



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 8, 1985

85-59

✓ HMB Affirms Parks, Tanner
Urges Gilmore Re-election

By Jim Newton

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's executive committee has voted to affirm recent public statements by the presidents of the SBC's two mission boards, and urged reelection of the board's former chairman to the agency's board of directors.

The HMB executive committee commended SBC Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and HMB President William G. Tanner for recent statements on the effect of SBC political controversies on Baptist missions.

In a second vote, the 25-member committee urged messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas to reinstate Jerry Gilmore, a Dallas attorney, as a member of the board.

Gilmore, whose wife teaches at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas as a Methodist minister, is not being renominated for a second term by the SBC committee on boards after a split vote by the committee.

"We deplore this blatant effort to remove this fair and resourceful leader," said the HMB executive committee motion, made by D. F. Norman of Atlanta, director of pastoral ministries for the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The executive committee affirmed Gilmore's "love for missions," described him as "an asset to this agency," and expressed appreciation for "his able leadership." Gilmore was chairman of the board for two years until April of 1985.

Speaking to his motion, Norman recalled that last year the SBC Committee on Boards had "bumped" Richard Eskew, pastor of First Baptist Church, Yadkinville, N.C., from the Home Mission Board, and pointed out Gilmore was the only person eligible this year for reelection not being renominated for a second term.

In discussing the motion, several board members suggested copies of the action be sent to the SBC committee on boards for consideration in their pre-convention meeting, with a request they reconsider the decision not to renominate Gilmore.

Norman commended Tanner for a statement mailed earlier to all HMB directors expressing deep concern because Gilmore was not being renominated "simply because he is controversial." Tanner said Gilmore, a deacon and active member of Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas, has been an effective board member and committed supporter of missions and the Cooperative Program.

In another action, the 19 HMB executive committee members present affirmed and commended both Tanner and Parks for statements "tailored to deal with the threat to our Baptist missions program."

Earlier, Jim Strickland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Cartersville, Ga., had made a motion to commend Parks "for his courageous stand concerning the threat to Bold Mission Thrust created by the political network which has conspired to seize control of our convention through manipulation of the boards and threatening to escrow Cooperative Program funds."

Parks issued a statement April 22 concerning attacks by conservatives on missions. When questioned about the statement later by a reporter Parks said he could not support the reelection of Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, as SBC president because of a felt need for elected leadership with a proven record of cooperative missions.

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In statements to Baptist Press responding to Parks' comments, Tanner stopped short of refusing to support Stanley, but agreed with Parks' assessment of the effect of the SBC controversy on missions.

Barbara Fain of Dunwoody, Ga., said she could not conscientiously support Strickland's motion endorsing Parks' stand, adding she felt it would negate Tanner's statement, "which I think showed great wisdom."

A substitute motion by John Hessel of West Frankfort, Ill., would have affirmed only Tanner's statement of concern "for the cause of world missions and our demonination," but the executive committee approved 18-1 an amendment by Bill Sherman of Nashville, Tenn., supporting both Parks and Tanner.

After the amended motion was adopted without opposition, Fain asked: "Does this mean we are saying we don't want Dr. Stanley to be reelected?"

Newly-elected HMB Chairman Travis E. Wiginton, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, Norman, Okla., said he did not feel the action could be interpreted as endorsing or opposing any candidate or how board members would vote as individuals.

Eddie Rickenbaker, pastor of First Baptist Church, Belton, S.C., agreed, saying he was not ready to say publicly if he would vote for Stanley or not.

In interviews after the meeting, both Sherman and Strickland said their motions were intended to endorse and commend Park's opposition to Stanley, as well as the statements by both Tanner and Parks on the effect of the controversy on missions. Strickland and Sherman said they did not agree with Wiginton's interpretation of the meaning of the action by the committee.

The meeting closed with prayer led by Gilmore, who asked God to help Southern Baptists to see beyond the present political turmoil to greater and higher commitment to missions.

