



--FEATURES

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Stereotypes Discussed
By Pastors' Wives

By Karen Benson

AMARILLO, Texas (BP)--Pastors' wives should be at church every time the doors open.

They should treat each church member exactly the same and not have any special friends in the congregation, keep sparkling clean houses and have well-disciplined children, not work outside the home and never say "no" when asked to assume church duties.

Some pastors' wives dispute those stereotypes: "Sometimes the church looks on me as superwoman," said Pat Hickman, wife of the pastor of Dawn Baptist Church, Dawn, Texas.

Hickman, part-time high school teacher, said teaching, keeping a clean house, being a good wife and mother and remaining active in church activities "does create stress--I have a point that I just can't go anymore."

To cope with the stresses of her role as wife, mother, pastor's wife and teacher, Hickman started a support system with three other couples. The foursome meets once a month for dinner and fellowship.

"It's difficult to find a place where you can really let down," she said. "I'm not saying we get together and just go wild, but when we get together, we're not looked upon by these couples as being in a position that's different from all other people in town. We've had marvelous things come out of our meetings."

Learning to say "no" when asked to assume church responsibilities has helped her alleviate stress, she said. "If I'm not careful, I can come to resent the church because of the demands on time I need to spend with my family," she said. "I'm learning to say 'no,' and be very selective in what I choose to do. I've found when I do say 'no,' the church is very understanding and supportive."

Elizabeth Moore, wife of the pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, and "first lady" of the Baptist General Convention of Texas following her husband's election as president, said she has "never tried to do everything everyone else wanted me to do." Instead she asks for the "privilege of praying about it"--the same privilege she offers others when asking them to assume responsibilities.

She suggested pastors' wives should come to recognize the "fringe benefits" of their positions and enjoy all the extra "perks" that are showered on the pastor and his family. Accepting and enjoying gifts and extra attention from church members often can offset feelings of frustration or stress, she said.

For times of "refreshing," Moore said she has been involved through the years in organizations outside the church such as the Symphony Guild and the YMCA's Heart Fund and Kidney Foundation fund-raising drives. She also regularly exercises, including daily walks, swimming and floor exercises.

"I do think people stereotype preachers' wives. In some places, she's expected to be almost a non-person, to be there every time the door is open, to participate in every program, to try to do anything she's asked to do. If you try to fit into that stereotyped role, I think you'll become very frustrated," she said.

Moore said she came to terms in recent years with one of the most prevalent stereotypes--a pastor and his wife could have no special friends within the church, but must treat every church member equally.

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"All the years I felt that, I felt a void in my life," she said. But one day, she realized, although Jesus Christ made himself available to everybody and ministered to all, he had 12 chosen people who were close to him.

Of those 12, he had three intimate friends, and of those three, John was the "beloved one," she said. "From that point on, I quit denying myself that privilege. I have found I can be available and can minister to all, but I CAN have special friends."

Not only does she have close friends within the church, she has developed relationships outside the church, as well, she said. "I don't think you should shut yourself up within the four walls of the church."

Rosemary Wade, pastor's wife at First Baptist Church, Arlington, Texas, said she usually deals with stress and stereotypes "head on." "I don't live in a glass house," she said. "We make decisions by how we feel God is leading, not because we're the pastor's family." She has found the most successful way of dealing with stress is to "be yourself and let God help you in any improvements you need to make in your life. Don't try to be someone else."

Friends, too, are important to her, she said. "I can't live without them. Friends mean the world to me." When conflicts or demands do arise, "I don't hesitate to express my feelings. I love going to church and I love God's people, but there are many times I feel I need to stay at home for my own good, or for the good of my family."

If a pastor is under stress, then the pastor's wife is, too, said Betty Blevins, pastor's wife at Central Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas. "I felt definitely called into full-time Christian service and if you have that commitment and calling, it makes a difference in handling stress. There is a spiritual help in dealing with stress," she said.

If a pastor's wife doesn't feel that sense of call, "then they'll feel frustrated," she said. "All ministers' wives have different gifts and different talents, and the church ought to let them find that place of service."

