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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 Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

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NASHVILLE -- Stewardship Commission cuts professional staff, salaries.
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NASHVILLE -- BSSB trustees OK budget adjustment, hear first quarter financial report.
DENVER -- Colorado executive to serve as home missionary in Kansas.

Stewardship Commission cuts
professional staff, salaries

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
2/11/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention's Stewardship Commission will reduce its professional staff by three positions and cut salaries of other professional staff by 5 percent, A.R. Fagan, commission president, announced Feb. 10.

Fagan, in a news release, noted the commission also cut two positions last year after retirements. The reductions will leave it with 11 professional staff members, compared to 16 at the outset of 1992.

Additionally, the Stewardship Commission used some \$250,000 in reserve funds each of the past two years to meet its budget. In financial information presented to the SBC Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee in January, commission reserves for the 1992-93 budget year stand at \$847,555, compared to \$1.1 million in 1991-92 -- and a projected \$647,109 for 1993-94.

"Economic conditions the last few years have led us to believe that we should take the lead in downsizing our organization as a matter of good stewardship," Fagan said in the news release.

He added, "Our commitment is to continue to provide the very best quality of materials for churches in promoting stewardship and the Cooperative Program," the SBC's channel for national and international missions and ministries through SBC mission boards, agencies and educational institutions.

"We will continue to offer to our churches the recognized 'Flagship' of the industry of professionally led fund-raising services, 'Together We Build,'" Fagan said. The commission observed its 30th anniversary year in 1991.

Fagan was traveling Feb. 11 and not available for comment.

The commission's 1992-93 budget stands at \$2.36 million and was \$2.5 million in 1991-92.

Due to the Persian Gulf crisis, recession and weak recovery, the Together We Build staff has seen the number of local church TWB programs drop 29 percent since the 1989-90 record year of 102 TWB programs, said Carl Hoffman, commission executive vice president for endowment and capital giving promotion.

During the 1990-91 and 1991-92 years, the number of programs has been flat at slightly over 70, with the same number projected this year, Hoffman said.

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Other financial strains cited by Fagan in materials presented in January are:

-- "The Cooperative Program allocation was smaller than the previous year." CP, however, provides only 20 percent of the commission's income, he noted in his news release.

-- "The sale of materials was below normal." In addition to revenue from Together We Build campaign, the commission relies heavily on income from a range of materials it produces for state Baptist conventions and local churches to promote the Cooperative Program, giving and tithing by church members and principles of budget planning for church leaders.

-- Interest on the commission's reserve funds had fallen.

Recommendations from the Executive Committee's program and budget subcommittee January deliberations for the 1993-94 budget year call for 1.4 percent allocation cuts to all SBC entities except the Christian Life Commission and SBC operating budget. The CLC's budget would not be cut, while the SBC operating budget would be cut by 2 percent.

Among measures to ease the commission's finances in recent years, Fagan reported in January, were the elimination of two professional positions after the staffers retired in 1992; continued use of reserve funds; reduction of budgeted expenditures by \$473,305; and sale of several automobiles provided for staff use.

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ROUNDUP

FMB initiates Europe changes,
sends WMU dialogue tape overseas By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
2/11/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees projected a new direction for mission work in Europe, debated how to communicate a dialogue with Woman's Missionary Union to missionaries overseas, and shelved a proposal to study whether the mission board should move.

Meeting Feb. 8-10 in Richmond, they also heard reports of increased evangelism and church growth overseas -- even in remote Mongolia -- and appointed 27 missionaries and reappointed one.

John Floyd, a former missionary and current vice president at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., was elected unanimously to become area director for Europe, effective March 1. He succeeds Keith Parker, who took early retirement last year in protest of board actions.

But in the same session, trustees voted to realign mission work in European countries into two administrative areas -- Western Europe and Eastern Europe. Floyd will administer the whole area until the realignment takes place and another area director is elected to lead one of the areas.

Trustee chairman John Jackson said he was pleased at the decision to create a new area, which came out of a recommendation from Sam James, vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. "Most of us have looked forward to this for some time, and we hoped staff would study it," Jackson said.

James, who earlier favored keeping Europe as one administrative area, said travel in the area changed his mind -- as long as both areas stay under the unifying supervision of the same regional office.

He warned trustees that not all European Baptists and missionaries will like the new alignment. Many fear that "dividing" Europe will create problems in an area finally free from division by the Iron Curtain.

The Feb. 8 dialogue with Woman's Missionary Union leaders continued to be the focus of intense discussion at the trustees' plenary session two days later.

