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November 8, 1988

88-178

Arkansas Baptist enjoy
quiet annual meeting

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Arkansas Baptists conducted their business in virtual unanimity during the 135th annual meeting of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Nov. 1-2 at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock.

Unlike last year's annual meeting, which was dominated by speculation about plans for a "conservative" takeover of the state convention's offices and boards, this year's meeting passed with little debate. Messengers unanimously re-elected their president, host pastor S. Cary Heard, and adopted without debate most of the recommendations and resolutions presented to them.

Messengers approved a \$13 million 1989 budget that will send \$5.3 million, or 40.8 percent, of Cooperative Program unified budget receipts on to the worldwide mission causes of the Southern Baptist Convention, keeping \$7.7 million, or 59.2 percent, in Arkansas for state mission concerns.

The budget reflected an increase of 4 percent over projected 1988 receipts and an actual increase of 1 percent over the 1988 budget of \$12.87 million. The share of Cooperative Program receipts passed along to SBC causes increased by .25 percent over 1988.

Another recommendation adopted by messengers called for Arkansas Baptists to join hands with Guatemala Baptists in a partnership mission project from 1989 through 1992. The proposal already had been approved by the SBC Foreign Mission Board and Guatemala Baptists.

A third recommendation set six priority goals for executive board programs in 1989: beginning 200 new Sunday school units, equipping 500 congregations through the emphasis, "A Call to Baptist Basics;" beginning 45 new churches; training 200 youth leaders to lead Youth Christian Life Seminars; and involving 638 churches in the "Year of the Laity" emphasis.

The proposal to start 45 new congregations during the coming year is the second phase of the state's "Church Arkansas" emphasis, a plan to start 370 new churches by the end of the century. The first phase called for launching 25 new works in 1987-88, 24 of which were established. After the 45 new congregation goal for 1988-89, the plan calls for 30 new churches each year for 10 years.

An additional recommendation came from the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. The proposal was the required second vote on a change in the foundation's charter that would allow it to act as an agent for individuals interested in purchasing life insurance contracts which name Baptist causes as beneficiaries. Messengers approved the change unanimously.

Messengers adopted without debate resolutions that urged support of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine as it struggles with increased postage costs and that encouraged opposition to Sunday alcohol sales and state lottery gambling.

One resolution adopted by messengers, titled "Abortion and Infanticide," reaffirmed the belief in the sanctity of "both born and pre-born" human life, which it said begins at conception. It condemned the lack of judicial protection for "pre-born persons" and social acceptance of abortion, which it said dulled society's respect for all human life.

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The resolution resolved that messengers go on record as abhorring "the use of federal, state or local tax money; public, tax-supported medical facilities; or Southern Baptist-supported medical facilities for the practice of abortions, and/or the practice of withholding treatments from unwanted or defective newly born infants." It urged churches to work for legislation or constitutional amendments that affirm the sanctity of human life and encouraged them to "emphasize Christian morality, offer alternatives to abortion and lovingly minister to those caught in this dilemma."

Messengers slightly amended and adopted another resolution that expressed opposition to school-based clinics. The resolution called "a camouflage" the contention that the clinics are intended to offer general medical services and argued instead that their "primary motivation ... is to provide contraceptives to public school students."

The resolution said that confidential provision of contraceptives undermines "God-ordained parental authority and responsibility" and "condones immoral sexual behavior." It called for churches to oppose the clinics and urged public schools to "uphold the standard of sexual abstinence outside of marriage." It also challenged families and churches to accept their responsibility to teach "a biblically-based, Christian view of sexual behavior and sex education."

A third resolution, as presented by the committee, affirmed Baptists emphases on soul competency, religious freedom, and the believer's priesthood and added that such an emphasis "should not be interpreted to mean there is an absence of certain definite doctrines" at the heart of Baptist faith. It noted the autonomy of the local church, which operates "through democratic process under the lordship of Jesus Christ" and that, while members are equally responsible, the "scriptural offices" of the church are pastors and deacons. It closed with an affirmation of the Holy Spirit's leadership over both pastor and congregation to "carry out the Great Commission in a spirit of cooperation, harmony and love."

