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March 16, 1995

95-45

WASHINGTON--Religious equality proposal taking shape, CLC says.

NORTH CAROLINA--Southeastern trustees approve 2 degree programs.

NEW ORLEANS--NOBTS trustees approve search committee selection process.

NEW ORLEANS--Student fees, faculty salaries raised; Landrum Leavell honored.

TENNESSEE--SBCNet tops 4,000 subscribers; adds music, worship library.

**Religious equality proposal  
taking shape, CLC says**

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
3/16/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--Supporters of a religious liberty amendment to the U.S. Constitution continue to work on language for introduction in Congress.

Representatives from several Christian and conservative advocacy organizations met March 13 with Rep. Ernest Istook, R.-Okla., to craft an amendment from several proposals. It is unknown when the final language for introduction will be announced, said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

While the proposal has been commonly labeled a school prayer amendment, Whitehead said it "will likely protect more than just school prayer."

"Consensus is forming around a religious-equality approach, which will command that government treat prayer and other religious expression equally with other kinds of speech," said Whitehead, who participated in the most recent meeting. "This approach would apply not just to students in public schools but to all persons in public settings. Whether in the classroom or in city hall, if non-religious speech is permitted by private citizens, then religious speech must be treated equally."

In addition to the CLC, other organizations with representatives at the meeting were Christian Legal Society, American Center for Law and Justice, National Association of Evangelicals, Liberty Council, The Rutherford Institute, Concerned Women for America, Christian Coalition, Family Research Council, American Family Association and Christian Action Network. Other school prayer advocates present were William Murray, son of atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair; author/speaker David Barton; and former congressman William Dannemeyer.

Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, R.-Ga., announced shortly after the November election there would be a vote on a school prayer amendment by July 4. He chose Istook to lead the effort on such a proposal. Istook has met with different organizations, including the CLC, on the issue since the election, when Republicans won a majority in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

A telephone call to Istook's office for comment was not returned before Baptist Press' deadline.

An amendment, not just another law, is needed, Whitehead said.

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"When people ask, 'Why not just pass a statute?,' you can point to the federal judge in Texas who has just declared unconstitutional the Religious Freedom Restoration Act," he said. "Supreme Court tinkering with the Constitution is hard to fix by statute, because the statute ultimately winds up before the Supreme Court, which may declare it unconstitutional, just as this trial judge has done. A constitutional amendment, on the other hand, cannot be declared unconstitutional."

A federal judge in Texas ruled RFRA unconstitutional on the same day as the latest meeting with Istook.

RFRA, signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1993, reversed the Supreme Court's 1990 Employment Division v. Smith opinion. In Smith, the court ruled government no longer has to demonstrate a "compelling interest" before restricting religious freedom. RFRA restored the "compelling interest" test. The government also must demonstrate a policy is the "least restrictive means" in fulfilling the government's interest before limiting the free exercise of religion.

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Southeastern trustees  
approve 2 degree programs

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press  
3/16/95

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Voicing assurance that a proposed degree in biblically based counseling will not just have "a veneer of Christianity with a secular perspective," Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson urged the school's board of trustees to approve in principle the program's development.

Meeting March 13-14 on Southeastern's Wake Forest, N.C., campus, trustees expressed apprehension at creating a program that would produce graduates whose counseling techniques would simply mirror those of secular counseling, instead calling for a degree plan to equip graduates to provide biblical guidance in lieu of a blend of psychotherapy and religiosity to people in need.

The body gave its approval of the new track in the master of divinity degree program acknowledging the need in society for counseling rooted in Scripture.

"Either we have to believe the Bible is the Word of God and that God supernaturally changes people or we'll just be sprinkling religious foo-foo dust on hurting people," said Adrian Rogers, a trustee and pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn.

Trustees also approved implementation of the doctor of philosophy degree for the fall 1995 semester. Southeastern's vice president for academic affairs Russ Bush told the board the degree program will be unique.