Questions from trustees at the tense session with the WMU leaders focused on the WMU executive board's January vote to assist mission groups other than just the Foreign and Home Mission boards.

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WMU leaders said they are responding to a changing Southern Baptist scene and will continue to assist the two mission boards. But trustees feel the WMU is abandoning the unity of Southern Baptist Convention-sponsored mission efforts to aid groups like the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Trustees approved a motion from their communications committee to send a videotape of the entire two-hour session to the approximately 125 regional organizations of Southern Baptist missionaries overseas so the missionaries could judge the dialogue for themselves. They also will send a transcript of it to each missionary.

The decision to send the videotapes and transcripts came despite questions raised by Jackson and interim FMB president Don Kammerdiener about the wisdom of the action. They asked that the matter be referred to them for discussion. But a motion to that effect lost by a one-vote margin. A later motion to reconsider also failed.

Kammerdiener expressed concern about how the tape, which does not communicate the entire trustee meeting, would affect missionary morale. "What questions would they have?" he asked. "How would they be answered? Would it create more concerns or less concerns?" The board's communication office should send a balanced report overseas that includes everything, he said.

Trustee John Simms of Virginia, a member of the communications committee, said the committee recommended sending the videotape because it felt a Richmond Times-Dispatch article reporting on the dialogue already was in the hands of missionaries. "The committee thought they should see for themselves what happened," Simms said.

Angered over the tone and content of the Times-Dispatch article, trustees approved a motion by trustee Bob Clements of Texas that the Richmond daily newspaper "send us a responsible reporter to cover our meetings."

They also approved an amendment to the videotape motion, proposed by trustee Paul Pressler of Texas, that it also be sent to the editor of the Times-Dispatch so he could evaluate the fairness of the coverage.

The article characterized the dialogue as "angry" and said trustees had "summoned" WMU officers to explain themselves.

Reporter Ed Briggs, the author of the article, told Baptist Press he believes he gave a fair report in the space he had available.

"It was the way the meeting came across during the dialogue and in events leading up to it," Briggs said. "WMU leaders were seated at a table and the trustees were peppering them with questions trying to get them to justify their actions.

"In a nutshell, it's the way we saw it," Briggs said. "Anyone who looks at that tape will see it basically as I reported it."

In his president's report, Kammerdiener drew "amens" and applause from trustees as he thanked Woman's Missionary Union for the spiritual and financial nurture it has provided to missions and gave his interpretation of the tone of the Feb. 8 dialogue.

"You were invited here," he told WMU leaders in attendance. "You were not summoned. As you graciously invited us to come to your meeting (in January), we invited you. You're always welcome here. This is your home."

Reflecting on the dialogue, Kammerdiener said: "We engaged in serious, intense dialogue about issues that are of great concern to us. If we didn't feel things deeply -- if we didn't have deep concerns for the future of our relationships and the work of this agency and WMU -- we would overlook things and not get below the surface. But the fact that we care deeply means that we must discuss intensely. I hope this dialogue will continue."

The proposal on a move out of Richmond by the Foreign Mission Board grew out of a discussion in the trustee strategy committee, which was referred to the trustee policy subcommittee.

The policy group reported to trustees Feb. 10 that it would not study a move but, instead, reaffirm a 1991 decision that set up six criteria the board would use in determining a move from Richmond.

The criteria, which followed a study of a move, are: 1) evidence relocation cost could be amortized through operational savings within 10 years; 2) potential of an alternative that would equal or improve the current work environment, transportation, skilled labor force and parking; 3) a viable proposal to maintain the board's Missionary Learning Center located just outside Richmond; 4) sufficient funds outside normal support channels that would not come from overseas funds; 5) no projected increase in budget expenditures in the United States; and 6) no long-term carrying costs before the current building could be sold.

In other action, trustees learned they will receive a recommendation in April that they elect Faye Pearson, a 24-year veteran of foreign missions, to become area director for East Asia. The position has been vacant since Sam James left it last year to become a vice president. Since 1988, Pearson has been associate to the area director for East Asia for Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao.

Trustees also voted to affirm their "full and unwavering support" of the committee searching for a successor to former president R. Keith Parks, and they referred for study a motion that would require a 75 percent majority vote to elect FMB staff subject to trustee approval.

In an earlier meeting, trustees voted to require that margin for the election of a new president. Trustees elect the top administrators of the board. These include the president, executive vice president, director of research and planning, the vice presidents for communications, finance and treasurer, and mission personnel; five regional vice presidents and the area directors who supervise the work overseas; and the board's assistant recording secretary.

