

September 19, 1958

Local Arrangements Chairmen Announced

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--Committee chairmen for making local arrangements for the 1959 session of the Southern Baptist Convention here have been announced.

W. R. Pettigrew, pastor, Walnut St. Baptist Church, is chairman of the general arrangements steering committee. Duke K. McCall, president, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and W. C. Boone, executive secretary, General Association of Baptists in Kentucky, are honorary chairmen.

R. S. Burhans, pastor, Crescent Hill Baptist Church, is vice-chairman and Jim Austin, Southern Seminary is secretary.

Chairmen of special committees are:

Ushers--Burhans.

Information--Ercil Barker, pastor, Rockford Lane Baptist Church.

Pages--Forrest Sawyer, Brotherhood secretary, General Association of Baptists in Kentucky.

First Aid--M. D. Morton, pastor, Beechmont Baptist Church.

Hotel, Motel Reservations--Austin.

Private Home Reservations--E. N. Wilkinson, pastor, Parkland Baptist Church.

Hospitality--Allen W. Graves, Southern Seminary.

Dinners--A. W. Walker, pastor, Carlisle Ave. Baptist Church.

Child Care--D. E. Jones, pastor, South Jefferson Baptist Church.

Registration--David Nelson, pastor, Highland Baptist Church.

Transportation--Edwin Ferry, pastor, Broadway Baptist Church.

Post Office--L. C. Ray, pastor, Baptist Tabernacle.

Publicity--Carroll Hubbard, pastor, St. Matthews Baptist Church.

Parking--George Riggs, pastor, Victory Memorial Baptist Church.

Auditorium and Decorations--Henry Beach, pastor, Ninth & O Baptist Church.

Finance--Ben Mitchell, executive secretary, Long Run Baptist Association.

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BP Folks and Facts.....

....."Christian Love Confronts a Changing World" has been selected as the theme of the 1959 annual meeting of the American Baptist Convention. Theme scripture for the Convention will be the words of Jesus as recorded in John 12:32: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men to me." "Jesus Shall Reign" is to be the Convention hymn. Convention sessions will be held June 4-9 in Veteran's Memorial Auditorium, Des Moines, Ia.

-30-

Baptists Generally
Against Major Changes

NASHVILLE--(BP)--Southern Baptists are generally against any major changes in their annual Convention pattern and are fairly solid against any change in the name of their denomination.

These conclusions are based on a Baptist Press survey conducted last May at the 1958 session of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

Messengers to the Convention were asked to fill out a questionnaire form. These forms were turned in later and tabulated by the department of research and statistics of the Baptist Sunday School Board here. Results of the tabulation of 1392 questionnaires returned have been announced.

While there was no attempt to sample a representative cross-section of the Convention messengers, the department of research and statistics said that its tabulations indicated "the results will give a reasonably good indication of the attitude of all messengers."

The survey's major findings were that:

Southern Baptist Convention messengers want to continue their present policy of meeting annually, moving from city to city, with all areas of the Convention represented in the attendance.

The messengers gave only meager support to three alternative procedures: holding regional Conventions annually with a national Convention only every fourth year; dividing the SBC into smaller regional Conventions, and meeting at St. Louis at the same time every year for their Convention.

The tabulations showed that 72.8 per cent wanted meetings kept as they are at present.

About three of every 10 messengers favor a change in the name of the Southern Baptist Convention, with the greatest support for a change coming from states in which Southern Baptist work is newer.

On the other hand, 65-1/2 per cent are solidly against a change in the name. More women than men are opposed to a change in name, the department of research and statistics observed. (5.1 per cent did not answer the question about the change of name.)

Nearly 91 per cent of the pastors filling out questionnaires had finished college and many had at least some seminary education. More than 60 per cent of the pastors' wives had at least a college education.

Of the total number filling out questionnaires, more than seven of every 10 messengers had completed college and more than four of 10 had completed a seminary education. Of those indicating they were from "open country" churches, 70.3 per cent had finished college or had gone further. In "city" churches, this percentage increased to 84.4.

The largest single group filling out questionnaires was pastors---57 per cent. Next largest was pastors' wives with 13.3 per cent.

Nearly half---49.2 per cent---of those replying said they were from "cities" as compared with "open country, small town, or large town."

The average age of messengers filling out a questionnaire was 40.9 years. More than three of every 10 were from 30-39 years old. Over one in four were from 40-49 years of age. Only a very small number were under 20 or over 70 years of age.