Gene Crawley, pastor of First Baptist Church in Newport, offered an amendment that noted the role of "God-called pastors" in local church leadership, based upon Hebrews 13:7,17. That amendment narrowly passed, by a 298-260 ballot vote.

However, Dale Thompson, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Rogers moved that messengers strike the resolution in its entirety and adopt instead the resolution on the priesthood of the believer adopted by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in San Antonio last June. The SBC resolution stirred controversy over its contention that the doctrine has been used to shield unbiblical beliefs and undermine pastoral authority.

The substitute motion failed a show of ballots, and messengers adopted the amended resolution with only scattered opposition.

In addition to unanimously re-electing Heard as convention president, messengers elected Delton Beall, pastor of First Baptist Church in Forrest City, as first vice president and Mark Brooks, pastor of Elmdale Baptist Church in Springdale, as second vice president.

Next year's meeting will be Nov. 14-15 at First Baptist Church of Little Rock.

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West Virginians set
attendance record

Baptist Press
11/8/88

FAIRLEA, W.Va. (BP)--A record 352 messengers and visitors attended the 18th annual meeting of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists at First Baptist Church of Fairlea Nov. 4-5.

Messengers adopted a 1989 budget of \$1,549,264, a 3.2 percent decrease from the 1988 budget of \$1,601,863. The decrease came about when the convention changed the process in which the salaries and benefits of associational directors of missions are paid.

Previously, associations forwarded funds to the convention which, in turn, paid the directors of missions. Under the current plan, the state convention will not handle the associational contributions, thus resulting in the decrease of the overall budget.

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Of the 1989 budget, the 142 congregations affiliated with the West Virginia convention will contribute \$719,499. The balance of \$829,765 will come primarily from the Southern Baptist Home Mission and Sunday School boards.

Messengers voted to send 26 percent, or \$167,070, of the churches' contributions to support the worldwide missionary, evangelistic, educational and ministry causes of the Southern Baptist Convention and to retain 74 percent, or \$552,429, for work in West Virginia. The 26 percent is a 1 percent increase over 1988.

During the annual meeting, the convention welcomed 13 new congregations and a newly formed association. The new association -- Tri-County Association of Baptists -- is composed of churches in the three easternmost counties in West Virginia.

The churches previously were associated with the Eastern Panhandle Association, which changed its name to the Potomac Highlands Baptist Association. With the addition of the new association, 10 associations are affiliated with the West Virginia convention.

Messengers elected Odell Clay, pastor of East Williamson Baptist Church in Williamson, as president in a narrow ballot vote over Russell Talley, retired pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Fairmount.

Alvie Edwards, pastor of First Baptist Church of Fairlea, was elected first vice president; Ron Larson, pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in Shepherdstown, second vice president; and Robert Keown, pastor of Riverwood Baptist Church in St. Albans, secretary.

Three recommendations were adopted from the state office building committee. The first recommendation abandoned the Elkview location as a site for the new state office building because of the instability of the hillside site and the expense of going to the top of the hill. The second gave the building committee authorization to engage a building contractor to complete a turnkey building when an alternate site is selected. The third allows the building committee to select a site in the greater Charleston area.

The 1989 annual meeting will be at Immanuel Baptist Church in Princeton Nov. 3-4.

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Minnesota-Wisconsin
launches 'Vision '95'

Baptist Press
11/8/88

APPLETON, Wis. (BP)--Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptists kicked off a six-year long-range program, "Vision '95: Celebrating Growth," during their annual meeting Nov. 3-5 in Appleton, Wis.

They also adopted a \$1,532,000 budget and elected new officers at the meeting, attended by 194 messengers and visitors.

