



- - BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 2, 1990

90-31

New Orleans SBC to focus
on need for church growth

N-CO
By Mary Knox

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Church growth will take the spotlight during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans' Louisiana Superdome June 12-14.

"The Churches: Edified ... Multiplied" will be the theme for the meeting, announced Dwight "Ike" Reighard, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ga., and chair of the SBC Committee on Order of Business.

"As we enter the 1990s, we need to recognize that if Bold Mission Thrust (the SBC campaign to spread the gospel across the globe by the year 2000) is to be a reality, we must emphasize the role of our churches in growth," Reighard said. "We must challenge them with churches and pastors who are building great churches -- from the very large churches to smaller churches."

Theme interpreters will be Homer G. Lindsay Jr., co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.; Larry Wynn, pastor of Hebron Baptist Church in Dacula, Ga.; and Ron Lewis, a church-growth consultant from Nashville.

"Homer Lindsay Jr. is a man who has been used of God to build one of the finest churches in America, and one of the largest," Reighard said. "It has set a fine example, both in baptisms and in missions giving."

"To the other extreme is Larry Wynn. He has taken a church over 10 years from running 65 in Sunday school to over 1,200 in Sunday school and last year baptized over 500 people. A lot of people will discover the ministry of Hebron Baptist Church during the Southern Baptist Convention."

"Also, Ron Lewis is considered to be one of our greatest experts in the Southern Baptist Convention in the area of church growth. He will do a great job inspiring and motivating our men in church growth."

The SBC annual meeting additionally will feature a message by Jay H. Strack, a vocational evangelist from Dallas.

"Jay is an outstanding revival preacher who spent several years in the pastorate and knows the heart of the pastor," Reighard said. "We're excited about having Jay on the program, representing vocational evangelists in the SBC who share their lives and invest them in local churches."

Strack's place on the program will highlight the role of revival meetings in church growth, Reighard added. That especially will be true in light of the spring "Here's Hope" simultaneous revivals that will have been conducted in Southern Baptist churches across the country by the time of the New Orleans meeting, he noted.

"We've just got a superb program planned for New Orleans," he said. "We feel like we've got some of the finest speakers in America to share in the areas of church growth."

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Two other keynote speeches will be presented during the meeting. SBC President Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, will give the annual president's address. Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., will deliver the convention sermon.

Lindsay will bring the first major address of the meeting, at 9:15 a.m. Tuesday, June 12. He will be followed that day by Vines, at 11:25 a.m., and Wynn, at 7:20 p.m. Wolfe will preach at noon Wednesday, June 13, followed that day by Lewis, at 7:05 p.m. Strack will speak at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, June 14.

Two unique items on the program will be the reports of the SBC's Sunday School Board and Foreign Mission Board, Reighard said.

The Sunday School Board has been allotted an extra-long segment for its report so it may launch the celebration of its 100th anniversary in 1991, he explained. Board President Lloyd Elder of Nashville will preside over the report Wednesday at 10:15 a.m.

The Foreign Mission Board's report will feature a missionary appointment service, an unusual event at SBC annual meetings, Reighard noted. Board President R. Keith Parks of Richmond, Va., will lead in that report and service Wednesday at 7:55 p.m.

The annual meeting also is when messengers from Southern Baptist churches meet to conduct SBC business. Six hours of business have been spread across the three days.

During that time, messengers will elect a successor to Vines, who has served two one-year terms as president. They will vote on a proposed \$137.3 million unified allocation budget that will help support evangelistic, ministry and educational endeavors worldwide. They also will vote whether to keep the nine-denomination Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs as their primary religious liberty organization, or whether to transfer that responsibility to the SBC Christian Life Commission.

"We feel we've got an extremely well-rounded program," Reighard said. "There's going to be a lot of attention on the election of a new president to succeed Jerry Vines. But we hope all the focus won't be on that issue. We've put together a program that I think folks will enjoy and find challenging."

Record numbers of those folks may attend the meeting, he predicted.

"I believe we're going to have one of the largest -- if not the largest -- Southern Baptist Conventions on record," he said. The record was set in 1985 in Dallas, when 45,519 messengers attended.