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Charities, Lawmaker Appeal
For Charitable Deductions

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press
5/8/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—Charitable organizations, supported by a California congressman, have launched an eleventh-hour drive to pressure the Reagan administration into preserving deductibility of charitable contributions in its soon-to-be-released tax reform package.

At a May 7 Capitol Hill press conference, U.S. Rep. Robert Matsui (D-Calif.)—who has led an attack against provisions in the original administration tax reform proposal that would drastically cut present deductibility provisions—declared those changes "would have a chilling effect on philanthropy in America and on the institutions which depend upon voluntary giving by millions of citizens."

The California lawmaker, a United Methodist, was joined by representatives of the United Way of America, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society and Association of American Universities.

Matsui's position was endorsed immediately by James M. Dunn, executive director of the Washington-based Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. In a letter to Matsui dated May 8, Dunn declared: "It is a cruel contradiction for this administration to appeal to churches and others in the private sector to assume more responsibility for meeting human need and at the same time remove incentives for support of non-profit organizations."

Describing the original Treasury Department plan's provisions "negative and destructive," Dunn said further: "The United States has a noble tradition of volunteerism, an unwritten covenant that links government and charitable institutions in a partnership for good."

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Last February, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention asked Dunn and the Baptist Joint Committee to fight for retention of deductibility for charitable contributions after unanimously adopting a statement opposing administration proposals.

Matsui's last-minute effort to influence a new proposal from Treasury came amid unconfirmed reports the administration may back down from its previous position of establishing a two percent deductibility floor, under which taxpayers who itemize deductions would be allowed to claim only contributions exceeding two percent of their adjusted gross income.

Besides calling on administration officials to eliminate that item, Matsui also demanded reversals in the original proposal's elimination of any charitable tax deductions for taxpayers who do not itemize and a separate provision that would remove fair market deductibility for gifts of appreciated property. The latter proposal has come under heavy fire from colleges and universities, among other charities, because it is seen as a threat to large donations.

At his news conference, Matsui warned that without such major changes, the Treasury Department's plan "would devastate charitable contributions to nonprofit organizations." Estimated losses in charitable giving, he said, would amount to \$11.8 billion, or a drop of 20 percent from the current level of contributions. "Sound public policy dictates that our tax code should continue to foster the diversity of voluntary activity that has become a significant asset of our pluralistic society," he declared.

Matsui and fellow Ways and Means Committee member, Rep. Bill Frenzel, R-Minn., circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter asking other House members to join their appeal to Secretary of the Treasury James A. Baker III.

Baker was expected to present President Reagan with a revised tax reform package shortly after Reagan's May 10 return from a 10-day trip to Europe. The president, in turn, is expected to send the new proposal to Congress later this month, where it will be considered along with several competing plans.

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ABTS Commission
Reaffirms Missions Role

Baptist Press
5/8/85

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Commission on the American Baptist Theological Seminary reaffirmed its stance as a missions outreach of the Southern Baptist Convention during its annual meeting in Nashville.

Commission members adopted a 1985-86 budget of \$283,650, an increase of 2.7 percent from the previous year.

The budget will provide 140 scholarships of \$1,000 each to students attending American Baptist College of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, a black Bible school co-sponsored by the SBC and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

Students receiving the SBC scholarships must be committed to a church-related vocation in a National Baptist church and be recommended by their church and pastor, according to general guidelines established by the commission in 1979 when the scholarship program began.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., secretary-treasurer of the commission, said the agency's scholarship program is "an ongoing Bold Missions activity providing outreach in our diverse society."

J. David Jicka, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sheffield, Ala., was elected chairman of the ABTS commission for 1985-86. Other officers include: Kenneth Castleberry, pastor of Dalewood Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., vice-chairman, and Joe P. Williams, pastor of Baptist Tabernacl, Louisville, Ky., recording secretary.

