

SEP 24 1984

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention



-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

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

September 21, 1984

84-136

Church, Cancer Victim
Shared In Ministry

By Art Toalston

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—For three months, an unusual church and an unusual pastor and wife joined forces.

It began May 13 when the Mt. Nebo Baptist Church in Lockwood, Mo., called Jeff Hughes as pastor, knowing that he was battling cancer. Hughes worked until he died Aug. 18.

Two other churches had considered Hughes, but shied away after he told them he may have just a few months to live. "I think it would have been a sin if we had turned him down," Mt. Nebo member Bill Lasater said. "If a man wants to work for the Lord, let him work as long as he can."

The 28-year-old pastor's cancer of the pancreas was discovered in March. He finished his master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in May.

"There are very few churches that would do what they have done," Hughes' wife, Pat, said of Mt. Nebo. "Several members told him, 'We knew you were the man for our church before we even met you.' And they would say, 'You're with us as long as you live. Even if you were to think about resigning, we wouldn't accept it.'"

Hughes told his wife, "The Lord is either going to heal me or he's being very good to me in my last days." His gratitude is reflected in his choice of a burial plot a mile north of Mt. Nebo, rather than in his hometown, Springfield, Mo.

The congregation of 100, likewise, remains grateful for Hughes' brief tenure as pastor. "He loved ev rybody and everybody loved him," said Mt. Nebo member Donna Watson, who helped with around-the-clock care that Hughes needed the several weeks before he died. "He was just a super person, spiritually as well as personally."

"He nev r once was angry at God; he was angry at cancer," Mrs. Watson continued. "He never once doubted the Lord and his love. He had questions, just as anyone would, as to why," but he kept "thinking of others, for Pat or for the church."

"He surely was a witness for the Lord," Lasater said. "He had as much faith as any man I've ever known." The two Sunday mornings before Hughes died, he could preach only from a wheelchair, "and if that isn't faith, I don't know what is," Lasater said.

"There's no way to tell how many people were influenced by him," said Mt. Nebo member Joan Shouse, secretary for the Barton-Dade Baptist Association.

"The witness Jeff had had such a wide scope in this area," and at Mt. Nebo, she said, "Th people are closer together as a church family. Lots of us feel that maybe he was sent to our church not for him to minister to us, but for us to minister to him."

"It has been just the perfect church," Mrs. Hughes said of Mt. Nebo. "They accepted us. They really care, and I'm planning on staying here in the church and in this community."

—30—

(Art Toalston is co-news director at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.)

DARGAN-CARVER LIBRARY
S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Anti-Gambling Leaders
Plan National Strategy

By David Wilkinson

WASHINGTON (BP)—Anti-gambling activists from 13 states and the District of Columbia formulated strategy for nationwide opposition to the spread of legalized gambling during a two-day conference in the nation's capital.

Larry Braidfoot of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission told participants the threat of "a major advance" by gambling interests required "new vigilance at the national level" by opponents of legalized gambling.

The conference, sponsored by the Christian Life Commission as a follow-up to a consultation on gambling held last year in Nashville, Tenn., brought together representatives of different denominational offices and anti-gambling organizations.

Speakers included a Connecticut prosecutor with extensive experience in investigations of illegal gambling and a sociologist who has studied the socio-economic impact of state-sponsored lottery.

Formation of Southern Baptist relationships with anti-gambling groups has become "essential," according to Braidfoot, because of the national strategy of gambling proponents. Without such cooperation, added one state representative, pro-gambling forces "will pick us off state by state."

Braidfoot has led Southern Baptist opposition to federal legislation sponsored by Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.) and three other lawmakers from Nevada. The Senate and House bills, dubbed by a Senate aide as the "Nevada Relief Bill," would amend existing legislation to allow casinos and state-sponsored lotteries to advertise across state lines, even in states which now prohibit such gambling activities.

"The financing of a casino and of racetracks with tax shelters and tax-exempt industrial bonds is bad enough," Braidfoot said, but the Laxalt legislation "would be catastrophic."

