

# (BP)

## BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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91-175

**Kentuckians vote to fund BJCPA,  
ask FMB to reconsider decision** By Mark Wingfield & Marv Knox

LEXINGTON, Ky. (BP)--The budget went down, the Baptist Joint Committee came back and the Cooperative Program remained intact as Kentucky Baptists made decisions about their money last week.

Dollars-and-cents decisions dominated business sessions during the 154th annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Convention at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington Nov. 12-13. With no discussion, messengers approved a 1992-93 KBC Cooperative Program operating budget of \$17.34 million, a 3.1 percent decrease from the current year's budget goal. The KBC ended its 1990-91 fiscal year Aug. 31 with total Cooperative Program gifts falling 5 percent below the budget goal of \$17.9 million. This was the first time since the Great Depression that gifts failed to surpass a previous year's total.

Despite a decrease in available funds, messengers voted 331-195 to place the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in the state convention's unified budget.

The Washington-based religious liberty agency historically had been funded through the portion of Kentucky money forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program. However, the BJC was defunded by messengers to last summer's SBC meeting in Atlanta, and its program assignments were given to the SBC Christian Life Commission.

Bill Messer, pastor of First Baptist Church in Ashland, presented a motion requesting the KBC executive board to "find a way to provide funds in the 1993-94 budget and subsequent budgets to allow our convention to continue to support the Baptist Joint Committee." Despite the SBC's move away from the Joint Committee, the KBC "has not changed, ... has not moved," he said.

Messengers referred to a special study committee a motion that would have based KBC messenger representation on all giving to the state convention's work rather than on undesignated Cooperative Program gifts.

The motion's strongest supporter, Jim Holladay, pastor of East Baptist Church in Louisville, said the change would have allowed churches upset about national SBC decisions to continue as cooperating churches by supporting the state's unified budget without supporting the national unified budget.

"I do not want the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention to become a divisive litmus test for our work in the state," Holladay said. "I want us all to stay together." But rather than deciding the issue this year, messengers referred the motion to a special study committee on the Cooperative Program, which also was granted a one-year extension by messengers.

Messengers voted 418-97 to approve a resolution calling upon trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to reconsider their action taken in October to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and to "find a more amicable solution to the issue."

FMB trustee Bill Hall, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church in Danville, Ky., spoke against the resolution.

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He cited an upcoming meeting of FMB and European leaders and called the resolution needless. "The board is already doing what this resolution calls for," he said. Messengers also voted to expand the size of the KBC executive board by adding eight at-large members. Other executive board members are nominated by the state convention's 78 district associations.

In other business, messengers:

-- Elected four of the convention's five officers without opposition. President Glenn Mollette, First Vice President Floyd Price, Secretary Wilma Simmons and Assistant Secretary Joe Priest Williams all gained office by acclamation.

Second Vice President Ginny Sisk won her post over three other contenders on the first ballot.

Mollette has been pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Ky., since 1984. Price is pastor of Buck Grove Baptist Church in Ekron, Ky. Sisk is a former president of the Southern Baptist Conference of Minister's Wives and has been active in Woman's Missionary Union. Simmons, of Ekron, has been clerk and secretary of Salem Baptist Association for many years. Williams was the pastor of Baptist Tabernacle in Louisville for more than 25 years until his retirement.

-- Agreed to withdraw a constitutional amendment that would have required election of a layperson as KBC president within every four-year period.

-- Decided to cooperate with local associations to conduct evangelism emphases at KBC annual meetings and evangelism conferences.

-- Heard an amendment to the covenant agreements of the three KBC senior colleges -- Campbellsville, Cumberland and Georgetown -- to allow each school to have eight trustees from out of state.

-- Withdrew a proposed change in the description of the KBC public affairs committee that would have mandated that the committee "work in close cooperation with" the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in addition to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

-- Approved a resolution calling for fidelity to sexual relations within marriage, while expressing compassion for victims of AIDS.

The 1992 convention will meet Nov. 10-11 at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

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Record number of messengers  
gather for Louisiana meeting

By Gary W. Griffith

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11/19/91

LAFAYETTE, La. (BP)--While the rest of Louisiana and the nation focused on a state gubernatorial contest between Edwin Edwards and David Duke last week, Louisiana Baptist Convention messengers made key decisions about their leadership and support of Southern Baptist Convention causes.

A record 2,101 LBC messengers gathered for the 144th annual convention session in Lafayette, La., Nov. 11-12. Messengers elected a new state president by a narrow margin, increased their support of Southern Baptist Convention causes with approval of a budget amendment and approved a resolution decrying the recent defunding of Ruschlikon Baptist Theological Seminary in Switzerland. They also approved a charter change for the only LBC supported college in the state and entered a covenant agreement with their official newsjournal.

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Roger Freeman, pastor at First Baptist Church of New Orleans, was elected LBC president in a runoff election by a margin of 35 votes against Robert Anderson, pastor of Parkview Baptist Church in Baton Rouge. Freeman succeeds two-term LBC President Fred Lowery, who is pastor at First Baptist Church of Bossier City and former SBC second vice president.

Messengers also elected two laymen as LBC officers. A.C. Kirkpatrick of Lake Charles was elected first vice president, and Carl Gulde of Jena was elected second vice president.

During consideration of the 1992 state convention budget, messengers approved a motion to increase the portion of funds forwarded through the national Cooperative Program by 0.25 percent.

Messenger L.H. McCollough of Bastrop brought the motion to amend the SBC portion of the state budget, and messengers agreed to send 35.25 percent of all state convention receipts to the Cooperative Program. The 1990 percentage of the SBC portion was 35 percent.

Convention planners recalculated the proposed budget of \$16.5 million to maintain the originally proposed dollar amount for each state convention entity, despite slightly reduced percentages for them. The new goal for the state is \$16,562,548, an increase of 3.4 percent from the current year. The SBC Cooperative Program is to be forwarded \$5,732,548, or 35.25 percent.

During consideration of convention resolutions, messengers joined the chorus of protests about the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's recent defunding of Ruschlikon seminary. They opposed the defunding action as "a serious breach of trust" and urged the missions board to reinstate 1992 funds to the seminary.

Approval of the resolution came after 17 minutes of discussion and two moves that would have forestalled consideration of the matter. But messengers approved the resolution by what appeared to be a two-to-one margin.

Following a year of dialogue, explanation and negotiation, messengers approved a restated charter for Louisiana College in Pineville, the only LBC supported college in the state.

An LC charter proposal had been planned for state convention consideration at the 1990 annual meeting, but it was withdrawn because of concern that some critics would take action against the school.

Some Louisiana Baptists charged the restated document weakened ties between the state convention and school. That sentiment was fueled by actions at Baylor University in Texas and other schools, in which trustees moved to distance their institutions from state convention control.

Messengers to the 1990 state meeting authorized appointment of a committee to dialogue with the school regarding the charter and to report back to the 1991 convention.

Last week, messengers easily approved the renegotiated charter proposal after receiving assurance from the special dialogue committee that the document maintains ties between the school and state denomination. A two-thirds majority was needed for approval, and the standing vote appeared to indicate a three-to-one or four-to-one margin.

During a lengthy afternoon business session, messengers agreed to enter into an unprecedented covenant relationship with the state convention newspaper, the Louisiana Baptist Message.

Through the covenant, messengers affirmed their support and protection of a "free flow of news and information" through their official newsjournal. It appears to be the first agreement of its kind between a state convention and denominational newspaper.

The agreement also upholds the idea of the believer's right to know, affirms the editorial and leadership role of the newspaper editor, calls for any discussion related to the termination of the editor to be held in open session and cites the importance of electing persons committed to such ideas as trustees of the newspaper.

Approval of the covenant marks the end of more than a year of tension and threatened controversy for the state publication. The tension arose in August 1990, when Louisiana Baptist Message trustees and Editor Lynn P. Clayton entered into a contractual agreement related to how and why the editor could be removed from his position.

Supporters insisted the document was needed to protect the integrity of and free flow of information through the newspaper. Critics argued the contract was unprecedented, unneeded and extravagant in its severance package terms.

As the 1990 convention drew near, speculation heightened that critics would seek to move against the newspaper in some way. In response, Clayton announced to convention messengers that trustees had agreed to restudy the document.

In the ensuing months, a trustee committee engaged in personal interviews and commissioned a survey on what kind of newspaper Louisiana Baptists wanted. In a called meeting in September, trustees and Clayton agreed to rescind the contract and ask convention messengers for a covenant agreement.

Messengers approved the covenant on a standing vote with a margin of at least 85 percent to 15 percent last week.

The 1992 LBC annual meeting is scheduled for Nov. 9-10 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Utah-Idaho Baptists elect  
first Hispanic president

Baptist Press  
11/19/91

BOISE, Idaho (BP)--Messengers to the 27th annual meeting of the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention elected a language pastor as president for the 1992 year.

Paul Rodriguez, pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Mexicana in Burley, Idaho, was chosen by acclamation. Rodriguez also is pastor for the Jackpot Spanish Baptist Mission in Jackpot, Nev.

Other officers elected are: Eric Faye, pastor of First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City, first vice president; Gene Crewse, pastor of Mountain View Baptist Church, Boise, second vice president; and Dan Walker, pastor of University Baptist Church, Boise, for a third term as recording secretary.

Executive Director Clyde Billingsley urged those in attendance to be proud of their Southern Baptist heritage. "God never places an ambassador in the wrong country," he said. "Until we see Jesus, we are the only king people see."

Four new churches were received into the fellowship of the convention: Calvary Baptist Church, Weiser, Idaho; Mountain View Baptist Church, Huntington, Utah; Pierce Park Baptist Church, Boise; and Jackpot Baptist Church. These additions bring the total number of member churches to 97.

A total of 152 messengers and 36 guests at the Nov. 12-13 annual meeting.

A budget of \$1,483,420 was approved. This total is an increase of \$60,000 over the 1991 budget. To meet that goal, convention churches will contribute \$449,179. Of this amount, 21 percent will be given to the national Cooperative Program unified budget, the same as last year.

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Huron Polnac, chairman of the constitution committee, introduced proposed changes to the constitution during the Wednesday afternoon session. The committee proposed adding statements limiting membership on the board to individuals who were members of good standing of a church affiliated with the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention that is giving to the Cooperative Program. It was also proposed not more than one person from any given church be elected to the board except in the case of an elected officer and a board member belonging to the same church.

The article in which the proposed changes were to appear was read to those at the meeting. One statement, "No member of the board shall hold any remunerative office under the convention of any of its agencies," raised some questions among the messengers. Discussion as to whether this statement disqualified any of the pastors receiving assistance from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board followed. A motion was made to table the proposed constitution changes until 1992 at which time the constitution committee would be able to clarify the remunerative statement.

Medford Hutson, chairman of the time-place-preacher committee, brought a motion to the floor suggesting the 28th annual meeting be held at Holladay Baptist Church in Salt Lake City, Nov. 10-11. The motion passed.

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Michigan Baptists increase  
Cooperative Program giving

Baptist Press  
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ANN ARBOR, Mich. (BP)--Five hundred sixty one messengers and guests participated in the 34th annual session of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan Nov. 12-14.

Levi Parish, pastor of Eastgate Baptist Church in Flint, was re-elected president. August Peters, pastor of Hillsdale Baptist Church, was re-elected first vice president, and Charles Watson, pastor of Beaconsfield Baptist Church in East Detroit, was elected second vice president.

Messengers adopted a total budget of \$2,764,883, with \$1,148,659 to come from Michigan Baptists. Of the total given in the state, 30.5 percent will be forwarded to the national Cooperative Program unified budget. This is the 21st year Michigan Baptists have increased world mission gifts by 0.5 percent.

Roy Adams, director of the services division of the convention which includes stewardship, was recognized for 16 years of service. He will retire at the end of 1991.

The convention will next meet Nov. 10-12 at Bethany Baptist Church in Lansing.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "'Share Heritage and Hope' theme for New England Baptists" dated 11/12/91, please make the following changes in the second and third paragraphs, respectively.

Meeting at Island Pond Baptist Church in Hampstead, N.H., 217 messengers and 111 visitors ...

Messengers approved a 1992 budget of \$2,198,782, up almost ...

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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