"I think every person who works within a church needs to pray about their special responsibility and involvement in a church and determine what God would have them do. It's important we all be filling God's will in our lives, not just the pastor or pastor's wife."

As an artist who maintains a watercolor business from her home, Blevins said pastors' wives must learn to become "masters of time." Her professional responsibilities have "never been a problem" with her church, she said. "You just have to learn to manage your time."

Pastors' wives also need to acknowledge criticism is just part of the job. "If you're going to be in the public eye, you're going to receive criticism. You might as well face it and develop an attitude in which you don't let it bother you. Most things in life are handled by attitude," Blevins said.

Cheri Slocum, pastor's wife at Highland Baptist Church, Amarillo, said she has observed a lot of women have misconceptions about the role of a pastor's wife, so they "go into it with that attitude and it makes it harder for them." She said she has found "it's as good as you let it be and it's as hard as you let it be."

Donna Vernon, pastor's wife at First Baptist Church, Panhandle, Texas, said she copes with stress by "just trying to be me...I don't feel many churches squeeze you into a mold unless you let them."

For Yolanda Moore, pastor's wife of Plantation Acres Chapel, Amarillo, "it's a real juggling act" to handle the time demands of her church responsibilities, her full-time career with Texas Employment Commission, her husband's full-time profession and the needs of her family. "It takes a lot of physical energy," she said. She said she has found brisk walking and doing needlepoint offer needed outlets for the time stresses.

There's also another secret pastors' wives have discovered, she said with a smile. "We take our One-A-Day religiously!"

Togolese Villages Prove
Fertile Soil For Gospel

MORETAN, Togo (BP)--Tears--rare in Togo--slipped down the cheeks of a Togolese soldier as he watched a film on the life of Jesus.

Most of the 5,700 who saw the film had never heard the name of Jesus before. But as 446 people made professions of faith in Christ within a week, Southern Baptist missionary Mike Key called the experience a "dream come true."

The film was shown during three weeks of evangelistic services in preparation for a North Carolina-Togo partnership missions project in the Ogou region of the West African nation.

Key and Jacob Agbeletti, Togolese Baptists' evangelism director, led a team of 24 Togolese in witnessing and leading worship services in five villages.

Baptists targeted the area for evangelism and the partnership missions project after Key visited there and reported the entire region was unchurched. He learned a Christian group witnessed in one of the villages 30 years earlier, but left after a dispute with village leaders.

During services in Moretan, the region's major market village, 60 people made professions of faith the first night. Villagers served team members the local corn drink and gave them a case of soft drinks and a sheep to eat. "When we do these three things, it shows that we really like you," said the village authorities.

One Christian woman was especially glad Baptists had come. She and her husband had been traveling 35 kilometers to the nearest church. "It will make me so happy if you establish a church here; we will come," she said. The next Sunday, 145 people met under a grove of trees to organize the first Baptist church in Moretan.

The second week, the team members held services in Kamina, where the Ife tribe's traditional religion originated. No Christians had ever witnessed in the village. The first night, the village chief and a sub-chief were among the 85 who became Christians.

That Sunday, 200 villagers held their first church service in a school and then marched out behind the newly converted chief singing, "Life is found in Jesus. It is given to everyone...."

When the procession ended at the chief's hut, the chief asked team members whether he would have to destroy his idols. One team member replied, "If your leg is hurt you will need a cane, but if your leg gets well, will you need the cane anymore?" The chief understood.

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Fall HMB Commissioning
Held For 84 Missionaries

By Patti Stephenson

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11/14/83

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)--Eighty-four missionaries and missionary associates serving in 24 states, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico were recently commissioned by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board at First Baptist Church, Marietta, Ga.

The Sunday morning service, one of two held in Atlanta congregations each year, coincided with the observance of the church's 148th anniversary.

The commissioned personnel work in the HMB's programs of church extension, evangelism, black church relations, special mission ministries, Christian social ministries, metropolitan missions, rural-urban missions and language missions.

