



BAPTIST PRESS

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April 8, 1987

87-53

**Faculty Nomination Dropped;
Denominational Politics Blamed**

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The nomination of a Fort Worth, Texas, pastor to become professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has been withdrawn because of what the school's president called "denominational political objections."

James Carter, pastor of University Baptist Church in Fort Worth, was nominated to become professor of preaching by Southwestern President Russell H. Dilday Jr. during the March 9 meeting of seminary trustees. Questions arose, however, in the trustees' academic affairs committee and the nomination was not presented to the full board.

On March 31, Dilday and Carter issued a joint statement to trustees saying Carter's nomination to the faculty would be dropped.

"After much prayer and a number of profound and painful discussions, Dr. James Carter and I have mutually decided to withdraw his name from consideration for a faculty position," Dilday wrote to trustees.

Dilday told the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, that one of the trustees, Ken Lilly, a medical doctor from Fort Smith, Ark., had told Academic Vice President John Newport that 18 of the board's trustees opposed Carter's nomination before the board meeting began. Five more joined in opposition after the meeting started.

The Standard contacted Lilly about the report. The Arkansas trustee said whether the report was true or not was moot since the nomination had been withdrawn. He declined to say more.

Dilday said the kind of questions raised in the academic affairs committee sets a new precedent for the questioning of a prospective faculty member.

Dilday said: "Faculty members have always been chosen because of their theological position, the Baptist Faith and Message Statement, which is our doctrinal guideline; spiritual and moral character; and the academic, intellectual capabilities and qualifications. Those things were not the bases of objections of those who opposed Dr. Carter's election. They moved aside for the first time to other issues which are outside those parameters."

Carter is "solidly conservative," Dilday told the Standard. "But it boiled down to just the practical matter of which side of this controversy Dr. Carter was considered to be on.

"It has become more and more clear that the issues before us are no longer, if they ever were, basically theological," Dilday said. "They are indeed political."

Included with Dilday's brief letter to trustees was a 23-page document prepared by Carter concerning objections, which had arisen during the academic affairs committee.

Carter was not present for either the academic affairs committee meeting or the full board meeting. Under the trustee organization, the academic affairs committee is composed of nine members, although any other board member may attend and participate. Most of the trustees did attend the March 9 meeting. The meeting was conducted in executive -- closed -- session.

In his reply to trustees, Carter said he understood questions raised about his nomination did not concern character, commitment, credentials or confession of faith -- "what the academic affairs committee usually considers when recommending an individual to the faculty."

In the document sent to trustees, Carter outlined and responded to the five areas he said had been questioned during the academic affairs committee meeting.

First is his belief in the Bible. "I have affirmed my belief in the Bible as the inspired, authoritative Word of God," he said. "It is the Word of God and is our authority for matters of faith and practice."

Second is the autonomy of his local church as expressed in style of worship and ordination of women, he said.

About worship, Carter said, "We come to worship God, not to entertain people. I feel very strongly that the worship style of a church is strictly a matter of local church preference, what suits the needs of that body of believers."

Carter said University Baptist Church has ordained women as deacons and ministers. "The church voted to ordain women," he said. "I did not lead the church into the ordination of women. I have not been crusading for the the ordination of women."

The third issue, Carter said, is that the other four professors in Southwestern's preaching department are members of University Baptist. "This questions the right of individual free choice," he said.

A fourth matter is the church's evangelistic record. "I am not particularly proud of our baptismal record. In fact, I have been distressed over it," Carter said. "It has not been outstanding."

However, Carter said he is "unapologetic" for that record because of the church's location, situation and history.

Finally, Carter addressed the concern that he had been called a moderate-conservative in the Southern Baptist Convention controversy. "By no stretch of the imagination could I be considered a liberal. I have some real concerns in the present situation, but I have not been a leader nor a spokesman in any kind of movement."

Carter has been pastor of the 2,800-member congregation since 1978. Previously, he was executive assistant to the executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention and pastor of churches in Texas and Louisiana. He is a graduate of Louisiana College in Pineville and earned master of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from Southwestern Seminary.