The 1986 meeting of the ABTS commission will be held May 1 in Nashville.

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✓ State Leadership Disregarded
In Appointments, Presidents Say

By Dan Martin

DALLAS (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Charles F. Stanley largely disregarded suggestions by state convention leadership when he made appointments to two key committees, according to an elected SBC official and a survey of state convention presidents.

Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, recently appointed the 52-member Committee on Committees and the 10-member Resolutions Committee to serve at the 1985 SBC, scheduled in Dallas June 11-13.

In announcing the appointments, he said the 62 were selected from a list of more than 500 names submitted by "state convention executive directors, presidents...and individuals."

Don Wideman, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Kansas City, Mo., and second vice president of the convention, said according to his records state executives submitted "about 300 names" to Stanley for consideration. "Only three of those names showed up on the Committee on Committees and one on the Resolutions Committee," Wideman said.

Following Wideman's comments on the disparity between recommendations by state leaders and appointment, Baptist Press contacted the presidents of 21 of the 26 states eligible for representation on SBC committees.

With only one exception—Alabama—each of the presidents reported none of the persons they nominated for the two committees were named.

"It was a nice, friendly gesture for Dr. Stanley to invite us to have input," said Raymond Boswell, a Shreveport insurance executive who is president of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. "But in the end, it didn't mean anything."

"We got a letter inviting our recommendations. Dr. Lee (Robert L. Lee, executive director of the LBC) and I both submitted names of people who are actively involved in the life and work of their local church, association, state and national conventions," Boswell said.

"None of the people we recommended were appointed. I have to say I am very disappointed," Boswell said. "From what I have heard, that seems to be true across the convention. I am very concerned that out of all of the names submitted by all of the state convention presidents and executive directors, there was an apparent disregard for the nominations."

"I appreciated his letter asking us to give input, but the action was without meaning. It had absolutely no significance," Boswell added.

Only one state convention president, Wallace Henley, pastor of McElwain Baptist Church in Birmingham, and president of the Alabama Baptist Convention, said he had nominated a person who ultimately been appointed.

"I put together a list of names but I probably overdid it. I submitted three pages of names to him (Stanley)," Henley said, adding he nominated Al Jackson, pastor of Lakeview Baptist Church in Auburntown, who was appointed to the Committee on Committees.

According to Wideman's records, only in Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina and Missouri were recommendations followed.

Wideman said only Jackson; James Bryant, pastor of Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith, Ark.; and John Gilbert, pastor of First Baptist Church of Poplar Bluff, Mo., and president of the Missouri Baptist Convention, were recommended by state leadership and appointed to the committee on committees.

Only Billy Cline, pastor of Merrimon Avenue Baptist Church in Asheville, N.C., was recommended by state leadership and ultimately appointed to the Resolutions Committee.

The Baptist Press survey revealed the presidents of the 21 state conventions did not nominate those ultimately appointed.

They are Arkansas, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas-Nebraska, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland-Delaware, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Presidents of Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, Northwest and Ohio were not contacted.

The executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, William Marshall, confirmed none of the suggestions he made were appointed. Marshall commented the president of the KBC, James Lewis, pastor of Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., made several suggestions, none of which were accepted.

"The only conclusion I can draw is that the people suggested by us were not acceptable to Mr. Stanley," Marshall added.

Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, and president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said "not one single name I suggested showed up on the appointments of the two committees."

Moore took exception to Stanley's published comment that the SBC president used suggestions "from out of" Texas because "there is emotional involvement on both sides."

"If there is any turmoil in our state convention, I am not aware of it. The Cooperative Program is up \$1 million over last year, Mission Texas is right on schedule and we are moving right along," he said.

"What shocked me was that his office wrote and asked us for input. I assumed they at least wanted them; then I find out they never considered them because there was so much 'turmoil.' I would have rather he had not even asked for my recommendations," Moore said.

