



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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SBC Resolutions Committee
Holds Preliminary Meeting

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--For the first time in recent history, the Southern Baptist Convention Resolutions Committee met prior to the annual meeting to organize, discuss potential resolutions and get acquainted.

Tal Bonham, executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, and chairman of the resolutions committee, told Baptist Press after the two-day session: "This was an orientation meeting, at which we reviewed procedure for presenting resolutions in Pittsburgh.

"President James T. Draper Jr. shared the details of the method which will be used this year at the SBC. The committee got acquainted and spent time in prayer for a harmonious convention. We considered resolutions submitted thus far and discussed possible resolutions that might be submitted.

"We feel this pre-convention meeting will help us do our job better and prevent the previously rushed manner in which the resolutions committee has been required to do its work."

Bonham said the committee, which unanimously approved his statement to the news media, renewed its request that any person desiring to present a resolution to the convention send a copy to the committee by June 6, in order that it might be properly considered.

Written versions of potential resolutions are requested to be sent to Harold C. Bennett, executive director-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, Tenn., 37219.

The 10-member committee, appointed by Draper in January, spent the afternoon-morning session listening to Draper, being oriented by Reginald McDonough, executive committee staffer who works with the committee, and hearing presentations by three agency executives.

James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., discussed church-state concerns with the committee; Foy D. Valentine, executive director of the Christian Life Commission, Nashville, Tenn., talked of social concerns, and William R. O'Brien, executive vice president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va., told members of concerns about the international implications of potential resolutions.

Both Draper and Bonham told Baptist Press the preliminary meeting was made necessary by the increasing number of resolutions introduced at the annual meeting of the convention, to be June 14-16, in Pittsburgh Civic Arena. In 1982, at the New Orleans annual meeting, messengers submitted 46 separate resolutions, which SBC bylaws require the resolutions committee to receive and consider during the three-day meeting.

McDonough, also associate executive secretary and director of program planning for the SBC Executive Committee, pointed out the number of resolutions submitted has grown enormously across the past few years, many of them dealing with opposing positions on volatile social, theological, doctrinal and political issues.

For example, he said, the 46 submitted resolutions was an "all time record" for the SBC. By contrast, at the 1965 annual meeting, only six resolutions were proposed.

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Draper, who outlined changes he plans to make in the introduction of resolutions in Pittsburgh earlier this year, detailed those changes for committee members. He also defined what he considers to be a resolution. "My definition is a traditional one," he said. "A resolution is an expression of opinion...support, dismay, or whatever. A resolution is not a call for action. Any resolution which calls for action will be ruled a motion. A motion is a call for specific action; a resolution is not."

Draper outlined the procedure which will be used in introducing resolutions, noting those persons who submit resolutions in writing to the committee prior to the convention, and then introduce them at the appropriate time, will be given priority consideration by the committee.

He reiterated messengers desiring to introduce resolutions will be required to submit the resolution title, his or her name and the church which elected him or her a messenger at the desk designated for submission of resolutions.

At the designated time in the order of business, Draper said, one of the officers will read the topics of the resolutions and the messengers submitting them, thus introducing them into the business of the convention.

Draper told Baptist Press the change was made in an effort to conserve time, and to "make it as easy as possible for every messenger to be fairly treated. This is not an effort to stifle discussion, but an effort to enlarge it."

Members of the committee include three members of the SBC Executive Committee, as required in the bylaws. They are W. LeRay Fowler, pastor of West University Baptist Church, Houston; Thurmond George, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gilroy, Calif., and Lois Wenger, a member of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla.

Other members are Rudy Hernandez, an evangelist from Catrina, Texas; William Rhodes, an attorney from Atlanta; Joan Tyler, a businesswoman from Collins, Miss.; John Tippet, pastor of Calvary Temple Baptist Church, Savannah, Ga.; W.D. Stogner, a retired associational missionary from Bossier City, La., and Verlin Kruschwitz, a retired pastor and currently professor at Boyce Bible School, Louisville, Ky.

Bonham told Baptist Press he is "very impressed with the committee." He pointed out three members--Tippet, Kruschwitz and George--are former presidents of their state conventions, and George has been president of both the Oklahoma and California conventions. He added Stogner has been a vice president of the Louisiana convention and Hernandez currently is president of the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas.

He added Rhodes, a layman, has been moderator of the Atlanta Baptist Association "one of the largest associations in the SBC."

"All of these people have been very active in their state conventions, in their associations and local churches. All of them come from churches with a good record of missions giving through the Cooperative Program," he added.