He was a member of the board of trustees of Southwestern Seminary from 1973 to 1982 and was chairman of the presidential search committee which brought Dilday to be president of the seminary in 1977.

He told the Standard the church has been "absolutely beautiful" to him since his possible nomination became known. On the Sunday following its withdrawal, the congregation gave him a standing ovation.

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(Also contributing to this article were Mark Wingfield, director of news and information at Southwestern Seminary; Toby Druin, associate editor of the Baptist Standard; and Dan Martin, news editor of Baptist Press.)

1,000 Expected At Inerrancy Conference;
BTN Will Offer Delayed Broadcast

Baptist Press
4/8/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Although accommodations for the Conference on Biblical Inerrancy at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center May 4-7 are nearly full, thousands of other Southern Baptists will view the event at their churches.

The conference's general sessions will be offered to subscribers of the Baptist Telecommunication Network through a delayed transmission, said Joe Denney, manager of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's telecommunications department.

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A \$75 fee will be charged to cover cost of production and transmission, he said. Videotapes made at the conference center will be sent on a commercial flight to Nashville, Tenn., for satellite transmission from the Sunday School Board.

All BTN subscribers should receive a letter detailing the offer, Denney said. The enclosed reply card must be returned to the telecommunications department by April 24.

Current estimates are for at least 1,000 people to attend the conference, said Gail Mashburn of the Ridgecrest staff. Lodging at the conference center is almost completely reserved, she reported.

More space could become available if people requesting single rooms would accept roommates, Mashburn said. Anyone registered for a single room who would accept a roommate should contact Ridgecrest immediately.

Even if the conference center books all its rooms, lodging still is available in surrounding areas, Mashburn said.

The conference will begin at 7 p.m. May 4 with a worship service led by Joel Gregory, pastor of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, and Russell Newport, vocalist from Springfield, Mo.

Gregory said he would preach "a biblical message on the Word of God" to begin the conference.

"Theological discussions should never be divorced from a context of worship and commitment," Gregory said. "This vital issue must not be discussed outside a commitment to corporate and personal devotion to the Lord whose Word it is."

The remaining sessions will feature addresses by evangelical non-Southern Baptists on biblical inerrancy, responses by Southern Baptists and small-group seminars led by seminary professors.

The conference is sponsored by the six Southern Baptist seminaries. The seminary presidents have said it is an attempt to bring reconciliation to ongoing denominational theological/political controversy.

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Seminary Founders Day Address
Recounts Influence Of Norris

Baptist Press
4/8/87

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The "Texas Cyclone" blew through Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary again during the annual Founders Day address delivered in March by Leon McBeth, professor of church history at the Fort Worth, Texas, school.

Speaking on "J. Frank Norris and Southwestern Seminary," McBeth credited the former pastor of Fort Worth's First Baptist Church with both helping establish the seminary and nearly destroying it.

McBeth said Norris really was two different people — a model pastor early in his ministry and later a man who tried to destroy Baptist work.

After 1911, Norris embraced "angry fundamentalist doctrines and turned to sensational methods," McBeth said. The result was an exodus of nearly 1,000 members from First Baptist Church and a feud with Southwestern Seminary that lasted until Norris' death.

Norris "declared war against all Baptist schools" and especially Southwestern, McBeth said. He carried on a private war with the seminary's second president, L.R. Scarborough, and trustee Chairman George W. Truett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

But Norris' attacks did not stop with Baptists. He also attacked Fort Worth officials and often "named names, exposed alleged corruption and somehow skirted libel laws enough to stay out of jail," McBeth said.

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McBeth illustrated Norris' stunts by telling about the time Norris brought a monkey into the church for an anti-evolution sermon. The monkey, dressed in a suit, sat on a stool by the pulpit. "Norris would make a point against evolution, turn to the monkey and say, 'Isn't that so?'"

Norris was expelled from Tarrant Baptist Association and the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1924. He later was put out of fellowship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

But before turning to destruction, Norris was one of the most instrumental figures in bringing Southwestern to Fort Worth from Waco, Texas, McBeth said.