Sociologist Mark Abrahamson of the University of Connecticut described the results of an intensive study of that state's lottery. The research, he said, found the lottery—particularly the daily numbers game—to be a regressive form of taxation that exploited the poor and ethnic minorities.

By promoting the lottery, Abrahamson noted, "the same state that urged people to stay in school, seek job training and persevere through hard work and sacrifice also encouraged the fatalistic belief people's lives could change dramatically if their numbers came up in the lottery. The state was selling one message with its right hand and another with its left."

Abrahamson's study was fiercely attacked by gambling industry leaders, the state's gaming regulatory agency and gambling supporters in the legislature. Lawmakers who had commissioned the study, he said, "got more than they bargained for."

Austin McGuigan, chief state's attorney for the state of Connecticut, echoed Abrahamson's assessment of the lottery and other forms of gambling.

McGuigan pointedly refuted claims that legalization of gambling reduces the influence of organized crime. Investigations of jai alai betting and other gambling activities, he said, convinced him that even legalized gambling is a "dirty business."

McGuigan said "There is no way to keep the gambling business clean," despite claims that it can be regulated. "Illegal gambling," he said, "has grown every year since Connecticut brought in so-called legalized gambling."

Missionary's Child Killed, Another Injured In Car Accident

NEW YORK (BP)—One daughter of Baptist Convention of New York Language Missions Director Manuel Alonso was killed and another injured in a car accident in New York Sept. 15.

Christi Ann Alonso, seven, died of head injuries sustained when the car driven by her grandmother was struck by a car which had run a red light.

The grandmother is listed in good condition; four-year-old Nicole Alonso also sustained head injuries and remains in guarded condition in a New York hospital.

Another child passenger was injured but has been released from the hospital.

A memorial service for Christi Ann was held at Calvary Baptist Church in Medford, Long Island. Memorial gifts were placed in a Christi Ann Alonso Memorial Fund established by the Baptist Convention of New York.

Alonso has been the state language missions leader for New York since 1978. He was pastor of Taylor Memorial Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., and Second Spanish English Baptist Church in San Francisco, before joining the New York Baptist convention staff.

--30--

Preachers Again Lead List Of Needed Missionaries

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
9/21/84

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—In a continuing strategy to start new churches overseas, Southern Baptist foreign missionaries are asking three-fourths of the new missionaries named during the next year be preachers and church developers.

Out of 589 of their most urgent requests this year, the missionaries are bidding for 449 seminary-trained people. They want 293 of them to be preachers.

The requests reflect a Foreign Mission Board emphasis on evangelism that results in churches, as part of Bold Mission Thrust—a plan to help reach everyone in the world with the gospel by the year 2000. They were outlined Sept. 13-14 in an annual meeting of Foreign Mission Board human resources and overseas office staffers.

Meeting participants stressed missionary candidates recommended for appointment need to be soul-winners. "They must have compassion for the lost," said Charles Bryan, senior vice-president for overseas operations. "If they don't have this, they're not going to be involved in our primary thrust."

Staffers also outlined priority needs for auxiliary personnel, including journeymen and volunteers. Journeymen are college graduates under age 27 commissioned for two-year assignments, mostly in support roles.

The overseas call for volunteers has grown the past few years. "Instead of having to try to convince missionaries to use volunteers, now they're asking, 'Where are they?'" said Ron Boswell, director of the volunteer enlistment department. The board is continuing partnership mission projects involving 17 states and 29 countries scattered throughout the world, he added.

Last year FMB area directors asked missionaries to pare requests to the most critical needs. Requests for new missionaries now call for only those who fit into a specific strategy for the area of the world to which they will be assigned.

About half of last year's total priority needs—and 55 percent of 1983 priority needs for seminary-trained people—are filled or are on hold for candidates anticipating appointment.

--more--

This year four area directors list preachers as their No. 1 need, and in one area all 15 priority needs are preachers. But missionaries also request new medical workers, agricultural evangelists, business-administrative people, student workers and teachers.