The fact that Americans today are a people on the move was reflected in the answers to the question: "Do you live in the state where you were born?" 51.3 per cent said they did not live in their native state.

The largest percentage of those still residing in their native states were from North Carolina and Texas, the two largest states in the Southern Baptist

Convention in terms of membership, and from Illinois. In each case, the percentage was 60 per cent or slightly more.

In four of the fastest-growing states of the Union---Arizona, California, Florida, and New Mexico---a high percentage indicated they had been born in another state. The number was over 75 per cent in each instance.

The average cost for a messenger to attend the Houston Convention---from the time he left home until he returned---was \$107. Based on close to 13,000 registrations---plus many who did not register---the total cost for messengers to attend the Convention ran approximately \$1-1/2 million.

To help defray costs of the Convention, which "have risen sharply in recent years," four in 10 would be willing to pay a registration fee though there was some hesitancy about the amount of the fee. 60 per cent did not suggest what they thought the registration fee should be.

Another possibility suggested on the questionnaire to help offset Convention costs was for each messenger to pay for his copy of the "Book of Reports." There was a close division of opinion on this question---44.6 per cent reported they would be willing to pay for the "Book of Reports," 49.7 per cent were unwilling to pay for it, and 5.7 per cent did not answer the question.

An overwhelming number of messengers preferred to have afternoon sessions of the Convention devoted to business only, as contrasted with two other alternatives---more attention to business generally throughout all sessions and less time to inspirational events, or the Convention given over entirely to inspiration with business being referred to small legislative groups.

The percentage distribution showed 64.8 per cent favoring afternoon sessions exclusively for business, 18.1 per cent for more business taken up throughout the sessions, and 6.6 per cent for an all-inspiration program. The remainder---about one person in every 10---failed to reply to the question.

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Southern Seminary Appoints Instructors

LOUISVILLE--(BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here has appointed two new instructors.

W. Clayton Sullivan, native of Jacksonville, Miss., has been named as an instructor of Greek New Testament.

In addition to this, Sullivan has been honored by being named as a recipient of a Lilly Foundation, Inc., scholarship in connection with his work at Southern Seminary toward a doctor of theology degree.

Ashley P. Cox Jr. has been named instructor in the ministry of writing. He also is serving as news director for the seminary.

A former pastor in Georgia, Cox will soon complete requirements for the bachelor of divinity degree here.

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Lewis A. Myers Plans To Retire November 1

ALBUQUERQUE, N. M.--(BP)--Dr. Lewis A. Myers, whose denominational service has included that of seminary professor, pastor, chaplain, and editor of three Baptist state papers, plans to retire Nov. 1 as editor of the Baptist New Mexican here.

He has held that post for 11 years. Immediately before moving to New Mexico, Dr. Myers was editor of the Word and Way, Missouri Baptist weekly newspaper. He edited the weekly Arkansas Baptist from 1938-1940.

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Dr. Myers said that after retiring, he plans a short period of relaxation, after which he will spend two years compiling a history of Baptists in New Mexico. He also plans to be available for pulpit supply.

A native of Pinola, Miss., Dr. Myers once owned and edited the weekly Simpson County News at Mendenhall, Miss. From 1919-1923, he was representative to the Mississippi state legislature from that county. He also organized the Simpson County Chamber of Commerce.

During this period, however, Dr. Myers felt the call of God into full-time religious work. Selling his paper in Mendenhall, and turning down a chance for re-election without opposition to his post in the legislature, he entered Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

At Southwestern, Dr. Myers received the doctor of religious education degree. He remained at Southwestern to teach religious education, edit a seminary periodical, and serve as director of publicity for several years.

While still a layman, he was called from Fort Worth to become pastor of Seventh St. Baptist Church, Memphis. He was ordained to the ministry after accepting the call. In Memphis, he organized the first association-wide Sunday school unit in the Shelby County Association of Baptist churches.

He was called to serve as associate pastor of First Baptist Church, New Orleans, serving under pastor J. D. Grey. While in New Orleans, Dr. Myers also taught religious education at Baptist Bible Institute (now New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary).

He left New Orleans in 1938 to edit the Arkansas Baptist. When World War II broke out, Dr. Myers entered the Army as a chaplain, serving 2-1/2 years aboard military transports plying the Pacific Ocean.

Following the chaplaincy, he was editor of the Word and Way.

Dr. Myers said he has been governed by this policy in life: "When doors for Christian service opened, and I couldn't explain why they had opened, I entered those doors."