Under Norris' leadership, First Baptist Church gave more than \$50,000 to get the seminary to Fort Worth. Norris was a seminary trustee for six years, overseeing the construction of Fort Worth Hall.

After his exclusion by Southern Baptists, Norris continued his attacks through radio and his newspaper, the Searchlight. "He printed rumors, innuendoes and mere suspicions. Without a shred of evidence, he accused Scarborough of cheating in land dealings, of dishonesty in financial records of the seminary and skinning funds from the Seventy-five Million Campaign," McBeth said.

"The Texas Cyclone swept through Fort Worth with a fury that is hard to imagine today," McBeth noted. "Like all cyclones, this one came with a loud noise and left a path of destruction in its wake.

"But today the Cyclone is stilled, and the seminary still stands."

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Baptist Press
4/8/87

Southern Baptist Women in Ministry
Kirkwood Baptist Church & The Clarion Hotel, St. Louis, Mo.
June 13-14, 1987

Theme: "Living Toward a Vision of Shalom"

Saturday, June 13, 1987

- 9:00 Registration — Kirkwood Baptist Church
- 10:00 "Visions of a Broken World" — Catherine Meeks, author and teacher, Atlanta, Ga.
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Business Session — Women in Ministry President Ashli Cartwright Peak, coordinator of religious activities, Stephens College, Columbia, Mo.
- 1:45 "Visions of Healing for a Broken World" — Seminars on issues relevant for Southern Baptists in today's world
- 3:00 Break
- 3:30 "Visions of Healing for a Broken World" — Repeat seminars
- 5:30 Dinner — Darrell Adams, Christian songwriter and performing artist, Louisville, Ky.
- 7:30 "Visions of Healing for a Broken World" — Voices of Faith Choir, Faith Temple Baptist Church, Waterloo, Iowa
- Excerpts from "Rubies" — Cynthia Clawson, gospel artist, Louisville, Ky.; Ragan Courtney, professor of church music, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville
- Relating to the Call to Ministry — Vernon Davis, associate professor of Christian theology, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.; Carol Davis-Younger, Paoli, Ind.

Sunday, June 14

- 9:00 Welcome Coffee — Clarion Hotel
- 10:00 "Visions of a New Humanity" — Lynda Weaver-Williams, former pastor, Richmond, Va.

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Women In Ministry
Focus On 'Shalom'

ST. LOUIS (BP)--Southern Baptist Women in Ministry will focus on visions of healing in a broken world during the organization's fifth annual meeting in St. Louis June 13-14.

"Living Toward a Vision of Shalom" will be the theme for the women ministers' conference, held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, also in St. Louis, June 16-18.

Interpretation of that theme will seek to provide "encouragement, because of our denominational situation and world situation in general. We think all Baptists need encouragement," said Irene Vinyard Bennett, public relations chairperson for the organization and minister of education and youth at Evans (Ga.) Baptist Church.

The theme will be interpreted in three parts, Bennett said. An opening session on Saturday morning, June 13, will focus on "Visions of a Broken World." This informal worship service will be led by Catherine Meeks, a lay preacher, doctor of philosophy candidate at Emory University in Atlanta, instructor and director of the Afro-American studies program at Mercer University in Atlanta and author of the book, "I Want Somebody to Know My Name."

The afternoon emphasis, "Visions of Healing for a Broken World," will build on the morning's theme, Bennett added, noting conferees will participate in a variety of workgroups "to discuss how healing takes place or how people respond to the brokenness."

Workgroup topics are practice of peacemaking, reconciling the races, Jesus as the wounded healer, a theology of the household, constructive use of anger, poverty in America, global poverty, clergy couples, the "fire that refines," Bread for the World, prison ministry, parenting for peace and justice, healing for abused women, the status of women in the Southern Baptist Convention, a new humanity from a feminist perspective, Baptist heritage, women's contributions in healing, using vocation in the healing process, contemplative prayer, balance in life, strategies for meditation and faith development.