"New Orleans will be a wonderful host city," Reighard noted. "And the Superdome gives us the capability to host the convention in a good, orderly fashion, where we won't be cramped and worn out. It's made for a convention like this."

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

June 12-14, 1990

Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans

Theme: "The Churches: Edified ... Multiplied"

Scripture: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." (Acts 9:31)

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Tuesday Morning, June 12

- 8:20 Music for Inspiration -- First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; Choir, Rick Stone, director, and orchestra, Ed Dickinson, director
- 8:40 Call to Order
Congregational Singing -- John McKay, convention music director, Keller, Texas
- 8:45 Prayer -- Robert Covington, layman, Fayetteville, Ga.
- 8:50 Registration Report and Constitution of Convention -- Lee Porter, SBC registration secretary, design editor, Sunday school division, Sunday School Board, Nashville
- 8:55 Committee on Order of Business (First Report) -- Dwight Reighard, chairman, pastor, New Hope Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ga.
- 9:00 Welcome -- Mark Short, executive director, Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria
- 9:00 Response -- Junior Hill, evangelist, Hartselle, Ala.
- 9:10 Announcement of Committee on Committees, Credentials, Resolutions, and Tellers
- 9:15 Theme Interpretation -- Homer G. Lindsay Jr., co-pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
- 9:40 Executive Committee Report (Part 1) -- Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer, Nashville
- 10:40 Introduction of Business and Resolutions
- 11:05 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
- 11:10 Music -- First Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Jacksonville, Fla.; Martha Branham, First Baptist Church, Dallas
- 11:25 President's Address -- Jerry Vines, co-pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
- 12:00 Benediction -- Jack Millwood, pastor, First Baptist Church of North Mobile, Chickasaw, Ala.
Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

Tuesday Afternoon, June 12

- 1:00 Evangelistic Singers -- Jim Bob Griffin Family, music evangelists, Rusk, Texas; First Impressions Quartet, Rome, Ga.; The SITES, Woodstock, Ga.; GiGi Summers, music evangelist, North Augusta, SC; Jay McKay Family, music evangelists, Rusk, Texas; Lino Lopez, flutist, Fort Worth, Texas; The Balltzglers, music evangelist, Griffin, Ga.
- 2:00 Congregational Singing -- Jim Bob Griffin
- 2:05 Prayer -- Rick Stanley, evangelist, Fort Walton Beach, Fla.
- 2:10 Messenger Information Survey
- 2:20 Business
Committee on Order of Business (Second Report) -- Dwight Reighard
Introduction of Business and Resolutions
- 2:30 Election of Officers (First)
- 2:45 Committee on Nominations Report -- Roland Lopez, chairman, McAllen, Texas
- 3:00 Congregational Singing -- Jay McKay
- 3:05 Executive Committee Report (Part 2) -- Harold C. Bennett
- 4:00 Congregational Singing -- Philip Griffin, minister of music, Highland Baptist Church, Laurel, Miss.
- 4:05 Business
Committee on Order of Business (Third Report) -- Dwight Reighard
Committee on Committees Report
Introduction of Business and Resolutions
Miscellaneous Business
- 4:45 Election of Officers (Second)
- 5:00 Benediction -- J.L. Hendrix, layman, Winnsboro, La.

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

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Tuesday Evening, June 12

- 6:30 Music for Inspiration -- First Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Springdale, Ark., Buster Pray, director
 7:00 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 7:05 Prayer -- Curt Dodd, pastor, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Houston
 7:10 Election of Officers (Third)
 7:20 Theme Interpretation -- Larry Wynn, pastor, Hebron Baptist Church, Dacula, Ga.
 7:40 Congregational Singing -- Bill Cole, minister of music, Sagemont Baptist Church, Houston
 7:45 Bold Mission Thrust Report -- Harold C. Bennett
 8:00 Commission on American Baptist Seminary Report -- Arthur L. Walker, secretary-treasurer, Nashville
 8:05 Historical Commission -- Lynn E. May Jr., executive director, Nashville
 8:15 Radio and Television Commission -- Richard T. McCartney, executive vice president, Fort Worth, Texas
 8:25 Congregational Singing -- William A. Cox Jr., manager, conference center section, Sunday School Board, Nashville
 8:30 Home Mission Board Report -- Larry L. Lewis, president, Atlanta
 9:30 Benediction -- Bill Purvis, pastor, Cascade Hills Baptist Church, Columbus, Ga.