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Women In Church Vocations
Meeting Set For Pittsburgh

Baptist Press
5/12/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A special task force on women in church-related vocations has announced a pre-Southern Baptist Convention meeting June 11-12 at the Pittsburgh Hilton.

Anne Davis, assistant professor of social work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and moderator of the ad hoc task force which planned the meeting, said women from a wide spectrum of church-related vocations are expected to attend, including church staff, college and seminary professors and denominational workers and leaders.

"Anyone is invited who is supportive of women in ministry roles and who wants to affirm the call of women in church-related vocations," Davis said. "The purpose of the meeting is for women to get to know each other, to discover what we are about and to decide what shape our

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According to Davis the meeting is an outgrowth of previous Southern Baptist Convention dinner meetings in Houston and New Orleans. "A two-day meeting is a new venture for this group," Davis said. "We are in a direction-finding stage and do not know where we will go with any kind of formal organization."

The meeting begins at 4 p.m., June 11 with a presentation on issues related to ministry of Southern Baptist laywomen. Christine Gregory, president of the Virginia Baptist Convention, will discuss "The Ministry of Southern Baptist Laywomen" and Debra Woodberry, associate minister of Ridge Road Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C., will speak on "Women in Ministry: Identifying Issues."

Reservations for the 5:30 dinner should be sent with a \$15 check by June 1 to Lela Hendrix, at the Christian Life Commission, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, TN 37219. During the dinner Sarah Frances Anders, professor of sociology at Louisiana College, will be facilitator. Then at 7:30 p.m. Reba Cobb, minister to younger youth at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., will lead in "Sharing Our Stories."

Sunday at 8:15 a.m., Anne Neil, emeritus foreign missionary and visiting professor of missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., will look at "The Servant Model" and at 9 a.m., Nancy Sehested, associate minister of Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., will lead the group worship service.

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Woman Shared Faith
In Life and Death

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MIDWEST CITY, Okla. (BP)--In death as in life, Peggy Jones acted on her faith.

A week before she died April 21, the 86-year-old member of Soldier Creek Baptist Church in Midwest City, Okla., asked her pastor to take up a missions offering at her funeral. "She also requested that I be very evangelistic," said Charles McDade, pastor at Soldier Creek.

McDade carried out her wishes, and though the funeral didn't attract a crowd, about \$212 was collected for missions. He sent a check for the amount to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. A widow, Mrs. Jones had been ill and unable to attend church for a number of years. She continued to support it with prayer and money, however. She also included a gospel tract in every letter she mailed.

"Peggy was a delightful person," McDade said. "She was always ready to share about Christ." In her last days she had become friends and shared her faith with a Vietnamese family who moved in next door.

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Baptists Challenged To Pray
For Spiritual Awakening

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
5/12/83

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--"We will not have a vision of revival until we envision the needs of God's creation," insisted Robert Hamblin, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board vice president of evangelism.

Speaking at the Third National Conference on Prayer for Spiritual Awakening, Hamblin said without an understanding of peoples' needs and compassion to meet them, revival will not come. "We must see what God sees," said Hamblin. "We're going to have to see people as the creation of God loved by Jesus Christ."

But, he added, Baptists must do more than see the needs. They must act to meet them. "We have the responsibility of unlocking the hearts of all who are locked up," Hamblin said. "Evangelism and ministry do relate. If you want to witness, you better love and if you love you'll fill the empty souls of the world--you'll see the broken hearts and you'll care."

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Hamblin said the best way to see the needs of people is to pray. He called prayer a "symphony, a sounding together," and called on Baptists to cease striving against one another and work together to accomplish the task of Bold Mission Thrust.

"We can't pray together because we don't trust one another," Hamblin said. "It's keeping us from having a symphony of prayer. Think what would happen if 13 million Southern Baptists believed on the Lord Jesus Christ in a common faith and trusted each other and lifted their voices to God in a common prayer. The earth would be shaken."

Hamblin said it's time for Baptists to extend forgiveness to one another. "Without forgiveness we can't even pray together," he said.

"If we are to see revival, we must learn to pray in the will of God, walk in the spirit of God, and listen to the voice of God," said Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta. Too often Christians "overload God with a lot of verbage," he said, but never listen to God's reply. "What God wants us to hear is far more important than what we just told him."

Though he agreed prayer groups were an important part of bringing spiritual renewal, Stanley said the beginning of revival is with individuals, "If God is going to send an awakening, he's going to send it through individuals. God will have to work in the life of an individual before he can work in the nation."

Stanley cautioned against seeking spiritual highs while failing to communicate God's love. "God didn't make us to live on the mountain tops," he explained. "He made us for the valleys where people are hurting and need the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Grant Adkisson, director of evangelism for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, warned Christians "can have the provision of God without the presence of God." Adkisson read from Exodus chapter 13 how God promised to provide protection and guidance to the Israelites to get to the promised land but said, "I will not go up in the midst of you."