The third interpretation of the overall theme will be "Visions of a New Humanity," a worship service Sunday morning, June 14. Preacher for that service will be Lynda Weaver-Williams of Richmond, Va., former co-pastor with her husband, Sammy, of Goshen (Ky.) Baptist Church.

In addition, participants will eat an "agape meal" Saturday evening, featuring "songs of fellowship and reconciliation" performed by Darrell Adams, Christian songwriter and performing artist from Louisville, Ky.

A Saturday evening service will feature the Voices of Faith Choir from Faith Temple Baptist Church in Waterloo, Iowa; excerpts from the new musical, "Rubies," by gospel artist Cynthia Clawson and her husband, Ragan Courtney, professor of church music at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and composer of the musical; and testimony by Vernon Davis, associate professor of Christian theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., and his daughter, Carol Davis-Younger of Paoli, Ind., describing how they related to her call to ministry.

A business session Saturday afternoon will be led by Ashli Cartwright Peak, Women in Ministry president and coordinator of religious activities at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo.

Saturday meetings will be held at Kirkwood (Mo.) Baptist Church in suburban St. Louis, and the Sunday service will be held at the Clarion Hotel in downtown St. Louis.

For preregistration, contact Rebecca Turner Lawson, c/o Kirkwood Baptist Church, 211 N. Woodlawn Ave., Kirkwood, Mo. 63122. Registration checks should cover all applicable conference fees: the conference, \$7; Saturday lunch, \$3; and Saturday dinner, \$5.

Official Supports Teaching
Values In Public Schools

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--The head of California's public school system told participants at a national conference in Washington that he and a growing number of people throughout the country favor teaching values to public schoolchildren.

"There is a growing consensus that unless we figure out what values are important and how to teach them -- our civic tradition and our ethical tradition -- to our young people, we are in deep trouble," said Bill Honig, California's superintendent of public instruction.

Honig said he thinks general consensus could be reached on teaching such values as honesty, integrity, self discipline, compassion, tolerance and moral courage. The issue is complicated by a paradox central to the American tradition in which individual freedom is held in tension with common values, he added.

Honig called the teaching of "radical individualism" -- which claims there are no outside standards or traditions -- "cultural suicide."

Individualism is more than "just breaking away or freedom from," he argued. Rather, it involves "freedom to," he said, explaining individuals are free to "make conscious decisions" and "commit to freely chosen values."

Honig recommended using different strategies for teaching values at elementary, junior high and senior high school levels. He said young children find it difficult to control their own impulses and need a power relationship with a parent, teacher or society. Students at the next level, he said, begin to act out of their own self interest and respond to a system of awards and penalties. Students in the most advanced developmental stage begin to consider the good of all society, he said.

The last stage is the most difficult since it involves teaching "tolerance and respect for different viewpoints," Honig admitted. But he pointed to a "message from Jesus Christ that says you do not have to hate or get apart from others to maintain the strength of your own ethical views."

In the past, Honig said, disagreement over teaching values developed because individuals on the left were afraid sectarian values could lead into dogma, while those on the right were afraid individual thinking could lead to rejection of values.

He now sees a coalition forming to bring back the teaching of values in public schools. He said members of the religious community who want to re-introduce values and ethics but avoid sectarian teaching have joined with people who believe in ethics and values but may be secularists.

The coalition will have to continue fighting the two extremes -- those who deny any common values and those who want dogma taught in classrooms, he described.

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N.C.'s Coates Heads
Foundation Executives

Baptist Press
4/8/87

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--Edwin Coates, executive director of the North Carolina Baptist Foundation, was elected president of the Association of Baptist Foundation Executives annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Other officers elected were Fred Lister, executive director of the Baptist Foundation of South Carolina, president-elect; and James R. Smith, vice president of the Oklahoma Baptist Foundation, secretary-treasurer.

Theme for the conference was "Communication -- The Art Form of the Foundation Executive."

The 1988 annual meeting of the association will be March 28-31 in San Francisco.

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