One of the most unusual requests calls for a nurse/midwife in Europe and the Middle East. She would work in a hospital obstetrics unit and in the wards, supervising the nursing staff.

Requests from the Middle East also include a woman religious education consultant to work with Woman's Missionary Union, Sunday school and Vacation Bible School groups in Jordan; a general evangelist to work with Arabs in the northern Galilee region of Israel and a publications worker for Monsourieh, Lebanon.

In Europe a general evangelist is needed for Spain.

Uruguay needs an itinerant preacher to organize and promote crusades and tent revivals in Montevideo, said Thurmon Bryant, director for eastern South America. Other needs include a New Testament professor and general evangelists for Brazil, a secretary with bookkeeping skills for Argentina and a hospital administrator for Paraguay.

Five preachers to start churches in five different nations are listed as the top priorities in western South America by area director Bryan Brasington. The only non-evangelist position is a religious education consultant to coordinate work with 20 Baptist churches in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

The top priority in South and Southeast Asia calls for a teacher in the Malaysian Baptist seminary. Also among priority concerns are physicians for Thailand and India, a couple to serve as hostel parents for missionary kids in Thailand and a camp director in the Philippines.

In East Asia a student evangelist for Taiwan is the first priority. Other student evangelists are requested for Hong Kong and South Korea. Japan needs a field evangelist for Fukuoka City to help churches conduct surveys and start new churches, said George Hays, area director. Also identified as needs are a music consultant in Japan and religious education workers in Hong Kong and Japan.

Priority needs in eastern and southern Africa include an obstetrics-gynecology physician in Zimbabwe, a leadership worker in Angola and general evangelists in Namibia, Malawi, Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Bophuthatswana and the Indian Ocean Islands.

In West Africa general evangelists accounted for six of the 15 top needs. The first priority calls for a general evangelist to develop a plan to reach people of varied socio-economic levels in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso, Bourkina Fasso (formerly Upper Volta). Such a person, said associate area director Betty Kay Abell, would need the ability to reach an entire city and change his strategies as the work develops.

Other needs include dentists for The Gambia and Benin, mission business managers/treasurers for Mali and Sierra Leone and a hospital administrator for Ghana. One very crucial need in Nigeria is for a business manager who would make travel arrangements--especially for sending and receiving volunteers from the United States--and keep missionaries informed about government regulations.

Ten of the 15 top requests from Middle America and the Caribbean ask for general evangelists. Others include a publications worker for El Salvador, a mass communications specialist who would produce and market Baptist programs for the Bahamas and the Caribbean, a dentist for Barbados and a seminary professor for Guatemala.

--30--

Drought Sears Africa;
Southern Baptists Help

By Mary Jane Welch

Baptist Press
9/21/84

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--What promised to be a rewarding experience turned into a heart-wrenching eye-opener for Ron and Jan Langston. They came to distribute food to hungry African villagers. There wasn't enough.

--more--

"We felt helpless, sick and angry as we saw the faces of the hungry villagers and realized we did not have enough food for them all," said the Langstons, Southern Baptist missionaries in Zimbabwe. They watched tears well up in an African mother's eyes when she realized she would go back home empty-handed.

The Langstons' experience symbolizes what is happening across Africa. What many call the worst drought of the century is reducing thousands to starvation. Earlier this year the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) announced that without help one third of all Africans—150 million people—face the prospect of starvation.

Help has come from governments and private relief organizations, but it's sometimes too little, too late. More than 100,000 people have died in Mozambique—more than died in the drought which attracted world attention in the early 1970s to the West African countries bordering the Sahara Desert.

The drought isn't alone in causing the plight of starving Africans. Wars and political instability, poor economic planning, mushrooming populations, rural flight to the cities and creaking transportation systems have all done their part to strip Africans of their ability to cope with drought.

Countries in the Sahel, the region south of the Sahara Desert in West Africa, have never recovered fully from the early 1970s drought. Rainfall increased but never returned to normal. Today such conditions touch other nations where drought used to be a rarity. Only a handful of African countries remain untouched.

