of Merritt Island, Fla., and Edward V. Hill, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Los Angeles.

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Reagan Prayer Amendment  
Reintroduced In Congress

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press  
3/25/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Reagan's proposed constitutional amendment on prayer in public schools has been reintroduced in the 98th Congress.

Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, introduced the measure, promising early action by his panel. Although the proposal was the subject of three days of hearings last year, the Judiciary Committee took no action on it and the measure died.

In a statement on the Senate floor, Thurmond, a Southern Baptist, attacked the U.S. Supreme Court decisions of 1962 and 1963 that struck down state and local laws requiring prayer and Bible readings in public schools.

The proposed amendment is needed, he said, "to restore the meaning of the First Amendment that had existed throughout most of the nation's history," a meaning Thurmond said was "abruptly upset" by the 1962 and 1963 rulings. He said those decisions in effect overturned "the original intent that Congress be neutral as between religious views," a concept the Supreme Court "transformed into a notion of neutrality between religion and irreligion."

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Thurmond also revived another argument against the high court rulings, declaring the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion was directed to the federal Congress only, not to states and localities.

At the White House, meanwhile, a "Fact Sheet" on the proposed amendment reiterated a point made last year that "the selection of the particular circumstances for prayer would be left to the judgment of local communities based on a consideration of such factors as the preferences of parents, students, teachers, as well as other community interests."

Last May, when the president first indicated he would push the measure, the White House issued a similar document explaining that under the proposal state governments and local school boards would be empowered to write the prayers to be recited.

That statement read in part: "Since the voluntary school prayer amendment will eliminate any federal constitutional obstacle to voluntary school prayer, states and communities would be free to select prayers of their own choosing. They could choose prayers that have already been written, or they could compose their own prayers. If groups of people are to be permitted to pray, someone must have the power to determine the content of such prayers."

Last June, during its annual session in New Orleans, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution supporting the prayer amendment. The resolution declared in part that the proposed amendment "does not constitute a call for government-written or government mandated prayer." The issue is expected to be debated again when the convention meets June 14-16 in Pittsburgh.

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Streamlined Abortion Bill  
Clears Senate Committee

By Larry Chesser

Baptist Press  
3/25/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Senate Judiciary panel has opted for a less restrictive constitutional amendment on abortion than the version proposed by its chairman Sen. Orin G. Hatch, R-Utah.

In a move designed to boost chances of passing the anti-abortion amendment, Hatch joined fellow Republican senators Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Charles E. Grassley of Iowa in agreeing to send the full Judiciary Committee a streamlined version of S.J. Res. 3.

Backers say the one-sentence amendment would simply overturn the controversial 1973 Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade* (that the constitution protects a woman's rights to privacy in making abortion decisions) by declaring the "right to abortion is not secured by this Constitution."

Scuttled in the move were provisions in the Hatch bill which would have allowed state legislatures and Congress to restrict abortion, providing the most restrictive of competing state and federal laws would apply.

The shortened version had been urged at an earlier hearing by Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton, D-Mo., who contended an amendment simply reversing *Roe v. Wade* stood a better chance of passage.

It remains uncertain, however, whether the Hatch-Eagleton compromise will satisfy either side in the long-running, highly emotional abortion debate.

Groups favoring a legislated or constitutional ban on abortion will likely be concerned that the amendment would allow states to pass permissive as well as restrictive abortion laws. Pro-choice groups have already attacked the committee action, with one organization, the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, charging the amendment would substitute "the political judgment of state legislators for the conscientious decision of a woman and her family."

The amendment now goes to the full Judiciary Committee which last year approved the more restrictive Hatch amendment on a 10-7 vote. Senate consideration of the amendment, however, was delayed when the Utah Republican agreed to withdraw his proposal in exchange for a commitment from majority leader Howard H. Baker Jr., R-Tenn., to provide floor action on a constitutional amendment early in the 98th Congress.

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Cooperative Program  
Giving Drops In February

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Cooperative Program gifts to the Southern Baptist Convention last month failed to surpass figures from a year ago for the first time since November 1980.

The national level unified giving program received \$8,858,267 during the month, a drop of .84 percent (\$75,344) from receipts in February 1982. It was only the third time in the past decade for the monthly figures to show a decline.

Major increases from Mississippi (\$412,845) and Florida (\$132,616) were the bright spots for the month, along with the fact that 20 of the 34 state conventions did give more to the national mission and education programs of the conventions than they did a year ago.

The SBC Cooperative Program is still ahead for the fiscal year. Since Oct. 1 receipts have totalled \$42,415,118--an increase of \$2,426,668 (8.8 percent) from the first five months of the 1981-82 fiscal year.

The Northern Plains convention has increased its gifts 78.01 percent so far this year. Other leaders are: Mississippi (35.46 percent), New York (31.61), Pennsylvania-South Jersey (26.82), Colorado (25.2) and Florida (24.48). Overall 30 of the 34 conventions have given more to the SBC Cooperative Program during the last five months than they did a year ago.

At the same time designated giving to specific agencies or causes within the SBC are up 12.45 percent after five months. Most of the \$41,432,132 in designated gifts has been for the Foreign Mission Board (\$39,827,932) through the special Lottie Moon Christmas offering for missions.

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Grandparent's Visitation  
Rights Before Congress

By Gerri Ratliff

Baptist Press  
3/25/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--A House of Representatives committee has approved resolution to protect grandparents' rights to visit their grandchildren.

The resolution, H.Con. Res. 45, calls on the National Conference of Commissions on Uniform State Laws to develop a model state act providing grandparents with the right to petition courts for visitation privileges when the marriage of the grandchildren's parents has ended because of separation, divorce or death.

Requirements of visitation statutes vary from state to state. In 42 states grandparents in certain circumstances have a right to petition courts for visitation privileges, said the sponsor of the resolution, Rep. Mario Biaggi, D-N.Y.

Many grandparents who have been granted visitation privileges in one state find these privileges are not recognized by a sister state, he said. Grandparents are "the often forgotten victims of divorce," Biaggi said. "They have no legal rights to maintain contact with their grandchildren following a divorce."

Some states view the death of a parent as the only circumstance that will allow grandparents the privilege of petitioning courts for access to their grandchildren. Only four states will hear petitions from grandparents whose grandchildren have been adopted by a stepparent. Seven states, however, have no limitations and allow petitions from "any person interested in the welfare of the child."

By encouraging all states to adopt a uniform grandparent visitation act, interstate recognition of awarded visitation rights would be ensured. The resolution has been endorsed by four national grandparents associations and has 55 co-sponsors.

"The resolution addresses the ongoing aftermath of divorces that involve children," said Douglas Anderson, family life specialist with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. "There is a longing for relationships and strong ties that the breaking up of homes can sever."

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