John Schexnayder Jr., commissioned as a new church starter in Buffalo, Iowa, related he once was so shy "I couldn't pray out loud in church." Support from his church, Baptist seminary professors and Home Mission Board leaders has confirmed "God has really called me," Schexnayder said. He urged Baptists to "be open to God's call and let him surprise you, too."

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Dianne Green Smith recounted growing up as one of six children in a two-room New Orleans house. "I grew up with young pregnant women all around me," she observed. "Some of these girls are poor, some rich, some are even deacons' daughters, but all need love and support." She now serves at Sellers Baptist Home and Adoption Center in New Orleans, which provides care for unwed mothers and offers adoption services.

Wayne Dyer, a Maine native appointed through rural-urban missions, noted "where we're going in New York there are people who've never been to church, who've never read the Bible. That's why we're going and that's why Southern Baptists are sending us there through the Cooperative Program and with their prayers."

HMB President William G. Tanner praised the missionaries' "reservoir of faith and resoluteness" but reminded them they are serving "down in the valleys where the people are." The valley can be "an island like Puerto Rico, or inner-city Chicago or an Arizona Indian reservation, but the needs of the people are the same. They all need Christ," Tanner said.

The largest number, 46, were commissioned as new church starters. Their names and assignments are: Franklin and Susan Beam, Houston, Texas; Richard and Linda Blount, New Haven, Ind.; Stuart and Jeanette Cundiff, Goshen, Ind.; David and Katherine Edmonds, San Jose, Calif.; Floren and Barbara Fisher, Lewiston, Maine; Marvin and Janet Foltz, Kansas City, Mo.; Byron and Scharlee Glenn, Dickinson, N.D.; Rickey and Jeannie Greene, Englewood, Fla.; Robert and Carol Hodges, Kansas City, Mo.; James and Patsy Holland, Tahlequah, Okla.; Charles and Marcia Jones, Maumee, Ohio;

William Sean and Sarah Lee, Minot, N.D.; Michael and Mary McLerren, New Salem, N.D.; Terry and Sandra Minchow-Proffitt, Sandy, Utah; Ricky and Sharon Ogston, Buford, Ga.; Wayne and Cindy Parker, Big Rapids, Mich.; John and Judy Schexnayder Jr., Buffalo, Iowa; James and Nancy Ann Townzen Sr., Richfield, Utah; Richard and Cynthia Wallin, Columbia, Ind.; Spencer and Ivy Walwyn, Christianstead, St. Croix, Virgin Islands; James and Catherine Ward, Dateland, Ariz., and Keith and Cindy Wilson, Clovis, Calif.

Pedro and Irma Aviles work in evangelism in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. Gladys and Hickman Johnson serve in black church relations in Jackson, Miss. Robert and Brenda Smith conduct special mission ministries in Minneapolis, Minn.

Thirteen serving in Christian social ministries are: Dianne Green Smith, New Orleans, La.; Jack and Jackie Bettis, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Michael and Janice Elliott, Louisville, Ky.; Alan and Sean Gilley, Marietta, Ga.; Warren and Mary Ann Hart, Belton, Texas; Forrest and Betty Jo Smith, Corpus Christi, Texas, and Patricia and Raymond Bailey. She serves in Chicago, Ill., while he remains professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Assigned through metropolitan missions are Richard and Lila Risas, who serve the Western Massachusetts Baptist Association, and Robert and Margaret Rooks, Central Coast Baptist Association, California.

Wayne and Martha Jean Dyer serve in Davis Baptist Association, New York, through rural-urban missions.

Thirteen commissioned for language missions outreach include: Marcos Castro, Albuquerque, N.M.; Mike Chiew, New York, N.Y.; Mary High, St. Augustine, Fla.; Vicente and Conchita Co, Houston, Texas; Marcus and Sylva Rego, Portland, Ore.; Antonio and Renee Rengifo, Norman, Okla.; C. Edward and Elizabeth Richardson, Puerto Rico, and Moses and Marilyn Valdes, Augusta, Ga.