"The Ph.D. program will combine the traditional American model with the mentorship roles unique to the European academic community," Bush said. "We anticipate it to be a premier program that will produce a very high quality graduate."

The board also heard from Andy and Joyce Bealer, seminary students who recently had returned from southwest Kenya where 2,300-plus persons accepted Christ during a two-week evangelistic effort by Southeastern students. The Bealers said they went to Kenya expecting God to move but not expecting the massive power of God they witnessed.

The husband-and-wife team, who are enrolled in the school's master of divinity in church planting degree program, will be relocating to the east African nation this summer to continue their studies as part of the joint Foreign Mission Board-Southeastern program.

Patterson advised trustees of his desire that every student have the opportunity to participate in a mission trip to a Third World nation before their graduation.

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"The lack of such opportunities has been one of the sad factors in seminary life," he said. "We believe such an on-the-job training offering would make our graduates better prepared for the ministry God has for them."

Patterson also announced the addition of David Beck to the faculty as assistant professor of New Testament. Beck, who holds a Ph.D. from Duke University, was appointed to one of five professorial slots the president indicated would need to be filled by the fall semester to meet the growth in enrollment.

In closing, the board recognized Bob Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church, Rockville, Md., and Ralph Holt Jr., pastor of Lake Forest Baptist, Wilmington, N.C., for their completion of 10 years of service on the school's board of trustees.

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NOBTS trustees approve search  
committee selection process

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press  
3/16/95

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The nominee hasn't been selected but trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary have decided they will meet in a special two-day meeting to consider the search committee's selection for the seminary's eighth president.

Trustees adopted the selection procedure offered by the 11-person search committee during the board's regular spring meeting, March 13-16, at the New Orleans campus.

Morris L. Anderson, Pigeon Forge, Tenn., pastor and chairman of the search committee, said the committee would no longer "solicit" recommendations for a successor to Landrum P. Leavell II after March 15. Leavell retired Dec. 31, 1994, but agreed to stay as interim until a new president is elected.

"We have 22 candidates," Anderson, also vice chairman of the trustee board, said. Although not "soliciting" more recommendations, Anderson said that did not prohibit the committee from considering recommendations which they might receive after March 15.

"We are not down to two men," Anderson said, responding to what he said were rumors. He did not identify the two. The search committee said it will not divulge the names of candidates under consideration.

Anderson told Baptist Press he hopes the committee would have a candidate before the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, June 20-22.

Trustees adopted a four-point selection procedure:

- 1) "Review all names submitted for consideration.
- 2) "Develop a short list of candidates.
- 3) "Prayerfully select the candidate to be presented to the full board.
- 4) "Call a special two-day session of the full board (to consider): the afternoon of the first day present the name and information on the candidate, introduce the candidate and his wife at dinner where he will address the full board, on the morning of the second day the candidate will meet with the full board to address their questions, and after question and answer session the full board will vote on the recommendation."

The search committee also agreed to give the full board at least two weeks' notice of the special meeting.

The committee already has met a number of times, Edward D. Johnson, board chairman, said, including twice during the trustees' meeting. They also plan to meet later this month, said Johnson, an Ocala, Fla., pastor.

Although not adopted by the trustees, the search committee did present its 10-point criteria "for the potential candidate."

- 1) "A man of godly, impeccable integrity -- first and foremost.

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- 2) "Terminal (doctorate) degree: very desirable but not a determining factor.
- 3) "Statesman: speaks and presents himself well; perception of the president will be the perception of the school.
- 4) "Strong conservative.
- 5) "Tenure potential (to serve): about 10 years.
- 6) "Have administrative skills.
- 7) "Have pastoral experience.
- 8) "Visionary and innovative.
- 9) "Fund-raiser able to sell the cause of theological education.
- 10) "Wife's support.

Gary Enfinger, a trustee from Thomasville, Ala., asked if any of the 10 criteria were "negotiable."

Anderson said "some not, others maybe," but did not elaborate.

