



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

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

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

January 8, 1985

85-2

***** NOTICE *****

During the move of Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee offices, Jan. 9-10-11, 1985, Baptist Press will not publish on its regular schedule. However, arrangements have been made to receive and circulate any news of great importance.

During moving days, if you need to contact Baptist Press personnel, you may telephone:

Dan Martin, 1-615-890-6827
Craig Bird, 1-615-791-1914
W.C. Fields, 1-615-298-4900

or Linda Lawson, news and information coordinator, Baptist Sunday School Board, 1-615-251-2798.

Baptist Press will be back in operation Monday, Jan. 14. The telephone number will remain the same, 1-615-244-2355, but the address will be changed to 901 Commerce, Nashville, TN 37203.

Thanks,
BP

Oklahoma Makes History,
Shares CP Check 50-50

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
1/8/85

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Since the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma was in position to make history, Joe Ingram didn't waste any time.

Oklahoma and the Florida Baptist Convention have been the front runners for the past several years among state conventions which are increasing the percentage of their income they voluntarily contribute to the unified giving plan of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Program.

Last November Florida became the first state convention to vote to divide all undesignated gifts it receives evenly with the national Cooperative Program agencies. Hours later, Oklahoma became the second--and so far only other--state convention to approve a 50-50 split.

But when 1985 opened for business, Oklahoma was the first to actually bank a contribution in Nashville, Tenn., for distribution to national SBC agencies.

Ingram, executive director-treasurer of the Oklahoma convention, made arrangements on Jan. 2--the first working day of the new year--to wire \$5,000 directly to the Nashville bank account for the national Cooperative Program.

"Oklahoma has always mailed their check to us once a week, but this is the first time they have ever wired a contribution directly to the bank," said Ada Ruth Kelly, chief bookkeeper for the SBC Executive Committee and the person responsible for distributing national Cooperative Program gifts to 19 national SBC agencies.

Overpayment by First Baptist Church in Norman, Okla., created the opportunity for Ingram to make the early contribution.

The church, where Lavonne Brown is pastor, sends 14 percent of its receipts to the Oklahoma convention until its budget is underwritten. Needs are divided 50-50 with the state.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee



BAPTIST PRESS

Official Journal of the Southern Baptist Convention

Editorial Office
Baptist Press
1000 Broadway, Nashville, TN 37203
Telephone (615) 251-2300
Telefax (615) 251-2300
Editor: Dan Martin
Managing Editor: Craig Bird
Business Manager: Stan L. Hasty

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

The church's December check to the state for \$140,000, which included its Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions, was \$10,000 more than it should have been.

"But instead of asking us to refund the \$10,000 they just said to apply it to their 1985 contributions," Ingram said. "So we immediately made plans to send \$5,000 of it to Nashville."

Ingram has worked for the Oklahoma convention for 23 years, including the last 13 and a half as executive director-treasurer and in that time, "we have never missed a week sending our check to the national Cooperative Program," he said.

"People know we are not banking their money for awhile and drawing interest on it but are promptly sending it to do what they intended for it to do when they gave it," through the worldwide mission and education programs of the SBC.

"We encourage our people to give to their local churches each week from the top, the first thing they pay instead of the last, and we encourage our churches to send their voluntary gifts to the state convention each week," Ingram explained.

He is convinced that is why, even as Oklahoma suffers through an "almost depression" because of downturns in energy prices and several state bank failures, and inflation rates have dropped in half, the Oklahoma convention budget has been increased even as the percentage sent to national programs has jumped.

About seven years ago the state convention voted to move toward a 50-50 split by increasing national Cooperative Program giving one percent each budget year. In 1984 the jump was two percent to a 48-52 split and 1985 was approved for 50-50.

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Baptists Urged To Pray
For African Rain In 1985

Baptist Press
1/8/85

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)---Three Southern Baptist executives have joined in urging 14.3 million Southern Baptists and Baptists on 105 foreign mission fields to make 1985 a year of prayer for rain in drought-stricken Africa.

"Starving millions of Africans in some 30 countries have long since passed the point at which human wisdom alone can find a solution to their agony," declared Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks. "Water is life. Pray for rain in Africa."

Parks joined with Rheubin L. South of Missouri, chairman-elect of the Southern Baptist Association of State Executive Directors, and J. Everett Sneed of Arkansas, president of the Southern Baptist Press Association, in issuing the call to prayer.

