

January 11, 1959

New Office Created By Missouri Baptists

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.--(BP)--The executive board of the Missouri Baptist Convention has elected J. E. Rains, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Mexico, Mo., to the newly created position as director of the office of protection plans.

The new office will direct the retirement and security plans of the Missouri Baptist Convention in cooperation with the Relief and Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Rains has assumed his new duties in Jefferson City.

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Oklahoma Chooses New Training Union Officer

OKLAHOMA CITY--(BP)--C. Fred Williams, pastor of First Baptist church, Hugo, Okla., and moderator of Frisco Baptist association of churches, will become director of Training Union work for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma Jan. 15.

Williams also will serve as an associate in the religious education department of the convention. J. Lyle Garlow, who has been Training Union director since December, 1957, will become superintendent of Sunday School work for the convention and also will continue to serve as an associate,

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Missouri Brotherhood Secretary Elected

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.--(BP)--J. W. Fisher of St. Louis has been elected Brotherhood secretary of the Missouri Baptist Convention here.

Fisher is a layman and has been educational director for the St. Louis Baptist Mission Board since 1956. He assumed his duties early in January with offices in the Baptist Building in Jefferson City.

He was manager of the Missouri Baptist Press in Jefferson City from 1954 to 1956.

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Hospital Great Need In Land Of 49th Star

ANCHORAGE, Alaska--(BP)--This is the land of stars--the northern stars and the new, 49th star in the United States flag.

Southern Baptists should follow the stars into this land of untapped physical and spiritual resources, a pioneer missionary leader says. He is L. A. Watson, Anchorage, executive secretary of Alaska Baptist Convention.

The Convention has had work in the territory--which became a state in January--since 1943 and already is third highest among denominations in numbers of churches and missions in Alaska. Only Roman Catholics and Presbyterians have more.

However, there is a need for more Baptist work in the state at the present time, plus the fact that this need will increase in proportion to the expected rapid growth of the new state.

Baptist leaders in Alaska believe the state will grow more rapidly now than it did as a territory. "Thousands and thousands of acres remain unsurveyed or unexplored," according to Watson.

Watson said the land rush is already on, property often selling as fast as it is surveyed. New towns will spring up; existing cities will mushroom in

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size. Anchorage, with a current 75,000 population, will reach 200,000 in a decade, Watson said.

Oil and mineral deposits are vast, he continued, with Alaska's unmined copper equal to that of the great copper discoveries. "Mountains of untapped iron ore are equal to that mined in the eastern states," Watson said.

Gold, Coal, and tin also are mined.

As the state grows, the need for preaching the Christian gospel will greatly increase. One of the greatest needs in Alaska is a Baptist healing ministry, he said. "The Chamber of Commerce, the medical association, and the city council of Anchorage have urged Southern Baptists to open and operate a hospital in Anchorage because of the city's hospital shortage."

Other needs are Christian leadership and new buildings. Alaska has a population today of 250,000 of whom 5000 are Southern Baptists. Southern Baptists are third strongest among denominations in numbers of churches with 34 churches and missions. Roman Catholics, who have had work in Alaska since the 1700's, and Presbyterians, who entered in the late 1800's, each have 37 churches and missions, Watson said.

Catholics also have five hospitals and 10 schools, Watson reported.

Southern Baptists, Watson stated, also must give more support to their denominational training school in Anchorage. This school is for the original national population and is staffed by professional people who have volunteered their teaching services. The school is similar to a Bible institute with courses in Bible and religious education as well as in reading and writing and in English.

Southern Baptists in the 49th state have set a goal of establishing 30 new churches and missions during the Convention's "30,000 Movement." They also will strive to have eight churches using the Forward Program of Church Finance in subscribing their annual budgets.

"The first people who come along to establish hospitals are going a long way in their ministry in Alaska," Watson declared. He observed that a Baptist hospital helped establish Baptist work in New Orleans.

Frank Tripp, retiring executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Hospital Commission, has been to Alaska to survey the hospital need there, according to Watson.

"A Christian hospital is second only to the church in the opportunity for evangelism," he said.

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Ohio Building New Units At Assembly

COLUMBUS, O.--(BP)--The State Convention of Baptists in Ohio will spend \$7200 for improvements at its Seneca Lake assembly grounds near Cambridge, O.

Funds will be used to build six new motel-style units at the grounds in eastern Ohio. Construction is due to be finished in time for the summer assembly season.

The funds were allocated by the Ohio convention executive board at its January session here. In another action, the board made adjustments in the 1959 budget to conform with anticipated income.

It also voted to pay the individual's portion of retirement deductions under Relief and Annuity Board plans for four administrative officers at Columbus. Previously, the employee paid 5 per cent of his salary for retirement, and this amount was matched by the convention. The convention now pays the entire amount.

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