When a trustee suggested the "terminal" degree was very important, if not a requirement, Johnson replied he thought so too until he was told Robert Naylor, former president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, did not have a "terminal" degree.

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Student fees, faculty salaries  
raised; Landrum Leavell honored By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press  
3/16/95

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Student fees will increase but so will faculty and staff salaries for next year in action by trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary at their spring meeting, March 13-15 in New Orleans.

Landrum Leavell II, president of the seminary for 20 years when he retired Dec. 31, was given special recognition by trustees. A presidential search committee reported it has 22 candidates thus far, and a nominee may be recommended before the SBC annual meeting in June.

The fee schedule and salary information were included in a 1995-96 budget of \$9.2 million adopted by trustees. The seminary operates on a Aug. 1 to July 31 fiscal year.

The new budget is a 10.7 percent increase over this year's budget, according to L. Clay Corvin, vice president for business affairs. He told trustees the increase will come from an additional \$248,247 in SBC Cooperative Program funds, \$480,000 in student fee increases and \$160,659 in other revenues.

"The student fee cost is projected at \$750 per semester (up from \$650), which is still 20 percent below three of our (six) SBC seminaries," Corvin said in speaking of the traditional seminary degree programs. The seminary's doctor of ministry degree fee also will increase from \$675 to \$900 per semester.

"This revenue proposal positions us to continue our consistent growth pattern," Corvin said. "One of the fundamental issues dealt with in our revenue projection was a need to provide a significant compensation increase for our faculty and staff."

Faculty and staff salaries will increase 3.5 percent. Corvin said the new budget allocates 81 percent of the overall increase to salaries. The average graduate faculty compensation will now increase from \$47,509 to \$52,381.

"We have moved our overall faculty to the upper level of faculty compensation for SBC seminaries," Corvin said.

Also included in the package is a reduction in the annual teaching load for faculty, stipends for endowed chair holders and compensation for those serving on doctoral committees.

"We continue to maintain our cost advantage while continuing to offer the very best training available anywhere," Corvin told trustees.

Leavell, 68, has agreed to continue as interim president until the trustees elect his successor. Trustees demonstrated in numerous ways at the meeting their affection for the seminary's seventh president.

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The seminary's Center for Evangelism and Church Growth was renamed The Landrum P. Leav II II Center for Evangelism and Church Growth and the Landrum P. Leavell II Chair of New Testament was activated.

Also, Leavell was appointed "professor emeritus" at the seminary. He was honored in special ceremonies at a trustee dinner.

The 40-member trustee board was in a harmonious mood throughout their deliberations with every vote appearing to be unanimous. Trustees re-elected their three officers for another year: Edward D. Johnson, an Ocala, Fla., pastor, chairman; Morris L. Anderson, a Pigeon Forge, Tenn., pastor, vice chairman; and Charles Glynn Rhinehart, River Ridge, La., an oil company engineer, secretary-treasurer.

In other action, trustees voted to approve the seminary foundation's activation of a chair of archaeology and a chair of music; accept former professor C. Penrose St. Amant's library holdings; approve sabbatical proposals for Gerald Aultman, Philip Coyle, Walter Brown and Billy Warren; approve a church leadership certificate program for the seminary; and promote Philip Coyle to associate professor of psychology and counseling, Jeanine Bozeman to full professor of social work and Robert Mathis to full professor of foundations of education.

Four new faculty members were employed: Don Aderhold, professor of New Testament at the Atlanta campus; Randall C. Millwood, assistant professor of church planting and Sunday school growth; James Lynn Shaddix, assistant professor of preaching; and Kenneth James Gabrielse, assistant professor of church music.

In addition, trustees approved a request to the SBC Executive Committee for a subsidiary corporation for its foundation which manages and controls the seminary's community radio station. It is the city's only 24-hour FM Christian radio station.

Also, trustees approved the 1993-94 fiscal year audits for both the seminary and its foundation, approved investment policy statements and noted \$22 million in endowments as of Jan. 31, 1995.