Sneed, editor in Arkansas, said Southern Baptists who care about the physical and spiritual lives of starving millions should do more than just give and pray in passing. "It's time to remember the power of God can change things when we can't," he said.

"All the resources we have wouldn't be enough to solve this crisis alone," added South, Missouri executive director, speaking in the absence of association chairman Earl Kelly of Mississippi, currently on an overseas trip. "Too often we just tip our hat to prayer and then get down to cold hard dollars and act as if that's the only solution. We mustn't forget that God is the source of our power."

Parks sent a mailgram Jan. 7 to executive directors, evangelism directors and editors in 37 state Baptist conventions. In it he asked them to use evangelism conferences and other meetings to urge pastors, evangelists and others to influence church members to begin the effort as soon as possible. He will contact other leaders in the months to come.

The Foreign Mission Board will also urge its staff, more than 3,400 foreign missionaries and some 1.8 million national Baptists with whom missionaries work in 105 countries to join in the prayer effort.

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Parks said a year of prayer for rain is necessary because it will take months of rain to break the drought and time after that to experience successful growing and harvesting seasons. Africa, he said, needs a season of rain to save it from utter devastation.

"Africa needs more than our dollars and our manpower," Parks said. "It needs life-giving rain and crops. Only God can stop the desert which relentlessly continues to devour huge chunks of Africa and its human and animal life."

Parks also urged prayer that "God also will use Southern Baptist missionaries, as they minister to physical needs in the crisis, to bring a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Living Water of life, to thousands of people."

Mission board leaders pointed out Southern Baptist missionaries will continue to bring food and developmental aid to the world's hungry people. Last year, the board appropriated some \$8.5 million in hunger and relief funds, including more than \$4 million for Africa.

Parks said the missionaries were able to use 100 percent of the hunger and relief funds for their designated purpose because Southern Baptists provide ongoing support to foreign missions through the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"The missionaries will continue to need the resources, concern and prayers of the people who send them," Parks said, "but they especially need the prayer."

Parks said Southern Baptist missionary Jerry Bedsole summed it up after looking into the eyes of an Ethiopian mother holding an emaciated baby and sobbing for food.

"I've lived here a long time and seen a lot, but that's a sight I can hardly bear," Bedsole said. "Only God can control this situation."

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Claude Cone Named
New Mexico Executive

By J.B. Fowler

Baptist Press
1/8/85

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--Claude Cone, pastor of First Baptist Church, Pampa, Texas, since 1972, was elected executive director of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico Jan. 7 at a special called meeting of the convention.

He will assume his duties March 1.

He succeeds Chester O'Brien who headed the convention for 10 years before resigning to become associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas.

Cone, 49, grew up in western Texas and eastern New Mexico. He was saved at Riverside Baptist Church in Albuquerque in 1945 and surrendered to the ministry while a student at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces in 1954.

He graduated from Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, and earned two degrees, including the doctor of ministry, from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

All of his pastorates have been in Texas. He was ordained at Slide Baptist Church in Lubbock in 1957 and also was pastor of churches in Crandall, Howe, Dennison and Lubbock.

A strong supporter of missions, Cone lead the Pampa church to increase its Cooperative Program giving (the Southern Baptist unified budget) to 23 percent of all budgeted income. During his 12-year tenure at the church, Cooperative Program giving increased from \$41,000 to \$297,000 annually. Total mission gifts during the same period increased from \$75,000 to \$632,000 annually.

The search committee reported it received about 60 resumes. All had been "prayerfully" considered and Cone was the unanimous recommendation from the committee.

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Cone and his wife, Jeannie, have two children. A daughter, Cathy is pursuing a Ph.D. at Texas A&M University, and a son, Craig, is a corporate pilot flying for a Pampa firm.

The Cones also sponsor Wanne Silva, a Brazilian student currently attending Wayland Baptist University.

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Methodists Honor
Southern Baptist

Baptist Press
1/8/85

LAKE JUNALUSKA, N.C. (BP)--Former President Jimmy Carter, a Southern Baptist, has been named to receive the World Methodist Peace Prize for 1985.

Carter, President from 1976-80, will receive the award March 13 at Emory University in Atlanta.

Joe Hale, general secretary of the council, said the award recognizes Carter's long commitment to the goal of world peace; his concern for increased understanding among the peoples of the earth, his vision evidenced through the establishment of the Carter Center of Emory University for the reduction of conflict; his work with Habitat for Humanity, which sponsors projects to provide low-cost housing for the poor, and the personal example of his own life as one who is committed to the "things that make for peace."