Trustee James Garland of Kentucky, who made the motion to affirm the search committee, said he did so because of press reports and rumors that indicated the committee might resign.

The committee has spent nine months looking for a successor to Parks, and was recently turned down by Oklahoma Pastor Tom Elliff, who said he and his wife "haven't had any peace that we should continue in this process."

Search committee chairman Joel Gregory of Texas denied at that time a rumor the 15-member committee might resign. He said the committee, which had met 13 times and held five teleconferences at that point, has invested much effort in the search and will continue to seek a candidate.

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Erich Bridges and Marty Croll contributed to this story.

(BP) photos (two horizontal) mailed Feb. 10 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutlines available on SBCNet Newsroom, as well as a synopsis of board actions.

Trustees OK realignment,
elect Floyd to lead Europe

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
2/11/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board took action during its Feb. 8-10 meeting to keep pace with dramatic changes in the spiritual climate of post-Cold War Europe.

Board trustees unanimously elected John Floyd, a former missionary church starter, as area director for Europe effective March 1. They also decided to find a second area director for the region and form separate mission administrations in Eastern and Western Europe.

Floyd, 58, a native of Lockesburg, Ark., is vice president of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn. During his missionary career in the Philippines, 1965-76, he became director of church growth after serving on a committee that designed a hands-on approach to church starting.

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Since then, other mission fields have adopted similar methods. The approach grew out of research introduced under the leadership of former board President R. Keith Parks, who at the time was area director for southern Asia.

The new Eastern Europe administrative area -- likely to involve the former Soviet Union -- was recommended by Sam James, vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. "Most of us have looked forward to this for some time, and we hoped the staff would study it," trustee chairman John Jackson said.

Several months ago James told trustees he planned to keep Europe as one administrative area. But after a grueling trip to visit 200 missionaries living in more than 15 countries, James said he changed his mind -- as long as both areas stay together under the unifying supervision of the same regional office. The enormity of a region spanning 15 time zones, the diversity of cultures in some 55 countries and the high number of active Baptist unions demand administrative division, he said.

But James warned trustees that not all European Baptists and missionaries will like a realignment. Many fear dividing Europe will cause problems in a region finally free from decades of division by the Iron Curtain.

Trustees also affirmed stepped-up plans to recruit new missionaries to work in Europe and affirmed plans to investigate possible involvement in starting churches through a cooperative venture called "CoMission." The venture would include several evangelical groups working in Europe.

They also voted to move two more veteran missionary couples from other parts of the world into Eastern Europe. That brings to 50 the number of career missionaries now living in formerly closed nations there. Not included in this number is a missionary couple in Germany primarily responsible for coordinating volunteer projects in Eastern Europe.

Foreign Mission Board trustees have agonized during the past year over how to keep the mission program alive in Europe following the resignations of the region's two top administrators a year ago, according to Skip Smith, chairman of the trustee committee that oversees work in Europe.

Smith characterized Isam Ballenger, James' predecessor as vice president, and Keith Parker, Floyd's predecessor, as outstanding missiologists. But when they left last year -- protesting the board's decision to stop funding the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland -- "all their plans and thoughts went with them," he said.

The trustees hope their new administrative team will be able to capitalize on growing excitement in Western Europe and openness in Eastern Europe -- and fill a vacuum giving rise to rampant cults. "I believe we're going to see some of the most exciting days Europe has ever seen," said Smith. Dramatic changes in Eastern Europe have triggered excitement for evangelism among western Europeans, he added.

James told trustees of an intense spiritual vacuum -- and hunger -- he sensed in Europe during his recent visit. Trustees on the Europe, Middle East and North Africa committee also heard reports of great openness in Siberia and other parts of the former Soviet Union from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary professor Phil Roberts. Roberts also is dean of a Baptist seminary in Oradea, Romania.

Floyd, who left the mission field to work at Mid-America seminary, came to the Foreign Mission Board staff in 1984 to direct the missionary enlistment department. He launched a program recruiting missionary preachers and returned 15 months later to Mid-America, where most recently he has been vice president directing the doctor of ministries program and missions department.

Like others, Floyd said he has prayed for Europe not only because of new openings to the gospel there but because of the turmoil among missionaries resulting from the mission board's defunding of the Swiss seminary.

"I'm praying that the feelings that have been hurt will be healed," he said. "I want the missionaries to know this is a board they can work with, and I want (Europeans) to know this as well.