Moore added: "My conclusion is that he really didn't want our suggestions...."

Wideman, who was elected second vice-president at the 1984 annual meeting in Kansas City, said he wrote to state convention executives two months after his election--on Aug. 16, 1984--asking their recommendations.

"I told them I hoped Charles (Stanley) would ask them for such a list," Wideman said. "I asked them to provide me with names because I was trying to get acquainted with people from all over the convention. I asked the executives to suggest people who would represent their conventions well."

Wideman said all of the executives, with the exception of leaders in Michigan and Indiana, responded with names. When Wideman compiled his list there were 294 names on it.

Later, Stanley compiled a list of 500 names from which he said he was going to make selections. Wideman said "most" of the names on his list appeared on Stanley's list, as well.

"I know of nearly 300 names on my list, only three were named to the Committee on Committees and one to the Committee on Boards. Also, 12 persons were appointed who did not show up on any list previous to the appointment," he added.

Wideman, who said he learned the actual appointees by reading a Baptist Press release, said Stanley "did not involve" him in the appointment process. Stanley also, he said, did not receive his suggestions based on the list of persons who had been nominated.

"I suggested people who are solid, conservative Southern Baptists, who do not have an ax to grind and who have not been identified with any group in the convention," Wideman said. "He (Stanley) did not appoint any of them."

Wideman added: "I think every state should look at their own representatives and see if they really do represent the state."

ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN BAPTIST CAMPUS MINISTERS

June 9-10, 1985

Red Bird Inn Best Western, Dallas

THEME: Heritage, Development, and Update: Our Convention...Our Faith...Our Work

Sunday Afternoon, June 9, 1985

1:00--Registration

3:00--Call to Order and Announcements

3:15--Business

3:30--Session I and Dialogue--Phil Briggs, professor of youth education, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, "Faith Development in Ministry"

5:00--Adjourn for Dinner

Sunday Evening, June 9, 1985

7:00--Worship--Steve Hollaway, Baptist campus minister for New York City and chaplain at Columbia University.

7:30--Session II and Dialogue--Walter Shurden, professor, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., "Roots of Our Diversity."

9:00--NSM Reception

Monday Morning, June 10, 1985

9:00--Worship

9:30--Business and Announcements

9:45--Session III--Jesse Fletcher, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, "Care and Maintenance of the Campus Minister's Life."

10:45--Break

11:00--Session IV--Paul Jones, executive director-treasurer, Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson, Miss., "Ethical Issues Which Demand Attention."

12:00--Lunch

Monday Afternoon, June 10, 1985

2:00--Reconvene

2:15--Session V--W.F. Howard, retired state director of student work in Texas, Fort Worth, Texas, "History and Development of Student Work"

3:15--Break

3:30--Business: Finances, Reports, Elections

4:30--Worship--Frank Cofer, metro director of student work in Chicago, Ill.

5:00--Adjourn

Monday Evening, June 10, 1985

7:00--Banquet and Awards

Music--Gary Rand, singer, song writer, recording artist, Chicago, Ill.

Speaker--John Tadlock, BSU director at Clemson University, Clemson, S.C.

Campus Ministers officers are: John Tadlock, president, Clemson, S.C.; Frank Cofer, president-lect, Chicago, Ill.; Jim Morrison, membership vice-president, Weatherford, Okla.; Steve Hollaway, publication vice-president, New York, N.Y.; Bill Neal, administration vice-president, Atlanta.

Campus Ministers
Set 1985 Meeting

Baptist Press
5/8/85

DALLAS (BP)--The Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers will hold its annual meeting June 9-10 at the Red Bird Inn Best Western in Dallas, immediately prior to the Southern Baptist Convention.

There will be five sessions spread over one-and-a-half days examining the theme, "Heritage, Development and Update: Our Convention...Our Faith...Our Work."

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Session I on Sunday evening will feature Phil Briggs, professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, speaking on "Faith Development in Ministry." Walter Shurden, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., will address "Roots of Our Diversity" in the Sunday night session.