In the Exodus passage the people of Israel put off their ornaments and took time to be alone with God, he pointed out. Christians must strip away all the things that preoccupy their lives and seek God in solitude, he said, but Christians today suffer from traditional approaches to spiritual growth. "People believe they only can find the power of God with a congregation," he explained. "It builds the ego of preachers to say the only place the church can find power from God is from the preacher."

He scolded Baptists for a lack of separateness, saying Christians should have a difference in their lives that draws others to Christ. But, he claimed, "The only difference between us and the lost is we have a different hobby on Sunday."

When Christians begin to seek the face of God as Nehemiah did, they will receive the "desired blessing," Hamblin noted. Nehemiah's request for building materials and a leave of absence were granted by the king after he had sought God's will in prayer.

"God is ready to give us what we need for revival," Hamblin said. "We need to envision this great God who is able to do all things." "Because God will prosper us, we will arise and do what God has called us to do," Hamblin said. "In Nehemiah's case it was to build a wall. In our case it's to take the gospel to every person in the world and make it believable. If we will, the sovereign God is going to bring revival."

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Forty-Member Ohio Church
Gets \$31,000 S.C. Surprise

By Don Kirkland

Baptist Press
5/12/83

ORANGEBURG, S.C. (BP)--"Get out the shovels. That miracle we've been praying for--well, God has done it here."

Arvel Hendrix, pastor of Tod Avenue Baptist Church in Warren, Ohio, delivered that message to his congregation May 1, speaking by telephone from the pulpit of St. George Baptist Church in Orangeburg, S.C.

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Moments earlier the Ohio pastor had received an envelope containing a "letter of encouragement" from St. George church to the 40-member Ohio congregation. Inside was a check for more than \$31,000.

It will enable Tod Avenue to break ground this summer for its own building. The church, organized in 1976, now meets in the offices of the Steel Valley Baptist Association. The church already owned three acres of land, purchased with a Home Mission Board loan.

The check was equal to nearly a third of St. George's annual budget but the gift was given above tithes and offerings.

"This may be the first time this has ever happened, said Bill Tanner, president of the Home Mission Board who was guest speaker at St. George. "It shouldn't be but it probably is. If we could get others to do this, we could build churches all over the convention."

St. George had given financial support for the Ohio church since last summer, but Hendrix and his family were surprised. They had come to Spartanburg, S.C., for a missions conference in late April and knew nothing of the gift. In an emotional display of gratitude to the members at St. George, Hendrix said, "You have brought new life into us."

The pastor at St. George, William E. Boyd, was overjoyed by the success of the one-month drive to raise at least \$30,000 for Tod Avenue's building fund. He called it "the greatest attempt to further the Lord's work that I have ever witnessed in my 25 years in the ministry."

"What makes it even more wonderful," he continued, "is that it was born in the minds of several in our church, not by denominational leadership. It came from the pews."

St. George Baptist Church with 390 resident members (mostly are farmers and dairymen) is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Tanner had been invited 18 months earlier to speak in conjunction with the centennial.

The Orangeburg congregation first became involved with Tod Avenue last summer when 10 members conducted backyard Bible clubs there. "Our people talked with the Hendrix family and saw the great dedication of this couple," Garrick said. "We began to talk about what part we could play in their work. They had people but no building and we felt like we had so much."

The church voted to send \$100 per month to Tod Avenue and during the fall St. George's youth contributed \$300 to the Ohio congregation building fund. In March, Hendrix and his wife spoke at St. George for Home Missions emphasis. St. George had already given more than \$2,300 for the Annie Armstrong Offering after setting a record goal of \$2,000.

Boyd and Garrick talked about Tod Avenue's need, deciding a church building was more important than a \$100 per month. Hendrix had said earlier Tod Avenue could get help through the Ohio Brotherhood's Builder's for Christ project if \$20,000 could be raised for materials.

The deacons at St. George endorsed the project and pledged their financial support. Garrick's Sunday school class and the senior adults group also contributed.

Later the project was presented to the church but no vote was taken. "We decided to just inform the people as to what was taking place," Boyd explained, "and invite others in the church to give if they wanted to. It would be purely a love offering."

Gifts ranged from \$2,000 from one family to 10 cents given by a young girl. More than 80 percent of the active members contributed to the project.

While taking the offering, St. George's Annie Armstrong Offering went \$300 over the goal and budget gifts which are supposed to be \$2,100 per week averaged \$2,150.