The FAO has named 24 countries that need help feeding their people because of the drought. Few are surprised to find countries like arid Bourkina Fasso (formerly Upper Volta) or Mali on the list. But Zimbabwe, long considered the breadbasket of southern Africa, also makes the list. And South Africa, another major African grain supplier, escapes only because it can afford to buy the grain it can't grow.

Southern Baptists, with missionaries in 14 of the 24 nations on the FAO list, have responded to African needs with grain, well-drilling and development projects to equip Africans to prevent future food shortages.

Since the beginning of 1982 the Foreign Mission Board has allocated more than \$7.5 million for hunger and relief in Africa. Much of the money helps directly or indirectly with drought relief.

One of Southern Baptists' most ambitious grain distribution projects has operated in Mali, where the U.N. Children's Fund says 100,000 children may die this year. Missionaries Norman and Beverly Coad have worked with fellow evangelicals to distribute 5,000 tons of grain in some of the neediest parts of the country.

Many relief experts say finding transportation for food aid has often been harder than getting the food itself. In Mali, the few rains which recently broke the drought turned dusty roads to mud. The four-wheel-drive vehicles required to get through the mud double the cost of transportation.

In 1984 Southern Baptists have sent 50 tons of rice to nearby Gambia, funded transportation for limited grain distribution around Koukouyou in Bourkina Fasso, provided grain and beans to families in several parts of Kenya suffering from drought and provided for emergency food distribution in Mozambique.

The Foreign Mission Board prefers to aid countries where it has missionaries to supervise the aid. But grain has reached Mozambique, one of the hardest hit nations, through missionary Roy Davidson in nearby Swaziland. Baptist churches in Mozambique handle distribution.

In Ghana, another of the countries especially hard hit, Arkansas Baptists provided 120 tons of rice for missionaries and volunteers to distribute.

Although the Foreign Mission Board provides emergency grain allocations during famines, it puts more emphasis on long-term development projects. Relief experts say the drought threatens to become permanent in parts of Africa bordering the Sahara. Without developmental help, people there may rely on relief for years to come.

In fact, per capita food production across Africa has fallen during the past 20 years and food shortages are likely in many countries, with or without drought, the experts add.

Southern Baptists have sponsored a number of projects to provide clean water sources that are nearer to families and more dependable than traditional sources in times of drought. This year the Foreign Mission Board has allocated money for water projects in seven African nations: Bourkina Fasso, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Swaziland.

In Ethiopia, where the drought is especially grave, a civil war has frustrated the efforts of numerous relief agencies to help. Southern Baptists have only a few missionaries there, but they've provided textbooks for a veterinary school, repaired a well in Addis Ababa and provided water storage tanks for a lepers' village.

Water development is only part of long-term development projects in Bourkina Fasso and Zimbabwe, which seek to improve the total lifestyles of Africans involved.

Tennessee Baptists are in the final months of a project in Bourkina Fasso which includes a dam and reservoir, wells and holding ponds as well as agriculture, literacy and public health training and evangelism. In Zimbabwe, Louisiana Baptists work in a similar project in the area around Sanyati Baptist Hospital.

Good news has come from some of the drought-stricken areas. Rains came on time in the coastal West African nations this year, a sign of hope. Missionaries John and Pat Gordy in Ghana report that corn, the staple of the Ghanaian diet, is growing everywhere—along the roadsides, beside houses and businesses and in large fields outside the cities.

But on the other side of the continent, countries that escaped the worst effects of the drought earlier are beginning to experience problems. "At this very hour, we are facing a critical situation in about three-fourths of Rwanda with a drought which has severely cut the nation's bean crop and source of protein," said Crawford Keese, missionary to Rwanda. In Kenya the story is similar.

The U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Hunger warns the drought promises to continue into next year, becoming even more severe in some countries.

John Mills, FMB director for West Africa, supports Southern Baptist efforts to provide food and other aid in Africa, but points out even massive relief programs can't do as much good as normal rains. "Pray for rain," he urges fellow Baptists.

—30—

(BP) map mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Bob Maddox Installed As
Head Of Americans United

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
9/21/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—Declaring advocates of church-state separation are the "true traditionalists" who "stand with the founding fathers," Southern Baptist minister Robert L. Maddox Jr. was installed as the fourth executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State in ceremonies at the U.S. Capitol.

Maddox, 46, formerly a speechwriter and liaison to the religious community in the Jimmy Carter White House, told an audience at the installation banquet the first task of Americans United is to "reeducate" the American people about the value of the First Amendment by promoting religious liberty and separation of church and state.

—more—

Noting some in the religious community disregard the writings of the founders and downplay the historical significance of the drive for separation, Maddox said, "We...are the true traditionalists.... We stand with the founding fathers." The United States, he added, has "a unique tradition of religious liberty, the envy of the world."

The former Georgia and Texas pastor said Americans United, founded in 1947 as a "watchdog" organization to challenge violations of religious liberty, must both react to church-state problems and anticipate them. A hallmark of his administration, he pledged, will be to anticipate problems in Congress and state legislatures "before they get out of hand."

Maddox, a graduate of Baylor University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Emory University, was installed during the organization's 37th annual national conference on church and state, with the theme, "Preserve, Protect and Defend."

C. Welton Gaddy, chaplain at Baptist-related Mercer University, Macon, Ga., told participants that "not since 1791 (the year the Bill of Rights was ratified by the colonies) has the principle of religious liberty been so endangered within our society and its authority as law so questioned within our government."

He decried the "deterioration of our commitment to religious liberty" in what he called "a prostitution of religious faith for political purposes, a trivialization of religious practices by civil interpretations, and a manipulation of religious institutions by governmental power brokers."

James M. Durn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and secretary of AU's board of trustees, said Baptists are among those abandoning a previous commitment to separation of church and state.

Presenting AU's annual religious liberty awards to a pair of Jewish leaders, Durn said that while "historically Baptists and Jews have had a lot at stake" in guarding church-state separation, "some of us Baptists are embarrassed and distressed and chagrined that some in our company are among the defectors in the ongoing battle" for separation.

He cited the heavy involvement of current and recent Southern Baptist Convention presidents in the newly organized American Coalition for Traditional Values (ACTV) as an example of such defection. ACTV advocates among other goals a return to officially sanctioned prayer in public schools and tuition tax credits for parents who send their children to parochial schools.

The religious liberty awards were presented to Joanne Goldsmith, who until recently headed the national office of Public Education and Religious Liberty (PEARL) and Maryland state senator Howard A. Dennis, a Republican who has successfully stalled school prayer bills and calls for a national constitutional convention.

Americans United was organized in 1947 by a group of Protestant leaders that included the late Joseph M. Dawson, first executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee. It was started to pool efforts in numerous denominations fighting such proposals as an ambassador to the Vatican and aid to parochial schools.

Baptists, always prominent in the organization, currently occupy eight slots on the 15-member board of trustees.

CORRECTION--In (BP) story, "Stanley Promises Increased Involvement With SBC," mailed 9/18/84, in 19th paragraph please delete final sentence and replace it with the following: The Committee on Committees nominates the Committee on Boards which, in turn, nominates the board members and trustees for all SBC agencies and committees."

Missionary Questioned
On Customs Violations

LAGOS, Nigeria (BP)—David Cornelius, first-term Southern Baptist missionary to Nigeria, has been summoned by Nigerian authorities to answer charges about alleged customs violations.

"What actually happened was that he carried to Nigeria an air rifle for his son and (\$20,000 worth of) equipment and supplies for the Baptist hospital in Eku," said John Mills, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for West Africa.

Cornelius, who has been freed on bail, was to have appeared for questioning in Lagos Sept. 20. First Baptist Church of Lagos has made an attorney available to him.

The Nigerian government has stepped up an effort in recent months to eliminate corruption and instill a new sense of discipline in the country. That has resulted in charges against foreigners and Nigerians suspected of violations.

Cornelius and his wife, Elwanda, both Texans, were appointed last December and arrived on the field in early July. The Corneliuses, the first black couple appointed Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, live in Jos, Nigeria, where they are involved in language study.