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

Wednesday Morning, June 13

- 8:30 Music for Inspiration -- Cottage Hill Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Mobile, Ala., Ed Keyes, director
 8:50 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 8:55 Prayer -- Darrell Gillyard, Providence Baptist Church, Dallas
 9:00 Election of Officers (Fourth)
 9:10 Stewardship Commission Report -- A.R. Fagan, president, Nashville
 9:20 Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- Lewis A. Drummond, president, Wake Forest, N.C.
 9:30 Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- Milton Ferguson, president, Kansas City, Mo.
 9:40 Education Commission Report -- Arthur L. Walker, executive director, Nashville
 9:50 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- Russell H. Dilday, president, Fort Worth, Texas
 10:00 Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- Roy L. Honeycutt, president, Louisville, Ky.
 10:10 Congregational Singing -- Tim Holder, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Cleveland, Texas
 10:15 Baptist Sunday School Report -- Lloyd Elder, president, Nashville
 11:05 Congregational Singing -- Fred Gilbert, minister of music, First Baptist Church, Lake Jackson, Texas
 11:10 Election of Officers (Fifth)
 11:15 Business
 Committee on Order of Business (Fourth Report) -- Dwight Reighard
 Committee on Resolutions (First Report)
 Miscellaneous Business
 11:50 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 11:55 Music -- Cottage Hill Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Mobile, Ala.
 12:00 Convention Sermon -- Fred Wolfe, pastor, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.
 12:30 Benediction -- Ronnie Floyd, pastor, First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark.

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

NO WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Wednesday Evening, June 13

- 6:10 Music for Inspiration -- Dauphin Way Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Mobile, Ala., Todd Bell, director
 6:30 Music -- The Cathedral Quartet, Stowe, Ohio
 6:55 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 7:00 Prayer -- Don Sharpe, pastor, Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church, Chicago
 7:05 Theme Interpretation -- Ron Lewis, church growth consultant, Nashville
 7:25 Business
 Committee on Order of Business (Fifth Report)
 Election of Convention Sermon Preacher and Alternate, and Music Director, 1991
 7:30 Introduction of Local Arrangements Committee
 7:35 Presentation of Past Presidents
 7:45 Presentation of Newly Elected SBC Officers
 7:50 Congregational Singing -- R.O. Stone, minister of music, Trinity Baptist Church, Ocala, Fla.
 7:55 Foreign Mission Board Report and Appointment Service -- R. Keith Parks, president, Richmond, Va.
 9:25 Benediction -- Robert Sherrill, pastor, Pecks Baptist Church, Bedford, Va.

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

Thursday Morning, June 14

- 8:30 Music for Inspiration -- First Baptist Church Choir and Orchestra, Jackson, Miss., Larry Black, director
 8:50 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 8:55 Prayer -- Bob Sena, pastor, First Spanish Baptist Church, Atlanta
 9:00 Business
 Committee on Resolutions (Final Report)
 10:00 Southern Baptist Foundation Report -- Hollis E. Johnson III, president, Nashville
 10:10 Christian Life Commission Report -- Richard D. Land, executive director, Nashville
 10:20 Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- William O. Crews, president, Mill Valley, Calif.
 10:30 Congregational Singing -- Bill Cole
 10:35 Brotherhood Commission Report -- James H. Smith, president, Memphis, Tenn.
 10:45 New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Report -- Landrum P. Leavell II, president, New Orleans
 10:55 Annuity Board Report -- Paul W. Powell, president, Dallas
 11:05 Recognition of Outgoing Officers -- Harold C. Bennett
 11:15 Congregational Singing -- John McKay
 11:20 Music
 11:30 Message -- Jay H. Strack, evangelist, Dallas
 12:00 Benediction -- Victor Walsh, layman, McComb, Miss.