The long-range plan, highlighted in a video presentation, includes goals for 74 new congregations, 14,000 people enrolled in Sunday school, 16,500 church members, 6,000 baptisms, and \$605,000 in budget gifts.

The two-state convention currently has 13,100 members in 94 churches and 26 missions, reported Executive Director Otha Winningham.

Next year's budget is a 3 percent increase over the 1988 budget. Minnesota-Wisconsin churches are expected to contribute \$304,000 of the total, with other income coming from the Southern Baptist Home Mission and Sunday School boards and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptists will contribute 25.75 percent of the receipts from their churches, or \$78,280, to national and world mission causes through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. That percentage is a 0.25 percent increase over the current budget.

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John Tanner, pastor of Southtown Baptist Church in Bloomington, Minn., was elected convention president. Other officers are Becky Dodson, layperson from Wausau, Wis., first vice president; James Edge, pastor of South LaCrosse Baptist Church, LaCrosse, Wis., second vice president; Clyde McClain, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Rochester, Minn., recording secretary; and Bonnie Stephens, layperson from Roseville, Minn., assistant recording secretary.

Two resolutions of appreciation to Texas Baptists were adopted -- one thanking the Texas convention for its continued support of the Minnesota-Wisconsin convention, another expressing gratitude to the Texas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for funding 32 years of Minnesota-Wisconsin pastors and wives' retreats through their state missions offering. The Texas convention sponsored Baptist work in Minnesota-Wisconsin for 27 years prior to formation of the convention in 1983.

The 1989 annual meeting of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Convention is set for Nov. 2-4 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Racine, Wis.

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New Mexico Baptists
honor veteran leaders

Baptist Press
11/8/88

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Two veteran leaders were honored by messengers to the 76th annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico Nov. 1-3 at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

The 456 messengers and 422 guests paid tribute to Harry P. Stagg, 90, executive director-emeritus of the convention, who served New Mexico Baptists from 1938 to 1968, and Theodore Roberts, who will retire Dec. 31 after 17 years as convention business administrator.

The annual state missions offering, which helps undergird missions and ministry work in New Mexico, was named the Harry P. Stagg State Missions offering. Roberts and his wife were honored with a cash gift and reception. The dining hall at Inlow Youth Camp in the Manzano Mountains east of Albuquerque will be named in their honor.

Observers noted that there was "not a single sour note sounded from beginning to end" of the three-day meeting, which commemorated the 76th anniversary of the convention.

An operating budget of \$5.2 million was adopted. Of the total, the 341 congregations holding ties to the convention will provide \$2.4 million. The remainder will come from various state and Southern Baptist Convention entities including the Home Mission and Sunday School boards.

The budget is virtually the same as the 1988 budget. Also, as with the 1988 budget, New Mexico Baptists will send 30 percent of undesignated receipts to support the worldwide SBC missionary, evangelistic, ministry and educational programs.

Charles Price, who became pastor of First Baptist Church of Las Cruces in February after a long tenure as pastor of First Baptist Church of Santa Fe, was elected president, succeeding Ed Meyers, pastor of First Baptist Church of Roswell.

Boyd Morerod, pastor of First Baptist Church of Los Chavez, was elected first vice president, and Frank Zamora, pastor of First Baptist Church of Grants, was named second vice president.

The 1989 annual meeting will be Oct. 31-Nov. 2 in Hoffmantown Baptist Church in Albuquerque.

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CORRECTION: Please change the second sentence of the third paragraph of the 11/7/88 BP story titled "Baptist missionary dies after heart transplant" to read:

For a number of years, Noland was executive officer of the Southern Baptist missionary organization in southern Brazil.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Credit card plan
provides blankets

By Sarah Zimmerman

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--With winter on the way, Robbie Quillin is gearing up to again provide blankets to needy people.

Last year Quillin organized a plan that purchased 600 blankets, 29 sheet sets and 19 bath towels for various missions in the Oklahoma City area. This year the system will continue in Oklahoma City, but she hopes her idea will be used throughout the state and "in the cold climates."