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Southern Seminary Receives
Land Gift Worth \$600,000

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11/14/83

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The Gheens Foundation of Louisville has deeded to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., a one-third interest in a tract of undeveloped real estate valued at more than \$1.8 million.

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When the property is sold, the seminary is expected to receive at least \$600,000. The remaining two-thirds of the estate will go to the University of Louisville for capital construction needs.

This latest gift brings to \$1.4 million the contributions of the foundation to Southern Seminary within the past year.

Earlier, at the encouragement of its late chairman, Mary Jo Gheens Hill, the foundation committed \$500,000 to endow the C. Edwin Gheens Chair of Christian Family Ministry. Another \$250,000 trust was established to provide annual support for the Gheens Lectures, a series of campus presentations by distinguished international scholars.

Hill, who died in 1982, was the widow of C. Edwin Gheens, a Louisville industrialist. She previously had given her home and its estate furnishings to the seminary. That gift ultimately will add more than \$1 million to the seminary's endowment fund.

Hill, her husband and her father-in-law served on the seminary board of trustees for a period of 90 years.

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Centurymen Concert
Makes Chinese History

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press
11/14/83

BEIJING, China (BP)--The Centurymen made Chinese history Nov. 5, becoming the first group from outside the People's Republic of China to perform in the Radio Beijing Music Hall.

The Centurymen, a 100-voice men's chorus sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC), are on a 17-day cultural exchange tour of China. The performance in the Radio Beijing Music Hall was the last Chinese stop for the tour, which was to conclude with two performances in Hong Kong.

For the concert in Beijing, the Centurymen were joined by musicians from the China Conservatory of Music, which specializes in traditional Chinese music. There has been a renewed interest recently among the Chinese in the indigenous musical instruments and styles of their country. The Conservatory musicians performed ancient folk music of China, while the Centurymen sang American folk music.

The two groups achieved another musical first during the concert, introducing a new synthesis of traditional Chinese music and choral of Western tradition. As the Centurymen sang American folk and Christian songs, the Conservatory orchestra accompanied them with ancient Chinese instruments.

Songs like "I Am Bound For The Promised Land" and "Who'll Be A Witness?" took on a new sound with Chinese instrumentation, which Centurymen director, Buryl Red, likened to American mountain music.

Red and Chinese conductor-composer Huang Xiao-Fei collaborated to compose and conduct the music, which was received with a standing ovation from the Chinese audience.

Radio Beijing recorded the concert for use on their English language broadcast. Television crews from the American Christian Television System (ACTS) and NBC have videotaped each of the Centurymen's concerts for use on American TV.

"The event takes on added importance when one considers that millions of people all over the nation and the world will be hearing this music with its new sound and its significant message," said RTVC President Jimmy R. Allen.

The Centurymen also performed before a standing-room-only crowd at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing Nov. 4. After several encores, the group ended the concert with "Stars and Stripes Review."

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"The horror stories of the Cultural Revolution seemed long ago and far away as the voices of the Centurymen sang 'Amazing Grace' in the People's Republic of China," said Ralph Tacker, a Dallas businessman and former Mission Service Corp volunteer with the RTVC who assisted in the China tour.

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HMB Honors Volunteers;
Reports 47,000 Involved

By Jim Newton

Baptist Press
11/14/83

ATLANTA (BP)--During a luncheon honoring Atlanta-area volunteers, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staff reported almost 47,000 volunteers were involved last year in missions work sponsored by the national missions agency.

Since 1977, when the Southern Baptist Convention launched its Bold Mission Thrust program, there has been a 100 percent increase in the number of volunteers involved in home missions, said Don Hammonds, director of the HMB special mission ministries department.

There is no way possible to calculate the number of hours these volunteers devote to missions or the millions of dollars they save the mission board, but it is "staggering," said Mike Robertson, associate director of the department.

Home Mission Board President William G. Tanner paid tribute to a group of about 50 Atlanta area church members who work as volunteers at the board's Atlanta offices, saying they were symbolic of more than 268,000 persons who have served as home mission volunteers since 1976.

"There is no way in the world we could pay these devoted people on a scale comparable to what they earn in business," Tanner said. "Yet there is also no way we could get the job of home missions done without their help."

Tanner predicted the role and importance of the volunteer will be increasingly significant to the Home Mission Board in the future.

Robertson added about 5,000 SBC churches worked with the Home Mission Board last year, yet the number of churches involved ought to double to 10,000 or more.

About 750 churches sent 30,000 young people to work in mission youth group projects through the Home Mission Board, the largest single category of volunteers.

An additional 8,700 adults worked as short-term Christian Service Corps volunteers, more than three times the number reported in 1980.

An additional 5,000 adults were involved in evangelism programs related to the board, said Reid Hardin, director of the agency's evangelism support department.

More than 2,600 students worked last year in such programs as student summer missions, semester missions, innovators, and special projects other than summer (SPOTS).

Hammonds said these volunteers worked in a variety of projects and roles, including backyard Bible clubs, vacation Bible schools, day care, day camping, community surveys, preaching, mission center work, street ministries, music, Big A clubs, recreation, personal evangelism, leadership training, construction, teaching, chaplaincy, counseling, starting new churches, resort missions and general missions and evangelism work.

Hammonds distributed an explanation of 15 different programs sponsored by the Home Mission Board utilizing either long-term (one year or more) or short-term volunteers who receive no financial support from the board.

Such programs include Christian Service Corps (less than one year), Mission Service Corps (one year or longer), "Messengers of the Word" (for language volunteers), PRAXIS teams (for seminary students), renewal groups, witness training volunteers, evangelists, crusade consultants, mission youth groups, Sojourners, Innovators, student summer missions, student semester missions and SPOTS.

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Hammonds pointed out there is a great deal of confusion among Baptists about the differences between the various types of volunteer programs. The HMB is seeking to overcome this through better communication and closer cooperation between leaders of these programs coordinated by a newly-created HMB volunteer council.

This year, for example, the board changed its Christian Service Corps program, often confused with Mission Service Corps, to include both individual and adult groups who serve for any period of time less than one year. In the past, Christian Service Corps long-term volunteers could serve for several years by supporting themselves financially through secular employment.

Now, however, any adult volunteer serving more than one year will come under the Mission Service Corps, which has a new "Tentmaker" subcategory for those who finance their support through secular employment.

David Bunch, Mission Service Corps coordinator for the HMB, observed most volunteers don't really know or care about what programs are available, but respond quickly to specific mission needs through the first program that opens.

Bunch gave a profile of volunteers, saying in Mission Service Corps, one-third are under 30 years of age, one-third are between 30 and retirement and one-third are retired. Most are well-trained by their churches, and there is a high percentage of college graduates and highly trained technicians.

Geographically, about 40 percent of the MSC personnel come from Texas and most serve in areas where Southern Baptist work is new.

Bunch said 60 percent of the short-term volunteers are female, half are willing to go anywhere and do anything and 90 percent are willing to pay all their expenses.

Among student missionaries, two-thirds are female, one of 15 is ethnic or black, and among youth groups, 70 percent come from upper or middle class homes yet work with the underprivileged.

Hammonds pointed out several trends, including data that indicate about 70 percent of adult volunteers are repeaters, 50 percent of the youth groups serve again and 11 percent of the student summer missionaries are repeaters.

Other trends, Hammonds said, indicate more men and church staff members are volunteering, more specialized skills are being utilized, more people are going and staying longer, more families spend time together as volunteers, more churches are assisting volunteers and more requests for volunteers are received from an increasing percentage of missionaries.

Hammonds said there has been good response to publication of specific needs for volunteers in mission magazines, but most Baptists are still unaware of the specific needs and ways they can respond.

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Baptists In Michigan
Cautiously Up Budget

Baptist Press
11/14/83

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (BP)--Messengers to the 26th annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan expressed cautious optimism in the return of a stronger economy by adopting a \$2,407,369 budget for 1984.