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

Thursday Afternoon, June 14

- 1:30 Music for Inspiration -- Alan Celoria Family, music evangelist, Jackson, Miss., Lee Porter II, minister of music, University Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La.; Varnard Johnson, music evangelist, Fort Worth, Texas
 1:55 Congregational Singing -- Jim Bob Griffin
 2:00 Prayer -- Bill Langley, pastor, First Baptist Church, Mustang, Okla.
 2:05 Introduction of Fraternal Representatives
 2:10 Denominational Press Report -- Alvin C. Shackelford, vice-president for public relations, SBC Executive Committee, Nashville
 2:20 American Bible Society Report -- Fred A. Allen, church relations director, New York
 2:30 Denominational Calendar Committee Report -- Leon B. Hataway, chairman, Grand Junction, Colo.
 2:40 Baptist World Alliance Report

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2:50 Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs Report -- James M. Dunn, executive director, Washington
 3:00 Public Affairs Committee Report -- Albert Lee Smith, chairman, Birmingham, Ala.
 3:10 Woman's Missionary Union Report -- Dellanna W. O'Brien, executive director, Birmingham
 3:20 Report on Southern Baptist Convention Canada Planning Group -- Larry L. Lewis
 3:30 Benediction -- Steve Hensley, pastor, Cross Road Baptist Church, Asheboro, N.C.
 Adjournment

Theme Song: "It's Harvest Time"

Convention Officers:

President -- C. Jerry Vines, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.
 First Vice President -- Junior Hill, Evangelist, Hartselle, Ala.
 Second Vice President -- Ernest B. Myers, Executive Director-Treasurer, Nevada Baptist Convention, Reno
 Recording Secretary -- Martin B. Bradley, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville
 Registration Secretary -- Lee Porter, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville
 Treasurer -- Harold C. Bennett, President, SBC Executive Committee, Nashville

Committee on Order of Business

C. Jerry Vines -- President, Southern Baptist Convention, Jacksonville, Fla.
 Dwight Reighard, Chairman -- Pastor, New Hope Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ga.
 Reuel S. May Jr. -- Layman, Jackson, Miss.
 Chris Tecmire -- Pastor, First Baptist Church, Blanchard, Okla.
 Ray Turner -- Layman, Bedford, Va.
 Joe Aulds -- Pastor, Temple Baptist Church, Winnsboro, La.
 Danny E. Watters -- Pastor, Beulah Baptist Church, Douglasville, Ga.
 John McKay -- Convention Music Director, Keller, Texas

Soviet Baptist restructuring
 reflects perestroika, glasnost

By Art Toalston

N-FAAB

Baptist Press
 3/2/90

MOSCOW (BP)--In an era of perestroika in the Soviet Union, Baptists likewise are restructuring.

The Soviet Union's largest Baptist body changed its name, scaled down its statistics, abolished its general secretary post, strengthened its presidency and created three vice presidential posts responsible for activities once discouraged -- and in some cases outlawed -- by the government.

More than 700 Baptist delegates attended the 44th congress of the All-Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in late February, some of them traveling across 11 time zones to Moscow. They voted to rename their national body the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, a change that suggests more autonomy for Baptist unions in the various republics, observers said.

Delegates also heard firsthand accounts from Baptists in Azerbaijan and other Soviet republics with majority Muslim populations, where Christians have faced persecution.

Many Christians in these regions fear for their lives, reported Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, who attended the congress. Some Muslims have threatened to cut out Christians' tongues, he said. One Baptist leader said religious tensions have spurred 73 people in his congregation to abandon their homes; only seven have stayed.

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In keeping with glasnost, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's thrust for "openness," Soviet Baptists scaled down their reported numbers from an estimated 500,000 members in 5,000 churches to about 250,000 members in 3,000 churches. That drops the union from the fourth-largest to the eighth-largest constituency in the Baptist World Alliance, even though reports indicate union churches have baptized more than 40,000 people in the past five years.