Monday morning will include two sessions: Jesse C. Fletcher, president of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, on "Care and Maintenance of the Campus Minister's Life," and Paul Jones, executive director-treasurer of the Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, on "Ethical Issues Which Demand Attention."

The Monday afternoon focus will be on "History and Development of Student Work" by W.F. Howard, retired state director of student work for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The final session, Monday evening, will feature the yearly awards banquet, music by recording artist Gary Rand of Chicago and an address by John Tadlock, Baptist Student Union director at Clemson University in South Carolina.

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Baptist Press
5/8/85

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE
June 9-10, 1985
First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas

June 9, 1985

Sunday Afternoon, Session I

- 2:30--Call to Order--Fes Robertson, supervisor, church music department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.
- Hymn--Thad Roberts, minister of music, South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas
- Prayer--James McKinney, dean, school of church music, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas
- 2:40--Welcome to First Baptist Church, Dallas--David Humphrey, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Dallas
- 2:45--Concert--Southwestern Seminary Singers, Robert L. Burton, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- 3:15--Welcome to Texas--Sam Prestidge, secretary, church music department, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Dallas
- 3:20--Theme Address: "Musicians on Mission"--Wes Forbis, secretary, church music department, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn.
- 3:50--Mini-Concert--Neilson and Young, concert artists, Dallas
- 4:15--Lecture/Demonstration: "Choral Techniques for the Church"--Hugh Sanders, professor, Baylor University, Waco, Texas
- 5:00--Benediction--Wade Davis, associate in church music department, Georgia Baptist Convention, Atlanta
- Exhibit Break
- Dinner

Sunday Evening, Session II

- 6:45--Worship--Choirs and orchestra, First Baptist Church, Dallas, David Humphrey, minister of music
- Sermon--W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas
- 8:00--Hymn--Thad Roberts
- 8:05--Organ Recital--Joyce Jones, professor, Baylor University, Waco, Texas
- 8:25--Offertory Prayer--Mary June Tabor, secretary-treasurer of Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, Oklahoma City
- Offertory
- 8:30--Commissioned Anthem--"Lord Thy Church on Earth is Seeking"--David Schwoebel, music assistant, First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala.
- 8:35--Concert--Southern Seminary Choir, Milburn Price, dean, school of church music, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.
- 9:05--Benediction--Bill J. Choate, executive council, Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, Kingston, Tenn.

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--Reception--church music department, Baptist General Convention of Texas, host
 --Exhibits

June 10, 1985

Monday Morning, Session III

- 8:30--Worship--Joel Gregory, professor, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, preacher; Thad Roberts, music director; Joyce Jones, organist; Ron Boud, pianist
- 9:35--Concert--Sunset Serenaders, Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas, James F. Palmer, director
- 10:05--Break
- 10:30--Annual business session
- 11:00--Presentation of Honorary Memberships
- 11:10--Panel Discussion: "The Role of the Music Evangelist", Jackson Cox, music evangelist, Milledgeville, Ga.; Jim McNeil, music evangelist, St. Louis; Aubrey Gaskins, minister of music, Highland Baptist Church, Florence, Ala.
- 11:40--Concert--R.L. and Beth Sigrest, music evangelists, Yazoo City, Miss.
- 12:05--Benediction--W.A. Bradshaw, executive council, Baptist Convention of New Mexico, Albuquerque, N.M.
- Lunch
 --Exhibits