The budget reflects a 5.5 percent increase, down from the 9.5 percent increase adopted last year.

Convention officials say while 1983 receipts are 7.6 percent above 1982, they are still below the 1983 budget. Estimates are, at the end of the calendar year, Michigan Baptists will have contributed 8 percent above last year, but about \$160,000 below the budget.

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The 5.5 percent increase in the 1984 budget indicates convention planners believe Michigan may be coming out of the recession. One official pointed to the fact unemployment has declined from 14.5 percent to 12 percent.

Of the \$2.4 million budget, \$1,394,089 is expected to come from the 197 churches and 64 church-type missions affiliated with the convention.

Messengers approved sending \$268,519--or 26.5 percent--to worldwide causes through the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program. That is a half percent increase over 1983, the 13th consecutive year Michigan Baptists have upped contributions by a half percent.

In other action, Michigan Baptists elected Carl Petty, pastor of Westside Baptist Church of Flint, as president. He was first vice president last year. Messengers also elected David French, pastor of Warren Wood Baptist Church in suburban Detroit, as first vice president.

Messengers adopted resolutions commending the legislature for passing a bill opposing state funding for abortion on demand. The resolution urged Gov. James Blanchard to sign the bill into law.

Another resolution dealt with the removal of "sexist language" from the Bible, expressing "abhorrence" to the attempt to change holy scripture by altering the text.

It "warned all Christian people of this false and destructive biblical lexionary," embraced all "legitimate translations" and called on "all men to search the riches of God's holy word through daily study."

The 1984 annual meeting will be Nov. 13-15 in Warren (Mich.) Baptist Church.

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Taped Sermon Convinces
Church To Call Unseen Pastor

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
11/14/83

HOGANSVILLE, Ga. (BP)--Highland Baptist Church and Ray Vowell were taped together. Literally.

The Hogansville congregation, located south of Atlanta, had been looking for a pastor for three months and the pulpit committee had heard numerous preachers before a cassette tape from Kingsville, Texas, ended the search.

Walker Boswell, chairman of the pulpit committee, stopped by the church one May day for a one-man prayer meeting. Kneeling at the altar he pleaded, "Lord, give us a pastor. I know you have the right man for us."

Almost immediately the church phone rang. Bobby Robinson, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in La Grange, Ga., had just heard a friend from high school days would be in the area the next week and thought the Highland committee might want to hear him.

The committee contacted Vowell at his father's La Grange home, visited with him and heard him preach the following Sunday at Unity Baptist Church.

Vowell, pastor of University Baptist Church in Kingsville, Texas (south of Corpus Christi), was not looking for another church but the Highland group asked him to pray about it.

The committee worried about expenses, however, since, if Vowell were called by the church, the cost of moving him to Georgia would be high. Rather than fly Vowell back in a few weeks to preach at Highland in view of a call, the committee asked if he had any tapes of his sermons.

He had a supply of University Baptist Church's tape ministry cassettes so the committee selected four at random. The next Sunday approximately 200 people sat in the sanctuary of Highland and listened to a tape recorder placed on an empty pulpit.

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Then, without anyone having laid eyes on Vowell except the pulpit committee members, the church voted unanimously to call him as pastor.

Vowell and his wife, Faye, arrived July 10, compliments of modern technology and the willingness of a Southern Baptist church to take a tape recording for the real thing.

In the last four months average attendance has grown from 88 to 140 and Vowell has baptized 18 converts.

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D.C. Convention Stresses
Long-Range Objectives

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press
11/14/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--In sessions characterized by calm deliberations on long-range goals and action plans, the District of Columbia Baptist Convention unanimously adopted a set of objectives through 1989.

In other actions, 321 delegates from 46 of the convention's 68 congregations passed resolutions on hunger, peace and a proposal in Congress to allow President Reagan to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican.

The D.C. convention became the second state convention aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention in the past two years to elect a black man president. Everard Hughes, associate pastor at Takoma Park Baptist Church, was elected without opposition. Elected vice president, and by D.C. tradition expected to be elected president next year, was Norman Taylor, a layman from First Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md.