"My excitement (about Europe) is that they are open to the gospel where they haven't been before, and there's unparalleled opportunity," Floyd said. "And we don't have forever."

Floyd plans to learn by listening how he can help missionaries start churches in Europe, he said. "I have great respect for missionaries on the field. I want to see us maximize the results we can have. We will be interested in planting churches, and I'll do all I can to be a catalyst for that," he said.

Floyd is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark. He received the master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and the doctor of theology degree from Mid-America. He and his wife, the former Helen Ruth Nutt of Mineral Springs, Ark., have two grown children.

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(BP) photo (mugshot) mailed Feb. 10 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet Newsroom.

U.S. may follow Netherlands
on euthanasia, ethicist says

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
2/11/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Netherlands recently took a major step toward becoming the first country to legitimize euthanasia, but the United States and the other members of the Western world will follow its example if current trends continue, a Southern Baptist ethicist said.

The second chamber of Parliament in The Netherlands voted Feb. 9 in favor of guidelines allowing physicians to do mercy killings on terminally ill patients or assist them in committing suicide. The vote was 91-45. The first chamber of Parliament is expected to pass the measure soon, an official at The Netherlands Embassy in Washington said.

"American society must repudiate its growing pro-death sentiments or go the way of The Netherlands," said Ben Mitchell, director of biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "The longer we continue routinely to kill babies and allow Kevorkian to snuff out human lives in the name of compassion, the more barbaric we become as a society.

"The battle is about more than individual human lives," Mitchell said. "It is a struggle for the soul of Western civilization.

"Western society is schizophrenic. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars on suicide prevention and therapy for those who attempt suicide and at the same time consider legalizing assisted suicide," Mitchell said.

Jack Kevorkian, a Michigan physician, has helped 12 people commit suicide in recent years. In November, California voters defeated a proposition which would have made their state the first to legalize physician-assisted suicide.

Euthanasia will remain a crime punishable by up to 12 years in prison under Dutch law. The new measure, however, writes into law guidelines drafted by the federal attorney general's office in 1990. Since then, doctors who follow the guidelines in performing acts of euthanasia and assisted suicide have been protected from prosecution.

The requirements in the guidelines approved by the second chamber of Parliament include: The person desiring to die must request it freely and repeatedly; the physician must have a second opinion from a colleague; the manner of death must be reported, and the health history of the patient must be included.

The physician reports each case of euthanasia to the municipal coroner, who in turn sends the report to the public prosecutor to make sure the guidelines have been followed.

Since the guidelines were introduced in November 1990, reports of euthanasia and assisted suicide have increased. In 1991, there were 590 reports of euthanasia. In 1992, there were more than 1,300.

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"The legitimization of active, voluntary euthanasia is a rejection of compassionate care," Mitchell said. "An ethic of care requires persevering support and encouragement for the dying, not a lethal injection."

If passed by the first chamber, the law is expected to go into effect in early 1994.

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BSSB trustees OK budget adjustment,
hear first quarter financial report

Baptist Press
2/11/93

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP)--Baptist Sunday School Board trustees authorized adjustments in the 1992-93 budget to allow the administration to "invest in tomorrow" during their Feb. 8-10 semiannual meeting.

Trustees approved reducing the funds provided from the operations budget from \$5.3 million to \$1.1 million. That budget encompasses net revenue and other income remaining after all product and operational expenses and contributions for Southern Baptist Convention support have been deducted.

In requesting the change, President James T. Draper said it would help to accommodate expenses incurred in implementing a restructuring which includes creation of strategic business units and decentralization of marketing and numerous business support functions.

Draper said the board could have lived within the budget proposed before its reorganization which began in 1992.

"However, doing so would virtually eliminate options for proposing new ventures that are needed now and looking at new ways of improving our products, our services, our distribution and everything we do. We are asking for the privilege of investing in tomorrow," he said.

In a related area, trustees learned both revenue and expenses were below budget for the first quarter of 1992-93. Funds provided from operations for the quarter were \$404,000. The board had budgeted a loss of \$1.5 million; funds provided from operations for the same quarter last year totaled \$557,000.

Sales of Lifeway products, a new publishing imprint, were the brightest spot of the financial report with sales of \$689,000, 14.8 percent above budget and 128.9 percent above 1991-92.

Operational areas with sales above last year included book stores, Broadman Press, Holman Bible publishers, conference centers and Genevox music. Convention Press and Church Information System had sales above budget but below last year.