Jimmy W. Dukes, assistant provost, told trustees in his report the seminary was searching for professors in history, social work, psychology and counseling as well as a director for continuing education.

In his report, Leavell said he would be out of the house provided by the seminary by April 1 to allow the prospective new president to "look around" and make any needed changes. The Leavells will retire to Wichita Falls, Texas, where he was a pastor when called to the seminary in 1975.

Leavell lauded the SBC Executive Committee's recommended SBC Cooperative Program budget which halts a recent trend, he said, of lower percentages to the six seminaries and gives the seminary an increase for the 1995-96 year.

Trustees heard numerous reports from staff members and testimonies from several faculty members.

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SBCNet tops 4,000 subscribers;  
adds music, worship library

Baptist Press  
3/16/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The number of people joining SBCNet, the Southern Baptist data communications network, has made a fourth substantial increase in subscribers in 18 months, with the addition of more than 1,000 users from Nov. 9, 1994, through March 10, 1995.

The increase has come with the addition of on-line services, including the most recent, a music and worship library, which provides a variety of resources for church musicians.

Total membership reached its last milestone increase in November when the total reached 3,000, up from 2,500 in August 1994, according to David Haywood, coordinator of the network.

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The number of on-line hours per week within SBCNet has increased from 116 to as high as 1,647 since August 1993, when the flat monthly rate for SBCNet charges was instituted. Individuals accessing the network weekly since that time have increased from 393 to 1,851.

The new music and worship library "includes educational and philosophical resources for music leadership in the churches, in areas such as music administration, choral, instrumental, orders of service, litanies, calls to worship and midi files," according to Lester McCullough, manager of the production section in the Baptist Sunday School Board's music department.

Other SBCNet services include:

- supplemental teaching helps for adult and youth Sunday school lessons in Life and Work, Bible Book and Convention Uniform series.
- Baptist Press, the official Southern Baptist news service.
- News Room, news and feature stories from Southern Baptist agencies and state conventions.
- Facts & Trends, the Sunday School Board's newsletter for church and denominational leaders.
- Facts & Trends Information Service, news briefs from the Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board with usage suggestions for church newsletters.
- Bold Mission Prayer, requests for prayer from home and foreign missionaries.
- CompassionNet, a worldwide electronic prayer network sponsored by the Foreign Mission Board.
- MissionsNet, missions education information from Woman's Missionary Union.
- Brotherhood Commission Library, providing information about the agency's programs, projects, activities and personnel.
- Clip Art.
- DiscipleLife Plus, a youth discipleship supplement.
- Music and Worship Library, resources for the church musician.
- Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Library, human interest articles, educational material, weekly campus newsletter and occasional commentaries.
- Innovative Ministry Library.
- Minister's Corner, sermons and illustrations.
- Electronic versions of state Baptist newspapers for Illinois, New Mexico and Oklahoma.
- Ongoing addition of other denominational publications and bulletin boards specifically designed for individual state Baptist convention communication needs.

Among the more than 100 CompuServe Basic Services available to SBCNet subscribers are the opportunity to read support forums news, sports and weather; travel services; shopping services; games and entertainment; reference library; and stock quotes and other financial services.

SBCNet, may be accessed by using a computer, modem and a membership kit distributed free by the Sunday School Board. Kits, which provide access to services of CompuServe and SBCNet, contain software, account information, credit for a free month of CompuServe's basic services and a \$25 credit. They are available in DOS, Macintosh, and Windows versions and may be ordered by calling 1-800-325-7749.

After the first month of free basic services, users pay for the CompuServe standard plan plus any additional charges for extended services on CompuServe. Thereafter, the cost of SBCNet is a flat rate of \$7.95 monthly, plus CompuServe's standard plan charge of \$9.95 monthly.

People who are already members of CompuServe may join SBCNet by simply typing "GO SBCNet" at any CompuServe prompt without using the software kit.

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