

October 10, 1958

111 Churches Join New Indiana Convention

INDIANAPOLIS--(BP)--The State Convention of Baptists in Indiana was organized here recently with 111 affiliated churches having a total of 21,000 members.

It is the 10th state Baptist convention co-operating with Southern Baptists to be established since 1919. The new Indiana convention is larger at the time of its origin than were any of the other nine at the time they were formed.

The Indiana convention drew churches which had formerly been affiliated either with the Illinois Baptist State Association or the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky. 39 churches came from Kentucky association, 72 from Illinois, with total memberships of about 10,500 in each group.

The convention adopted its first annual budget, amounting to \$100,750. Of this, 25 per cent will be forwarded to the Southern Baptist Convention treasury for Cooperative Program support.

Stephen H. Cobb, pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Evansville, Ind., is first president of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. W. W. Rhody, pastor of Richmond, Ind., Baptist Church is chairman of the convention's 24-member executive board.

The convention did not establish a state office location nor call an executive officer at its first session. The executive board, however, will meet Nov. 1 at Plainfield, Ind., to make further plans for the state.

The first Southern Baptist Convention-related church in Indiana was established at Hymera, Ind., in 1914 through efforts of W. A. Fuson, a Baptist minister known in the Illinois-Indiana area at the time as "Bill the Baptist." Fuson also was one of the founders of the Illinois Baptist State Association.

-30-

Inter-Agency Council Starts Reorganization

ATLANTA--(BP)--The Inter-Agency Council meeting here in early Oct., took steps to reorganize in keeping with instructions voted by the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston last May.

The membership was formerly recognized as consisting of three voting members and one non-voting alternate from each board or agency of the Convention. Temporary officers were elected to serve until the adoption of a new constitution. The chairman is Courts Redford, Atlanta, Home Mission Board; vice-chairman, Baker James Cauthen, Richmond, Foreign Mission Board, and secretary, Norman W. Cox, Nashville, Historical Commission.

A special committee was appointed to name a committee of five to draft the new constitution and by-laws. Among the standing committees suggested by members to be included are, Calendar, Procedures, and Curriculum committees.

The council studied the reports of two special committees.

(1) A proposal for the co-ordination and promotion of associational work. Attention was called to the number of association-wide meetings, the conflicting dates of these meetings, the number of personnel in associations with multiple duties and the pressure on leaders to attend these meetings.

-mor -

A plan was adopted suggesting that each association elect an associational council to correlate programs and to employ a full-time associational superintendent of missions whose duties would include the training of leadership.

(2) A report of the church study course committee. Much progress was reported toward an all church system study course. However, the problems of initiating, approving, writing, editing and publishing of books was frankly faced and no solution found.

It was decided, "that the areas of agreement be borne in mind by the individual agencies in doing future planning, thereby keeping open some doors through which future ventures may yet be made in the direction of a single system church study course." A new committee was appointed to keep the idea alive.

The Inter-Agency Council registered 35 members and visitors. The next meeting will be held in the spring, at a time and place to be selected by the constitution committee.