Sales of church literature totaled \$18,963,000, 3.7 percent below budget and 5.6 percent below last year.

Draper said contacts with customers about the decline in church literature sales indicate primary causes are changes in buying patterns such as buying for attendance rather than enrollment and the economy.

"Competition is a factor, but we believe that right now it's not a major factor compared to these other areas," he said.

E.V. King, vice president for finance and administration, said the board continues a trend of recent years of living within its budget, primarily by under-spending expenses rather than by experiencing real growth.

James Carey, chairman of the business and finance committee and pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Seguin, Texas, reported the board currently manages \$317 million in reserve, retirement, post retirement, employee savings plan and working capital funds. The retirement trust fund is fully funded so that no money from operations is required to pay retirement benefits.

Trustees also approved funds to relocate or remodel 10 Baptist Book Stores in the 63-store chain this year.

Charles Wilson, vice president for trade and retail markets, said plans are in process to publish about 48 Broadman books per year rather than the 110-120 of recent years, to become more selective and to better market products.

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Ray Clendenen, general editor of the New American Commentary, reported that six New Testament volumes in the 40-volume series have been released. Six Old Testament volumes will be released between April 1993 and June 1994.

Kirk Freeman, director of marketing for trade publishing, said marketing of Broadman and Holman products will be more targeted to specific audiences. Also, priority attention will be given to book covers "that will compete with major publishers."

"We are confident the Lord is doing something good here and something big here," said Freeman, who joined the board in November 1992.

In response to an address by Draper outlining concerns about board operations and highlighting solutions in process, trustees adopted a motion "commending Dr. Jimmy Draper, the Senior Executive Team and employees of the Sunday School Board for the courageous decision to honestly assess the condition of the Sunday School Board and to plot a course of action to lead us into the 21st century to be competitive in the evangelical marketplace."

Following similar, earlier action by trustees of the Home and Foreign mission boards, BSSB trustees approved eliminating the position of local trustees, those elected to serve from areas near Nashville. Local trustees were established before transportation made it possible for trustees from long distances to attend executive committee meetings or to be called on short notice for meetings.

Through attrition as local members complete their terms, the size of the trustee board will be reduced from 91 to 79 members. The change must be approved by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and messengers to the 1993 SBC meeting in Houston.

In the only contested vote during the three-day meeting, trustees approved by a vote of 38-30 a recommendation to move the annual August meeting to mid- to late-September, beginning in 1994, to shorten the annual budgeting cycle. Those voting against the motion cited September schedule conflicts for teachers, evangelists and church staff members.

Trustees approved three new church literature products: Black Church Development, a quarterly newsletter to begin in October 1993; large-print edition of Adult Bible Study, October 1993; and the quarterly Music for Threes Cassette, October 1994.

Trustees re-elected Dan Collins, attorney from Taylors, S.C., as chairman of trustees. They also elected Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church of Nashville, as vice chairman and chairman of the executive committee, and Roy Miller, layman from Lexington, Tenn., as secretary.

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Colorado executive to serve
as home missionary in Kansas

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
2/11/93

DENVER (BP)--Motivated by the desire to work more with people and less with paper, Charles Sharp has resigned as executive director of the Colorado Baptist General Convention to become director of missions for Western Kansas Association.

Sharp has led Colorado Baptists since 1984. He and his wife, Peggie, were appointed as home missionaries in January to work in Kansas.

"I have about 10 more years before retirement and I want to work more directly with people and churches," Sharp said. His job as Colorado executive director involved mainly administrative tasks, he said.

Western Kansas Association includes 28 churches and missions in 29 counties. The largest towns are Liberal, Dodge City and Garden City, where the Sharps will live.

The association, which covers about one-third of the state, is very rural, Sharp said. One county with a population of 3,200 has only one town and no Southern Baptist church.

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One of Sharp's goals is to establish "triads," places where one leader will work in three cities or counties. Some places may only have Bible studies, and some churches in the association may never have a full-time pastor, he said.

As director of missions, Sharp said he also will "teach, equip, love, nurture and encourage" pastors in his association.

Sharp received a bachelor's degree in music education from Henderson State College in Arkadelphia, Ark., and a master's degree and doctorate in music education from East Texas State University in Commerce.

Formerly a high school band director, Sharp previously served as minister of music in Texas, Alabama and Oklahoma, professor of church music education at Mobile (Ala.) College and director of church music for Northern Plains Baptist Convention and the Colorado Baptist General Convention.

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