Baptist leaders were concerned that "numbers must be true, especially for the Christian," Alexei Bichkov, outgoing general secretary, told the congress. "We felt we should correct the error, whatever the consequences."

The erroneous figure was first reported after World War II, and it may have included family members, Bichkov explained. Subsequent Baptist leaders avoided the embarrassment of admitting the mistake, he said.

The lower figure also reflects losses of Baptists, Pentecostals and German Mennonites who have emigrated to the West, and 42,000 Pentecostals, who, in the spirit of new Soviet openness, have withdrawn to form their own denomination. Pentecostal and Mennonite churches have been part of the union since 1944 largely because of pressures created by communist rule.

Other losses, Bichkov said, include those who were baptized but fearful of being listed as church members and some who joined independent churches.

Delegates abolished the general secretary post as part of their restructuring and elected Gregory Komendant of Kiev as the new president. The union's new bylaws assign executive powers to the president formerly shared with the general secretary.

Bichkov, general secretary since 1971, was elected to one of three new vice presidencies. He will oversee education and communication. Nicolai Kolesniko, outgoing treasurer, was elected vice president for evangelism, a post that also includes missions. Both posts reflect new opportunities Soviet Baptists are exploring in light of the country's new freedoms.

Alexander Firisyuk, who had been deputy superintendent of Baptist work in the Republic of Byelorussia, was elected vice president for administration and finance.

At 44, Komendant is the youngest person ever to lead Soviet Baptists. He had been deputy superintendent of Baptist work in the Ukraine since 1981. His father and grandfather were Baptist pastors. His grandfather was arrested in 1949 and never was heard from again.

Komendant, also a pastor in Kiev since the early 1970s, entered Baptist administrative work in the city and surrounding region in 1975 after finishing seminary studies in Hamburg, West Germany.

"This was the first time in many years that no pressure was exerted on us by authorities concerning whom to elect," commented Vasile Logvinenko, the union's outgoing president, during a news conference that included reporters from such Soviet government news operations as Tass.

"Especially in our country God has given us new opportunities," Firisyuk said in the opening message of the congress. "Everyone in the world is looking at us to see how we will use them."

"The work of the congress was intense, with morning, afternoon and evening business sessions," reported Stanley Crabb, director of European Baptist Press Service, who covered the meeting. The congress voted to meet every four years instead of the traditional five. Crabb described debates during the congress as "lengthy ... controversial at times."

The union's international department came under sharp criticism, Crabb said. Delegates complained the department is overstaffed with 10 employees who travel abroad too often.

"The congress virtually gave a mandate to their new leaders to dissolve the department," Crabb noted. "The new president pledged he would honor all decisions of the congress, including this one."

In another moment of glasnost, Bichkov told the congress that Baptists have lost an opportunity to buy a building within a couple of miles of the Kremlin to use as a seminary. The Soviet government's Department of Religious Affairs had promised the building to Baptists, but Moscow's City Council approved its sale to another party.

Bichkov quoted a religious affairs official as saying: "We are in a very confusing situation. If we can't return this piece of property to you, we will seek other solutions."

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Vestal defines
'bedrock' beliefs

By Toby Druin

N-CO
(Texas Std.)

Baptist Press
3/2/90

HOUSTON (BP)--The "bedrock" of Baptist belief, "the foundation of our mission as Baptists is nothing other and nothing less than Jesus Christ himself," not four things listed by the Southern Baptist Peace Committee report, Daniel Vestal told a missions conference in Houston Feb. 23.

About 300 participants at the conference, sponsored by eight Houston-area churches at Easthaven Baptist Church, heard Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta who has announced he will be nominated for the Southern Baptist Convention presidency in New Orleans in June, refer to remarks made by Morris Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.

Chapman, who also will be nominated for the SBC presidency, said in an interview that the Peace Committee report, adopted by the SBC in 1987, interpreted the Bible is "truth without any mixture of error" as meaning Adam and Eve were real people, the named authors did write the biblical books attributed to them by those books; the miracles were supernatural events in history; and the historical narratives in the Bible are accurate and reliable.