Hale said Carter is the first American citizen to receive the award. Among the other recipients is the late Anwar Sadat, president of Egypt, whose efforts for peace were interrelated with those of Carter.

The Peace Award is given periodically by the World Methodist Council, a representative world body of 64 Methodist and related united churches in 90 countries on six continents. Member denominations in the United States include African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal, Wesleyan and United Methodist.

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Baptist Joint Committee
Joins Vatican Challenge

By Stan Hasteay

Baptist Press
1/8/85

WASHINGTON (BP)--Insisting President Reagan is bound by the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has asked a federal district court to strike down as unconstitutional Reagan's appointment last year of an ambassador to the Vatican.

The Washington-based agency, representing the church-state interests of eight U.S. Baptist bodies--including the Southern Baptist Convention--submitted its views Jan. 7 in a case brought by Americans United for Separation of Church and State, more than 15 religious bodies and numerous individuals challenging diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the Holy See.

In a dramatic reversal of policy, the White House and the Holy See jointly announced in January 1984 they were immediately establishing full diplomatic relations.

Although several recent U.S. presidents, including Reagan, have stationed personal representatives at the Vatican, the move followed congressional reversal of an 1867 ban against formal diplomatic recognition.

That ban followed a 60-year period at the beginning of U.S. history of full diplomatic relations, a period which ended in 1848 when the papal states ceased to exist and the Vatican became a 108-acre enclave in the heart of Rome.

Because the new arrangement required formal reversal of the 1867 ban, the White House called on longtime advocate of renewed U.S.-Vatican ties, Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind., to lead the way. Lugar managed to secure Senate reversal on a voice vote with no debate.

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Reagan subsequently sent the name of his personal representative, longtime political ally William A. Wilson, to the Senate for approval as the new ambassador to the Vatican. And although opponents of the new arrangement were able to voice their alarm during a one-day confirmation hearing, the Senate quickly confirmed Wilson's nomination last March, 81-13.

Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel John W. Baker, in a friend-of-the-court brief to the U.S. District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania, declared "the President's power to appoint ambassadors is limited by the establishment clause."

Baker cited the 1947 Supreme Court decision in *Everson v. Board of Education*, a ruling which held the establishment clause "means at least this: Neither a state nor the Federal Government can...pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions or prefer one religion over another.... No tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion."

By reestablishing diplomatic relations with the Vatican, Baker continued, Reagan violated all three parts of another high court test--first enunciated in 1971--that governmental actions must reflect a secular purpose, must have the primary effect of neither advancing nor inhibiting religion, and must not excessively entangle government with religion.

On the last point--excessive entanglement--Baker argued further the decision to establish formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See already has resulted in "divisiveness along sectarian lines...both widespread and deep."

Besides the establishment clause arguments, the Baptist Joint Committee brief directly attacked the government's assertion in the case that those bringing suit do not have proper standing to do so because of presidential prerogatives in setting American foreign policy.

But Baker, acknowledging that Article II of the Constitution vests in the President the power to appoint and receive ambassadors, insisted nevertheless, "The President must exercise his powers...within the strictures" of the First Amendment.

Both sides in the dispute appear to agree a key determination to be made by the courts is the question of whether the Vatican is essentially a sovereign nation-state or a religious body. Baker's statement to the district court takes issue with the government's position that renewed relations are those of one sovereign state with another.

To make his point, Baker cited an address last year by Archbishop Pio Laghi, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio--or ambassador--to the U.S., in which Laghi declared, "It is...the Pope's religious authority which confers upon him the classical right of legation, a diplomatic standing in the world." Laghi added: "Those who interpret Papal Diplomacy as emanating from the Pope's temporal sovereignty are failing to understand the true nature of the mission of the Holy See."

In its concluding section, the Baptist Joint Committee brief argued the new diplomatic relationship "seriously jeopardizes the missionary programs" of U.S.-based churches.

"Because of anti-American, anti-religious and anti-democratic sentiments in many of the developing countries," Baker wrote, "missionaries and other persons representing religious institutions could actually become symbols of American governmental interest." Such mingling of religious and national purposes potentially brought on by diplomatic relations with the Vatican "offers an occasion for misunderstanding, invites chaos and confusion, and places a burdensome albatross upon every American who represents religion overseas," Baker concluded.