Monday Afternoon, Session IV

- 1:45--Mini-concert--Carol McClure Hahn, concert harpist, Atlanta
- 2:00--Concert--The Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma, James D. Woodward, dean, school of fine arts, Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla.
- 2:30--W. Hines Sims Award, Eugene M. Bartlette Jr.--Richard Ham, executive council, choir director, First Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky.
- 2:35--"Musicians on Mission...in Action--Prison Ministry," Allen Cox, minister of music, Green Acres Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas; Youth Choir Mission Tours, Dan Carson, Lakeview Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas; Adopt a Missionary, Bob Blankenship, minister of music, Harrodsburg Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Ky.
- 3:20--Break
- 3:45--Division Meetings
- 4:30--Lecture/Demonstration "Choral Techniques in the Church", Hugh Sanders
- 5:15--Benediction--Don Browning, executive council, First Southern Baptist Church, Glendale, Ariz.
- Dinner
 --Exhibits

Monday Evening, Session V

- 6:45--Concert--Choir and Orchestra, First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., Doyal Spence, minister of music
- 7:30--Sermon--Joel Gregory
- 8:00--Offertory Prayer--Ron Bostic, editor of publications, Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, Wingate College, Wingate, N.C.
 --Offertory--Rick Land, organist, First Baptist Church, Dallas
- 8:05--Concert--1985 Texas Baptist All-State Youth Choir Band/Singing Men of Texas, Loyd Hawthorne, professor, Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas; Buryl Red, composer, arranger, conductor, New York; Jim Hansford, Wayland Baptist University, Plainview, Texas, directors, Sam Prestidge, state music secretary
- 9:20--Installation of new officers--Fes Robertson
- 9:30--Benediction--Harry Cowan, president-elect, First Baptist Church, New Orleans

Church Music Conference officers are: Fes Robertson, president, Nashville, Tenn.; Harry Cowan, president-elect, New Orleans; Mary Jane Tabor, secretary-treasurer, Oklahoma City; Wade Davis, vice-president, Atlanta; Susan Clark, vice-president local church division, Jackson, Miss.; A.C. "Pete" Butler, vice-president music education division, Kansas City, Mo.

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Church Music Conference
Set At FBC Dallas

DALLAS (BP)—The role of music in missions and evangelism will receive considerable attention during the 1985 meeting of the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, June 9-10 at First Baptist Church, Dallas.

The conference meets each year prior to the Southern Baptist Convention which is set for June 11-13 at the Dallas Convention Center.

There will be two sessions Sunday, June 9, and three sessions June 10.

The Sunday afternoon session features the theme address, "Musicians on Mission," by Wes Forbis, secretary of the church music department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn.; concerts by the Southwestern Seminary Singers and Neilson and Young (concert artists from Dallas), and a lecture/demonstration on "Choral Techniques for the Church," by Hugh Sanders, professor at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Sunday night will include worship at First Baptist, including music by the church choirs and orchestra and a sermon by Pastor W.A. Criswell. Other program activities include an organ recital by Joyce Jones, professor at Baylor; a concert by the Southern Seminary Choir from Louisville, Ky., and presentation of a commissioned anthem, "Lord Thy Church on Earth is Seeking," by David Schwoebel, music assistant at First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala.

The evening will close with a reception hosted by the church music department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Monday morning will begin with worship lead by Joel Gregory, professor at Southwestern seminary, followed by a concert by the Sunset Serenaders of Cliff Temple Baptist Church in Dallas, and a panel discussion on "The Role of the Music Evangelist."

The session also will include presentation of honorary memberships and a concert by R.L. and Beth Sigrest, music evangelists from Yazoo City, Miss.

Monday afternoon will center on "Musician on Missions...in Action" with looks at prison ministry, youth choir mission tours and "Adopt a Missionary." There also will be concerts by Carol McClure Hahn, a harpist from Atlanta and the Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma and another lecture/demonstration by Sanders on "Choral Techniques in the Church."

The closing session, Monday evening, includes another sermon by Gregory and two concerts: one by the choir and orchestra from First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va., and another by the combined voices of the 1985 Texas Baptist All-State Youth Choir and the Singing Men of Texas.

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CORRECTION--In (BP) story, "Southern Baptist Evangelists Set 1985 Meeting, Program," mailed 5/6/85, in fifth paragraph please insert "Monday" before the phrase "10-11:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel."