That, Chapman was quoted as saying, is "bedrock, Baptist belief."

Vestal, addressing the Houston missions conference audience, referred to Chapman's list of the four examples and said: "I disagree.

"I think the bedrock of Baptist faith is Jesus Christ, born of a virgin, living the sinless life, crucified, buried, resurrected, ascended and coming again -- Jesus Christ the lord, the savior, the friend.

"The bedrock, the foundation of our mission is nothing other and nothing less than Jesus Christ himself."

Vestal noted that it also was said that Southern Baptists must believe in a "perfect Bible."

"I want you to know that I believe in the perfect revelation of God and in the perfect record of it in Scripture," he said. "I don't have any problem in confessing my faith in a Bible that is perfect and inerrant."

The problem, he said, is not with the Bible. "The problem is with us," he added. "We are not perfect ... in understanding ... ability to interpret ... ability to proclaim ... and surely not perfect in the ability to live by the Bible."

Vestal spoke at the conference on "Honoring the Past and Shaping the Future." Other speakers included Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, former executive director of Southern Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union; Houston layman John Baugh; and Midland, Texas, layman James Lacy.

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Houston churches invite
world heads of state

By Toby Druin

N-CO
(Texas Std.)

HOUSTON (BP)--President George Bush, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and other heads of state or their representatives attending the economic summit in Houston July 9-11 have been invited to attend worship services and a day of prayer Sunday, July 8, in eight Southern Baptist churches in the area.

The invitations and announcement of the day of prayer were announced at a "Missions 2000 Conference" at Easthaven Baptist Church in Houston Feb. 23-24.

The conference was sponsored by Easthaven Church and seven other congregations to "celebrate our Southern Baptist heritage of cooperative mission endeavor."

The Friday-evening-through-Saturday morning conference featured addresses by Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta; Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, former executive director of Southern Baptist Convention Woman's Missionary Union; Houston layman John Baugh and Midland, Texas, layman Jim Lacy.

A press release issued following the conference notes recent events in the world have placed Christian missions "on the threshold of a pivotal moment."

"We are committed to doing all we can to provide the resources necessary to minister to the spiritual needs of people throughout the world," the statement says. "We realize, however, that any evangelistic effort will be hampered as long as provision for the physical and economic necessities of life are not forthcoming.

"On July 9-11, the leaders of the seven major industrialized democracies will hold an economic summit here in Houston. These world leaders will discuss and make decisions that will determine the economic realities of existence for people throughout the world. We believe that such momentous decisions are only properly made after seeking the guidance and direction of the Almighty."

In addition to the leaders of the seven leading industrialized nations, "countries in the process of democratization and integration into the world economy will be present as observers," the release notes and representatives of those Soviet and other Eastern Bloc countries also will be invited.

Easthaven Church Pastor Bruce Prescott said his church already has sent an invitation to Bush and Gorbachev.

Others participating and the leaders they have invited include:

-- First Baptist Church, Galena Park, Jerry Webber, pastor, inviting Premier Ciriaco de Mita of Italy and Premier Georgi Atanasov of Bulgaria.

-- Golden Acres Baptist Church, Pasadena, Royce Measures, pastor, inviting Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain and President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia.

-- Meadowbrook Baptist Church, Houston, Tony Pearson, pastor, inviting Prime Minister Brian Mulroney of Canada and Premier Miklos Nemeth of Hungary.

-- Nassau Bay Baptist Church, Bill Rittenhouse, pastor, inviting Interim President Ion Iliescu of Romania and exiled King Michael of Romania.

-- South Main Baptist Church of Houston, William L. Turner, pastor, inviting Premier Toshiki Kaifu of Japan and Premier Ante Markovic of Yugoslavia.

-- South Main Baptist Church, Pasadena, Ron Lyles, pastor, inviting Chancellor Helmut Kohn of West Germany and Prime Minister Hans Modrow of East Germany.

-- University Baptist Church, Clear Lake, Robert Creech, pastor, inviting President Francois Mitterand of France and Premier Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Poland.