It was one of those days last winter when 10 to 11 inches of snow was forecast that Quillin said God gave her the idea for blanket distribution. She was cooking a big pot of chili when she heard a radio announcement that the Grace Rescue Mission, operated by Capital Baptist Association was at capacity and in need of blankets.

Five inches of snow already had fallen and people were urged to stay indoors.

"Within a few minutes, God gave me a plan for helping the needy during this storm," Quillin said. "I remain to this day in awe of how clearly it was laid before me."

The member of Nichols Hills Baptist Church of Oklahoma City said she realized people throughout the city would help the homeless if they did not have to get out in the weather themselves. She also knew that many of the people who would be willing to help have credit cards.

She called the managers of several department stores and found that area Sears and Pennys would allow people to call the store, order a blanket and charge it to their credit card account. Quillin or one of her volunteers could pick up the merchandise and take it to one of the centers designated to receive blankets.

Quillin called local radio and television stations to announce her plan. She said the media checked with the stores to verify the plan then cooperated in the effort by announcing the proposal.

During the storm, about 600 blankets were purchased for the needy. When some of the stores sold out of blankets and comforters, the stores sold 29 sets of sheets and 19 bath towels. Quillin took the sheets and towels to Grace Rescue Mission where one man told her his sheets were in shreds.

Despite the weather, Quillin said she didn't mind picking up and delivering the blankets. She said it was a joy to see the way people responded to the plan to know that people's needs were being met. She also saw it as a witness to the store employees as they saw how people responded to meet others' needs.

One of the biggest advantages for Quillin is that she does not have to handle any money. People buy the merchandise with their store credit card. The store is responsible for verifying the account number and billing the customer in the monthly statement.

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(Zimmerman is assistant editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.)

Dickenses double as professor,
missionary at Southwestern

By Scott Collins

Baptist Press
11/8/88

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--When it comes to similarities, Dean and Doug Dickens share more than looks.

Both were called into Christian ministry. Both graduated from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and this fall, both are teaching at Southwestern.

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Dean, a missionary to the Philippines, has joined Doug, professor of pastoral ministry, at the seminary. Dean is missionary guest professor.

"He (Doug) has probably been more of an influence on me than he knows," Dean said.

But the brothers guarded against influencing each other into the ministry.

"I thought a lot about both of us going into the ministry simply because we are twins," Dean said. "But we're not doing a twinly thing rather than a godly thing."

That doesn't stop the brothers from also doing "twinly" things.

When Dean was teaching at Southwestern in the early 1970s, Doug was working on his doctoral degree. Doug often used Dean's office, and when students came in for help, Doug offered assistance to the unsuspecting students.

One day Doug showed up at the room where Dean's class met. The students knew they'd been had.

At times, the brothers have combined twinly and godly things. They shared their first pastorate in Booneville, Ark. The two would alternate preaching and song leading each week.

But doing the godly thing has meant separation.

In 1975, Dean and his wife, Karr La, were appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to Clark Field Baptist Church in the Philippines. After six years at the church, Dean moved to a position at Philippine Baptist Seminary to teach preaching in 1981.

His involvement in cross-cultural preaching for seven years helped Dean gain an expertise in the subject. He has travelled to several countries leading seminars for pastors.

He has brought that knowledge to Southwestern Seminary this fall, where he is teaching classes in both preaching and missions. In the process, he provides guidance to students interested in foreign mission service.

"I tell them (students) that foreign mission work is not only exciting work, but the most underrated work," Dean said. "By its very dynamic, you can be in places of great response."

Dean admits that is a conclusion he was slow in making: "When the Lord called me into Christian service, we had an understanding he could call me as long as it wasn't overseas. But missions is such a fulfilling thing because once a person is on the field you're able to bite into more than you can chew."

For Dean, that has satisfied his appetite.

"World missions gets into your blood," he said. "It's in mine."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary