

**(BP)****-- BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Herb Hollinger, Vice President  
Fax (615) 742-8919  
CompuServe ID# 70420,17**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522  
**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232  
**NASHVILLE** Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Tom Strobe, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

May 6, 1992

92-79

**Raleigh Baptist Association  
votes Pullen Memorial out**

By R.G. Puckett

CARY, N.C. (BP)--With a standing-room-only crowd in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church here, a record attendance of messengers from Raleigh Baptist Association churches voted Pullen Memorial Baptist Church out of its fellowship by an 8-2 margin.

The Raleigh congregation announced March 1 its members had voted by a 64-36 percent margin to "bless" the "union" of two male homosexuals. The service of union was performed by the church's pastor, Mahan Siler, March 15.

There were 568 votes to remove Pullen from the association's membership and 144 against -- a 79.8 to 20.2 percentage. Early in the near-two-hour associational meeting, it was announced that 815 messengers had registered though the ballot vote totaled only 720. Also, seven ballots were ruled as improper and one was an abstention. The meeting was closed to the media and no cameras were allowed in the sanctuary.

The motion from the association's executive committee to the called meeting provides for a period in which Pullen can make "the desired change of its beliefs and practices in this matter by (the association's annual meeting, Oct. 26-27, 1992)" and then "the Association will receive said church in good fellowship. If not, the relationship of the Raleigh Baptist Association and Pullen Memorial Baptist Church will be terminated."

Efforts by moderator Jerry Hayner, pastor of Forest Hills Baptist Church, to keep the session calm and deliberative failed at points with shouts of "railroad," "point of order" and "time." Ground rules were established at the opening of the meeting, with each speaker to be limited to three minutes and speakers on each side of the issue to be recognized on an alternating basis. Also, the session, which started at 7:30 p.m., was to close by 9.

Efforts to give representatives from Pullen an opportunity to present their position failed. Two proposals -- one providing them with 10 minutes, another for 15 -- were overwhelmingly voted down by the messengers. After the meeting, persons from Pullen expressed their disappointment they were not given ample time to be heard.

After first approving a separate statement on "Human Sexuality" with only one adjustment -- the word "relationship" was changed to "marriage" on a suggestion from Joe T. Knott III, a member at Providence Baptist Church -- messengers narrowly defeated a motion to cut off debate and vote immediately on the subsequent proposal to remove Pullen from the association's membership.

A ballot vote was used for the motion to cut off debate, and the motion was voted down 398-363. Debate continued until the 9 p.m. adjournment time forced the vote on the primary question. A motion to adjourn without voting was defeated.

Several mess ngers left while the ballots were being counted but most remained to hear the results.

Hayn r closed the session with an appeal to the group that they leave "without celebration but with prayer."

"The consensus of Baptists in the area was expressed," said Charles McMillan,

"The fellowship is broken immediately. It's a very painful time for us," he added.

"The termination of a 109-year relationship is painful," Pullen pastor Siler told the Raleigh News & Observer after the associational vote.

"I am not surprised by the outcome," Siler told the newspaper, saying he felt the decision was reached hastily and there should have been more "respectful debate. It took months for our congregation to come to their conclusion."

Siler told the newspaper he did not know what would be the next step for Pullen. "As a church, we'll have to receive what actions happened and do what we think fits our vision of ministry," he said.

Among points contained in the proposed statement on human sexuality by the Raleigh association are:

-- "No society can exist without a common core of values and without an acceptable set of limits."

-- Jesus' words in Mark 10:6-8 that God's creation involved "male and female" who in marriage "become one flesh." Thus "the biblical model for the expression of human sexuality" is 1) a man and a woman united in a lifelong faithful marriage "by which each realizes the ultimate partnership of life and through which God has provided the possibility of procreation and rearing of children" or 2) "singleness and celibacy."

-- "The 'blessing' of a homosexual union in a Christian ceremony is particularly offensive in that it gives approval to that which has been specifically forbidden."

-- "All humans sin, and the church is part of God's strategy to make His grace and redemption available to human kind. While Baptist churches, in general, reject homosexual behavior as a lifestyle, many are engaged in ministry to and with homosexuals."

-- "An unflinching stand for the biblical way of expressing human sexuality should in no way be interpreted as a reason for personal attacks on homosexuals. Violence of any kind -- physical, verbal, or political -- against persons for any reasons is specifically denounced."

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SBC reception will honor  
Keith Parks' missions career

Baptist Press  
5/6/92

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, will be guests of honor during a special reception June 10 at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis.

The reception, scheduled for 4-5:30 p.m., will be concurrent with the annual foreign missions reception at the convention meeting. Mission board officials anticipate up to 1,000 people will attend and have reserved the Capitol Ballroom in the Westin Hotel across Maryland Street from the Hoosier Dome and Convention Center, site of convention sessions.

"We felt like we would be remiss if we did not give Southern Baptists who are at the convention the opportunity to come and thank Dr. Parks for his contribution to foreign missions," said Don Reavis of the Foreign Mission Board's public affairs office.

Parks announced in April he would retire in October, citing differences with board trustees in foreign missions philosophy and administration.

The Parkses were appointed missionaries to Indonesia in 1954. In 1968 trustees invited him to board headquarters in Richmond, Va., to direct mission work in Southeast Asia. He was elected to lead the entire foreign missions enterprise in 1979.

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His tenure as president has brought with it some of Southern Baptists' most dramatic world missions expansion and he has become the denomination's most respected missionary figure.

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Southern Baptist resources  
offered to help families

By Elizabeth Young

Baptist Press  
5/6/92

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--"Who the family will be in the future depends on who we are becoming today," Southern Baptist marriage enrichment leaders Britton and Bobbye Wood write in their book, "Christian Families Growing Stronger."

Christian Home Emphasis, which traditionally runs for six weeks from Mother's Day to Father's Day, is a time for churches to focus attention on the needs of families and how they can meet those needs. The theme for Christian Home Emphasis 1992 is the same as the Woods' book title, "Christian Families Growing Stronger."

"The media often remind us of the breakdown of families and the problems facing families today," state the writers of the "Family Ministry PlanBook 1991-92," published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department. "Perhaps it is time to focus on healthy, strong, growing families as role models for other families within and beyond our churches."

As Britton and Bobbye Wood of Fort Worth, Texas, state, "Christian families need to take the lead in demonstrating what strong families are like."

"Every congregation includes families with a wide variety of needs," states the "Family Ministry PlanBook 1991-92," a resource in planning for Christian Home Emphasis. "While some families face major crises that require counseling, the majority are relatively healthy families with stable marriages and normal parent-child and sibling relationships. But even the best of families need to grow."

Churches have unique opportunities to help families grow and all program organizations of the church can be part of the task.

There are many Southern Baptist resources available:

-- Age-graded books for the 1992 Christian Home Emphasis, along with a church planning guide and resource kit for Christian Home Emphasis.

-- Equipping Center Modules, including titles such as "Families Practicing God's Love," "Parent-Teen Relationships" and "Helping Children Deal with Crisis."

-- LIFE Courses, including "Parenting by Grace: Discipline and Spiritual Growth," "Christian Self-Esteem, Parenting by Grace" and "Covenant Marriage: Partnership and Commitment."

-- Books published by Convention and Broadman Press such as "Families Planning for Bible Study and Worship," "Helps for the Single Parent Christian Family" and "Building Bonds Between Adults and Their Aging Parents."

-- Periodicals, including "Home Life," "Living with Preschoolers," "Living with Children," "Living with Teenagers" and "Proclaim" magazine (family-related sermon suggestions in April, May, June issue).

-- Videos such as "Understanding the Family of the 90's" and "Youth Under Pressure: A Parent-Teenager Dialogue."

-- Tracts, including "Parenthood -- for Better or for Worse" and "Divorce: What Now?"

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All of the above resources are available from Baptist Book Stores or from the Baptist Sunday School Board Customer Service Center 1-800-458-BSSB.

Churches may also request leaflets, booklets and other resources at no charge other than postage and handling from the family ministry department, Baptist Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37234. These resources include the "Family Ministry Ideas" booklet, "Family Enrichment Resource Catalog" and information on family enrichment regional training.

The family ministry departments of state conventions are another major resource. These departments have available many of the items mentioned above and have trained consultants who can lead conferences such as "Parenting By Grace" and "Covenant Marriage."

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Dallas Baptist collection  
shares Corrie ten Boom legacy

By Darrell Wood

Baptist Press  
5/6/92

DALLAS (BP)--In the year she would have turned 100, the Corrie ten Boom Collection at Dallas Baptist University remains a continuing reminder of the Dutch evangelical's life and message.

North America's largest repository of Ten Boom's memorabilia, its curator is Pam Rosewell Moore, director of DBU's intercessory prayer ministry and Ten Boom's assistant and companion the last seven years of her life. Miss Ten Boom died in 1983 at age 91.

Affectionately called "Tante Corrie" by Moore (Tante being the Dutch word for aunt), the gifted Christian writer and communicator was best known through the book, "The Hiding Place," and movie of the same name. Christians and Jews in numerous countries have been touched by Ten Boom's story of faith and courage -- how Jesus Christ gave victory over the horrors of the Nazi concentration camp. She and her family were imprisoned at Ravensbruck, Germany, for hiding Jewish friends in their home in Haarlem, Holland, during World War II. Called "righteous gentiles" by the Israeli government, she and others like her -- Protestants and Catholics alike -- risked their homes, families, businesses and lives to save Jewish neighbors and even strangers from Nazi slaughter.

The array of artifacts displayed in the Corrie ten Boom Room of DBU's Collins Learning Center includes letters, publications, tapes, photographs and thousands of slides chronicling Ten Boom's more than 30 years of travel to speak and teach in more than 60 countries. Circling the globe twice, she shared her testimony with kings, presidents and celebrities as well as farmers, factory workers and prison inmates.

Dallas Baptist University celebrated the 100th anniversary of Ten Boom's birth April 15 with a Christian writers' workshop on campus featuring John and Elizabeth Sherrill who wrote the book, "The Hiding Place."

The last five years of Ten Boom's life mirror the nonverbal nature of items in the collection. Her voice was stilled in 1978 when a paralyzing stroke halted her writing, travels and speaking. As successive strokes left her an invalid and unable to make personal appearances, the inspiration of her writings continued to have an impact in many lands and languages.

Perhaps the greatest legacy of Ten Boom's life and ministry involved God's love and forgiveness highlighted in Germany by an experience she had in a Munich church in 1947. After she spoke, a balding, heavyset man approached her. A shudder swept over her as she recognized him as one of the German guards at Ravensbruck concentration camp where she and her sister, Betsie, were interned. (Betsie was finally "freed" from Ravensbruck -- one of 96,000 women to die there.)

The former Nazi storm trooper had become a Christian after the war. He said he knew God had forgiven him for the cruel things he did at Ravensbruck and asked Ten Boom to forgive him too.

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By a sheer act of the will and God's grace, she placed her hand into his hand outstretched to her.

"I forgive you, brother!" Ten Boom cried. "With all my heart!"

She recounted that electrifying reconciliation: "For a long moment we grasped each other's hands, the former guard and former prisoner. I had never known God's love so intensely as I did then."

God gave Corrie ten Boom a global ministry after age 50, in obedience to her Lord and to sister Betsie's plea that they must "tell people" what happened at Ravensbruck.

The Corrie ten Boom Collection at DBU is open weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon. Admission is free.

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Darrell Wood is director of public relations at Dallas Baptist University.