Outgoing president Mark Caldwell, pastor of University Baptist Church, College Park, Md., saw two years of intense self-study by a long-range planning committee rewarded as delegates approved five major objectives to carry the convention through the next five years.

First among the objectives will be establishment of five new mission churches and 15 new Sunday schools and/or Bible study fellowships. An objective of enhancing Christian discipleship in the churches will be supported by 13 specific goals.

Other objectives will be extension of specialized ministries to the end of "loving and serving the whole person," major initiatives in evangelistic outreach, and an enhanced effort at interchurch cooperation. The D.C. convention, alone among SBC-related state units, is dually aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches, USA.

In a resolution on hunger in D.C., delegates urged continuation of food distribution programs by the U.S. Department of Agriculture from stockpiles of surplus food products.

A broadly worded statement on world conflict called attention to tensions in the Middle East and Central America and to deterioration in U.S.-Soviet relations. It urged all nations involved to "seek more intensely to resolve their differences through negotiation" rather than pursuing military action.

The statement opposing appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican declared the move "would raise all kinds of constitutional problems" and "could result in a favored position for one religious faith."

Delegates also approved a proposed 1984 budget of \$663,249, of which \$424,818 is expected to come from D.C. churches. The latter figure includes both designated and undesignated anticipated receipts. From undesignated funds, five percent is sent to the American Baptist Churches and five percent to the Southern Baptist Convention. Several D. C. churches, however, designate their funds to SBC causes only, making the percentage of total gifts to SBC causes significantly higher.

Next year's meeting will be held Nov. 8-9 at the First Baptist Church of Washington.

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Arizona Nixes Requirement
Of Associational Membership

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Arizona Southern Baptists declined to require churches be members of local associations in order to belong to the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

The change in membership requirements was included in a proposed new constitution for the ASBC. Instead, with no discussion, messengers approved an amendment which continued the present membership requirements based on a church's following "New Testament standards of principle and policy" and being "loyal to the full program of the body by gifts and service."

The new constitution was then approved after a few other minor changes for clarity.

Messengers also approved the presentation of a long range planning document which will take the convention through 1989. The three-year study involved state convention and church leaders in the state, along with the Southern Baptist Sunday School and Home Mission Boards and includes objectives, specific goals and over 235 action plans to reach the goals.

The seven objectives which will be the focus of the work of the convention in the coming year are: new work, evangelism, developing believers, strengthening pastors and other staff members, strengthening associations, ministering to churches and cooperating in world missions.

Messengers approved a \$3.8 million 1984 convention budget, an 8.99 percent increase over 1983. The budget includes a .25 percent increase, to 26 percent, in Cooperative Program funds sent to the worldwide mission and education programs of the Southern Baptist Convention.

All resolutions presented by the resolutions committee were unanimously approved with no amendments and almost no discussion.

Three resolutions opposed the use of alcoholic drinks as a beverage, expressed support for raising the legal drinking to 21 and voiced appreciation to Governor Bruce Babbitt, the state legislature and Department of Public Safety for passage and enforcement of the new drunk driving law.

Others denounced gambling and pornography, asked churches and the state convention to "provide material on humanism and how we can counteract the materialistic, atheistic philosophy that is becoming so prevalent in our society today" and expressed concern for the institution of the family.

A resolution on religious liberty expressed concern about "the suppression of religious liberty either by the establishment of religion or by the denial of free exercise" and recognized the United States Constitution and First Amendment as adequate and sufficient guarantees to protect religious freedom.

Clark Johnson, pastor of Royal Palms Baptist Church, Phoenix, was elected to a second term as president; Beth McGhee, a lay person from Twenty-Second Street Baptist Church, Tucson, was elected first vice president; Jack DeVore, minister to senior adults at First Southern Baptist Church, Glendale, was elected second vice president, and Eugene Virt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sun City, was reelected recording secretary.

The 1984 annual meeting will be Nov. 6-7 in Tucson at Emmanuel Baptist Church.