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Cable TV Effort
Puts People In Pews

By Bonita Sparrow

Baptist Press
5/8/85

MARION, Ind. (BP)—When 56 strangers pack the pews of a church that usually runs 600 in two morning worship services the pastor knows to either get out of town or look for a revival.

To Garland Morrison, pastor, and David Trimbl, minister of media and youth at Sunnycrest Baptist Church in Marion, Ind., those visitors meant something was being done right.

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"What we did," said Trimble, "was get ACTS (a network of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission) on cable in Marion. Those people liked what they had seen so they came to our church." The 56 visitors were in church six weeks after ACTS came on line in Marion. "We used to run maybe three or four visitors a Sunday and the staff knew, generally, who they were. Now we have a least 10 or 15 extra visitors every Sunday. They say they learned about us from watching ACTS."

Since the church went on ACTS in mid-December 50 people have joined the congregation. "On April 14 we had 21 additions in one day," said Trimble. "Not a day passes that somebody on the street doesn't mention ACTS or ask a question about ACTS and that opens a door for witnessing."

Morrison and Trimble first heard about ACTS two years ago at the National Conference on Broadcast Ministries in Atlanta. Excited about the possibilities ACTS offered for sharing the gospel, they returned to Marion and presented the concept to their church. The church caught the vision and members voted to get ACTS.

ACTS has not been launched at that time but the church bought three television cameras and developed a worship service program on time purchased on the cable local access channel.

"This helped develop a good relationship with the cable folks," said Trimble. When ACTS was launched last June the local cable company's multiple systems owner was one of the first to sign a contract with ACTS--but the cable manager in Marion had not put ACTS on. So Morrison and Trimble and their church members conducted a survey to discover who wanted ACTS and who would agree to get cable in their homes if ACTS was offered on it.

Since Sunnycrest was the only Southern Baptist church in town, it enlisted the help of other mainline Christian denominations. "It really helped us for ACTS to be showing programs produced by the Lutherans, the Catholics, the Episcopalians, the Methodists and the Presbyterians because that opened the doors for us to talk about ACTS," said Trimble.

Morrison took care of the financial arrangements while Trimble visited more than 30 church worship services, briefing the congregations about ACTS and distributing survey forms. "We took a booth and ACTS demonstration tapes to the county fair and to a local mall and collected 4,300 signatures which we turned over to the local cable company, along with names, addresses and telephone numbers of folks who had agreed to sign up for cable if it carried ACTS."

They also obtained letters of support from the presidents of the two local colleges in Marion, from the superintendent of schools, the mayor and the city council, state representatives, civic leaders and business people.

Then they went home to continue to pray about it. Two weeks before Christmas the cable company manager called Morrison and Trimble to his office and asked if they could have ACTS on Channel 3 in two weeks.

Morrison and Trimble left that office praising the Lord but still facing problems. The cable owner had bumped another religious channel to make room for ACTS. "To say that a controversy erupted is putting it mildly," said Trimble. "There were letters to the editor, newspaper stories, and you wouldn't believe the rumors."

The church was able to turn the whole thing around, however, when it agreed to air the Marion High School basketball games (which won the state championship) on a delayed basis. "Those broadcasts attracted a lot of community support," Trimble said. "There were some front page stories in the newspapers, and some positive editorials."

But turning point or not, basketball is not all Sunnycrest offers the community. "We plan to tape and present some of the concerts from the two local colleges," said Trimble. "We ran a survey and discovered the community wanted more preaching so we have lined up tapes of John Bisagno, W.A. Criswell, Charles Stanley and Adrian Rogers for local insertion.

"And when we get our insertion equipment we plan to offer all churches and all non-profit organizations in the city free air time for spots. ACTS has given us an opportunity to make a difference in our community. ACTS is helping us reach people and the gospel is getting out."