—30—

Ziglar Nephew Leads Church
To Oppose SEC Resolution

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
9/21/84

WASHINGTON (BP)—Led by a nephew of Southern Baptist Convention first vice-president Zig Ziglar, the First Baptist Church of Washington has repudiated unanimously an SEC resolution opposing ordination of women as pastors and deacons.

In June James W. Ziglar, an investment banker with a Wall Street firm in New York, proposed to the 900-member congregation an eight-month "disassociation" from the SEC to protest the resolution on women. The matter was referred to the church executive council.

Ziglar's motion would have withheld Cooperative Program gifts to the SEC from Oct. 1, 1984 to June 1, 1985. By the latter date the church would have decided whether to make the withdrawal permanent. The congregation is dually aligned with American Baptist Churches in the USA and the SBC.

But the church executive council, with Ziglar's approval, instead asked the church at its Sept. 19 business meeting to adopt a statement that "repudiates" the SEC resolution and "affirms the belief that we are one in Christ, and that this belief dictates that women should have equal access to pastoral functions and leadership roles entailing ordination."

The statement further expresses the view that the teachings of Jesus "show that women have equal responsibility and opportunity in servanthood and ministry in Christ's Church."

First Baptist Pastor Everett C. Goodwin criticized the SEC resolution in a June 24 sermon entitled, "Does Gender Matter to God?" In his sermon, Goodwin reminded the congregation it was not bound to the SEC resolution and that it had a right to speak out against it.

Ziglar was among a group of First Baptist members who 15 years ago convinced the congregation to ordain its first women deacons. Ziglar's wife, Linda, was among the first group of women deacons in the congregation. The church also has ordained several women to the Christian ministry.

The SEC resolution, adopted 4,793-3,466 at this year's annual meeting in Kansas City, Mo., expressed the view the New Testament "excludes women from pastoral leadership...to preserve a submission God requires because the man was first in creation and the woman was first in the Edenic fall." The resolution concluded with a call to "encourage the service of women in all aspects of church life and work other than pastoral functions and leadership roles entailing ordination."

—30—

Executive Committee Considers
Constitutional Changes

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Eight changes to the constitution and bylaws of the Southern Baptist Convention were considered during the September meeting of the SBC Executive Committee.

The committee, on the recommendation of its bylaws workgroup, approved three changes, declined to make three changes and will continue the study of two additional modifications to the basic document governing the operation of the 14.1 million member denomination. To become effective, any constitutional change must be adopted at two consecutive SBCs.

The Executive Committee approved a recommendation to define the length of service any trustee of any of the 20 national agencies may serve and will continue to study recommendations on the number of trustees on each of the agencies and the method of electing seminary boards.

Under SBC procedures, when a trustee resigns or otherwise becomes ineligible, a replacement is elected to the unexpired term. Under the process, trustees elected to fill an unexpired three-year term would be eligible for two full terms—a total of 11 years.

A change was recommended to the Executive Committee by the 1984 Committee on Boards, Commissions and Standing Committees, which suggested a "maximum limit of eight years be placed on trustees, with exception that seminary trustees would be limited to a 10 years."

John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., explained there was "ambiguity on what constitutes a full term" of service for a trustee elected to fill a partial term. "We found the answer in Roberts Rules of Order." Under the recommendation, any trustee serving more than half a term—more than two years—would be considered to have served a full term, and would be eligible for only one more term.

Executive Committee members approved a recommendation to allow the bylaws workgroup to continue studying a proposal adopted at the 1983 annual meeting on the number of trustees serving on the various boards of the convention. Presently there are 930 trustees.

Sullivan said the executive officers of each board, commission or standing committee have been asked to recommend the number of trustees they would like to have.

Another matter referred to further study was a motion made at the 1984 annual meeting, requesting a study of whether any seminary trustees were elected by means other than by approval of messengers to an annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The committee declined to recommend a constitutional change and a bylaw modification concerning the giving records of the churches of potential leaders in the convention. One change would have specified the convention "recognize the principle that leaders of the convention should come from churches which support the Cooperative Program with a minimum of six percent of the church's total receipts." The other would have required that giving records of potential officers be published in the Convention Bulletin prior to a vote.