Concern over foreign mission work in part motivated messengers to last year's Southern Baptist Convention to adopt a strongly-worded resolution protesting U.S.-Vatican relations and a separate motion requesting the denomination's Executive Committee to join any legal action challenging the new arrangement.

But that body last September declined to join the Americans United suit after some members reportedly expressed concern the action might be interpreted as an effort to embarrass President Reagan during his bid for reelection. The matter may resurface at next month's Executive Committee meeting in Nashville, Tenn.



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*460 James Robertson Parkway
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LYNN MAY HO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 9TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37234

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January 8, 1985

North Central States Affirm
 Goal to Double Churches

By Michael Tutterow

DAYTON, Ohio (BP)--More than 430 participants from seven north central states reaffirmed their commitment to double the number of churches in the region by 1990.

The pastors and laypersons from the seven north central states--Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin--met at Far Hills Baptist Church in Dayton January 3-5 to hear an update on Southern Baptists' work in the region and to train for church starting in the country's mid-section.

R.V. Haygood, executive director of the Indiana Baptist Convention, told participants that Southern Baptists had only 625 churches in north central and northeastern states in 1946. By 1973, the number in the north central region alone had increased to 1,758, he added. It was during that year that a steering committee established North Central States Thrust, an effort to reach people in the north central states with the gospel. The committee adopted a goal to double the number of churches in the region by 1990, he noted.

Since then Southern Baptists have only begun about 19 percent of the churches needed to meet the goal. But Haygood said other goals from the 1973 meeting have been met.

One goal of the thrust "was to turn the eyes of Southern Baptists on the area and get linkages established between old-line state conventions and new work areas," Haygood said. "We have not doubled the number of churches by any means, but we have focused the minds of Southern Baptists on this area and we have focused the minds of Southern Baptists on a Bold Mission Thrust for our world," he explained.

Since the goals were adopted, explained Haygood, more than 50 pastors have come from Southern states to work in the region. Also, the north central states have received about \$500,000 through linkages with old-line Baptist state conventions in addition to the scores of volunteers who have flooded the area, working in church construction and other local church ministries.

Haygood noted that currently 2,085 Southern Baptist churches minister to 60 million people--one-fourth of nation's population--who reside in the north central states. "We feel that one-fourth (of Southern Baptist churches) should be here, too," said Haygood.

Baptists will attempt to have 3,516 churches in the seven-state area by 1990, added Haygood.

Clay Price, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's program research department, reported that only six percent of the Southern Baptist Convention's churches are located in the north central states while one out of eight SBC churches started in the United States since 1972 has been in the region.

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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
 LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
 Historical Commission, SBC
 Nashville, Tennessee**

Though church starts have been high in the region, "as soon as we organize churches, we start to lose churches," lamented Price. He noted that the Southern Baptist Convention lost two percent of its church starts per year, adding that 25 percent of the churches begun nationwide in 1972 have been lost.

In the north central states, the percentage of loss was even higher, said Price, with 39 percent of the churches organized in the region since 1972 now out of existence.

Price noted that of the SBC churches which reported they organized between 1972 and 1978, 50 percent did so with 50 members or less. He added that figures show one-third of the churches begun with 50 members or less are in trouble or dead within five years.

Price suggested Southern Baptists more closely monitor new churches, offering verbal encouragement and support to church leaders. But he also suggested that Baptists look at organizing churches when they reach 50 or more in membership. "The smaller the church when organized, the greater the potential of losing it," he warned.

Conference participants also heard Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, pledge that he will request trustees of the board to increase support for the north central states, with the agency contributing as much as \$100,000 more to each state convention in the region by 1990.

Oscar Romo, director of the Home Mission Board's language missions division, called on Baptists in the north central states to reach ethnics with the gospel. Romo noted that 122 million Americans claim they belong to at least one language/ethnic-culture group other than white.

Romo noted that north central states are home to 122 different ethnic groups. While reaching ethnics is important, Romo cautioned Baptists in their approach to language missions.

"We must learn to contextualize the gospel," Romo said. "Language becomes the thread and culture becomes the needle by which we weave the gospel into the lives of people."

Joe Ford, associate vice president of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, told participants "the church is God's way of evangelizing the world. Evangelism will be done by the church or it will not be done at all."

Ford said the climate is right for church starting in today's high-tech society. He challenged participants to establish churches with an emphasis on evangelism.

"Southern Baptists must start more churches because that's the only way we're going to reach the world," he concluded.