22 former S.C. presidents  
endorse severing Furman ties

Baptist Press  
5/6/92

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--A group of 22 former South Carolina Baptist Convention presidents has signed a statement endorsing the pending recommendations of the convention's general board to sever ties with Furman University.

The 85-member board's recommendations, adopted April 24, will be voted on by messengers in a called convention scheduled Friday, May 15, 1 p.m. at the Cantey Building on the State Fairgrounds in Columbia.

The recommendations include a formal severing of ties between the convention and Furman; plans to divert convention-allocated funds for Furman into scholarship assistance for students from Baptist churches attending Furman; and creation of a special committee to study the relationship between the convention and its agencies and institutions.

In their statement, the 22 former convention presidents noted:

"We, the undersigned, who have served as president of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, endorse the recent recommendation of the 34 pastors who initiated a resolution to the controversy between the convention and Furman University, and we commend the Executive Committee and the General Board of South Carolina Baptist Convention for requesting our current president Eddie Greene to call a special session of the convention in Columbia May 15, 1992.

"Being aware of the biblical injunction against Christians suing one another, of the drain upon our energy and resources that would result from long and costly litigation, of the contention and division that have hurt the Cooperative Program as the lifeline of our world mission commitment and of the need for South Carolina Baptists to devote ourselves to our previously approved 10-year emphasis 'Empowering Kingdom Growth,' we prayerfully and respectfully urge approval by this special convention of the recommendations from the General Board. This we believe will be in the best long-term interest of the advancement of Christ's kingdom in our state and to the uttermost parts of the world, as well as of the South Carolina Baptist Convention and its Cooperative Program and Furman University."

Signing the statement were John Hamrick, Sam M. Smith, David G. Anderson, S. George Lovell Jr., Preston H. Callison, Stewart B. Simms Sr., Patrick L. Baughman, James R. Bruce, Hovie D. Revis Jr., Carl E. Compton, Lloyd E. Batson, J.K. Lawton Sr., John E. Roberts, Lonnie H. Shull Jr., Horace B. Sims Jr., B.F. Hawkins, M.B. Morrow Jr., Earl D. Crumpler, George R. Dye, Flynn T. Harrell, Douglas N. Baker and Robert E. Cuttino.

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Research fellowship  
to meet prior to SBC

ATLANTA (BP)--Studies of American Protestantism and marginal church members will be among the research presented during the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship meeting Saturday, June 6, at the Holiday Inn Union Station in Indianapolis.

The program includes research reports of:

-- Southern Baptist perceptions of quality pastoral ministry by John Dever of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

-- Churches and church members in the United States by Martin Bradley of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

-- National study of marginal church members by Kirk Hadaway of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, United Church of Christ, and Penny Marler of Hartford Seminary.

-- Research on American Protestantism in the 1990s by James Lewis, director of the Louisville Institute for the Study of Protestantism in American Culture.

The program, which includes a banquet, will begin at 12:30 p.m. and is scheduled to conclude at 9 p.m. To register for the meeting, contact Chester Davidson, program information specialist with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, at (214) 828-5138 or 333 North Washington, Dallas, TX 75246-1798.

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Eights awards to be presented  
during new work banquet

Baptist Press  
5/6/92

ATLANTA (BP)--Eight awards for leadership in starting churches will be given by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during a new work banquet Monday, June 8, in Indianapolis.

The banquet is sponsored by the Home Mission Board in cooperation with the Southern Baptist New Work Fellowship.

The purpose of the banquet is to recognize leaders who started churches last year and to create awareness of the "crisis need" for new work, said David Bunch, Home Mission Board assistant vice president for strategy development.

James Herrington, director of missions for Union Baptist Association in Houston, will deliver the keynote address on "Empowering Kingdom Growth Through the Association."

More than 600 people have been invited to the banquet by state convention mission leaders and HMB President Larry Lewis. The program will begin at 6 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency.

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