Two other changes adopted for recommendation to the 1985 annual meeting concern the titles of the chief executive officers of the national agencies. One change allows the agencies to name the CEO "president" rather than executive director or executive secretary.

The other would allow the change of the designation of Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee to president and treasurer of the Executive Committee. The change is to bring the designation into conformity with Tennessee law.

The Executive Committee also "acknowledged the fact" the treasurer of the Executive Committee automatically is treasurer of the convention.

In other matters, the committee:

--Heard a progress report on the new SBC Building, which is scheduled for move-in in mid-January, and declined a request to "reduce the budget for furnishings" on the basis the "already limited budget" had been as reduced as far as it would go.

--more--

—Declined to conduct an opinion poll on "vital issues" during the 1985 annual meeting. Reasons stated were that less than one percent of the members of the SEC attend an annual meeting and that such a percentage is too small to get an accurate poll.

—Elected Richard D. White, pastor of First Baptist Church of Franklin, Tenn., to the 1985 Committee on Boards, replacing Alvin Douglas Sager, who was elected at the 1984 annual meeting, but has since moved from Tennessee.

—Approved a continuing study of the site of the 1991 annual meeting; declined to rotate the meeting site between five cities in seven-year periods, and declined to change present procedure for encouraging local arrangements committees to attempt to find housing in private homes for messengers who may wish to save on expenses.

—Accepted a check for \$28,158.66, collected by young persons attending Centrifuge programs at Ridgecrest and Glorieta Conference Centers, and distributed it half and half to the Foreign and Home Mission Boards.

—Accepted the resignation of J. Thurman George, of Gilroy, Calif., who accepted a position with the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

—30—

Executive Committee Members,
Staff Pledge Increased Giving

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
9/21/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Planned Growth In Giving, an effort to alter giving patterns across the 14.1-million member Southern Baptist Convention, has gotten a boost from the convention's Executive Committee.

During the September meeting of the committee a special service was held where each of the 68 lected members of the committee and the eight professional staff members were asked to sign cards which stated they had prayed about how much of their income they should give to their local churches and had set a plan to reach that level in increments over the next 15 years.

Three men—Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee; T.T. Crabtree, pastor of First Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo., and chairman of the Planned Growth in Giving task force, and Dewey Presley, layman from Dallas and chairman of the Executive Committee—gave stewardship testimonies before the pledge cards were taken up.

All three stressed the difficulty of publicly talking about the very private subject of giving to the church—but all agreed they were doing so because of a strong conviction in what Planned Growth In Giving could mean to the evangelistic efforts of the SEC.

Bennett said he and his wife, Phyllis, had agreed to increase their giving by one-half-of-one percent each year for the next 15 years in addition to the "more than 10 percent" they currently give through First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn.

Crabtree, charged "Baptist are big fools without being aware of it—we are rich in the things of this world and poor toward God." He said the traditional tithe of 10 percent (the SEC average is less than three percent), "is not the ceiling—it is only the first step in overcoming our greed and allowing us to enjoy life at its highest level."

"People need to be saved from the idolatry of materialism," he said. He said Christians resemble God, "not when we go to church or bow to pray but when we give ourselves without reservations. He said he and his wife will "move toward" giving one-fourth of their gross income and one-third of their taxable income to their SEC church.

Presley said his wife, Virginia, taught him stewardship—even mailing their tithe checks back to the Baptist General Convention of Texas during World War II when they did not live close to an SEC church. They will increase their "undesignated" giving by one-half-of-one percent each year. "I'm about to retire and for you young guys who are thinking I won't make it 15 years—we have made provisions in our estate plans to amply fulfill this commitment.

If PPG is successful giving through SEC churches will reach \$20 billion a year by 2000 AD.

—30—

NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

LYNN MAY
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37234

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

BAPTIST PRESS



mf
00
ALO