

A RESUME OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF  
THE SOUTHEASTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

(References are to SBC Annuals unless otherwise stated)

- 1945-- In September the Buncombe (N.C.) Baptist Ministers' Conference presented to the SBC Executive Committee a memorial requesting consideration of Ridgecrest, N. C., as a possible location for a new seminary or branch of an existing seminary in the eastern part of the Convention. The Executive Committee appointed a committee to investigate the need for such an institution. (Minutes, Executive Committee, SBC, 1945, p. 168.)
- 1946-- The special committee of the Executive Committee reported widespread sentiment for such an institution, but recommended that "any further action in regard to a new seminary should be taken by a committee set up by the . . . Convention itself. We do not feel that the Executive Committee should take the initiative in seeking to establish a new theological seminary." (Ibid., 1946, p. 21)
- 1947-- The Executive Committee recommended that the Convention appoint "a committee of nine to study the whole question of theological education in the light of suggestions concerning the establishment of a new theological seminary . . . ." On motion of H. W. Tiffany, the Convention approved an amendment whereby the scope of the committee already authorized (p. 31) to study the proposition of the Golden Gate Seminary to the SBC was enlarged to include the above recommendation of the Executive Committee. (p. 34) John H. Buchanan was made chairman of the special committee.
- 1948-- The Theological Education Survey Committee reported that it had conducted a survey of the SBC seminaries and their work and another survey among the churches and schools to discover the potential needs regarding additional seminaries for the Convention. The Convention granted the Committee's request for another year and the sum of \$5000 to complete and publish the results of its survey and its recommendations prior to the 1949 Convention.
- 1949-- The Theological Education Survey Committee reported that its findings established the need for two additional seminaries "to relieve our present congestion, provide facilities for the increased number of men who ought to have theological training, and to serve great areas now remote from the seminaries we have." The Convention adopted the following recommendations of the above committee:
1. That it be the purpose and intention of this Convention to project a long range program of theological education seeking to meet the needs as far as possible of all our churches and ministers.
  2. That in the formation and promotion of such a plan we ask the patient, prayerful and practical co-operation of all our agencies and all our people.

3. That we ask our college and seminary authorities to give careful consideration to the Howard College Extension plan with a view to adopting or modifying and adopting it, or some other plan for the benefit of men who cannot or for any reason do not attend some regular institution of learning.

4. That we ask the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention to discuss with the Inter-Seminary Council, and to take up with the colleges: (1) the matter of providing and recommending pre-theological courses for ministerial students, in line with the recommendations of the American Association of Theological Schools, and (2) to suggest advisors for ministerial students who because of age, family conditions or other causes find it impossible to attend seminary.

5. That the present plan adopted by this Convention in 1946 to provide for both operating and capital needs of our existing seminaries be carried out, recognizing the fact that their needs are even greater now than when the survey was made in 1945.

6. That two new seminaries, one in the West and one in the East, be established as soon as suitable sites can be had and adequate plans be made for financing the same without injury or impairment to our existing seminaries.

7. We further recommend that a unified financial appeal be launched for financing the whole long range seminary program (mentioned in recommendation number 1 above) including the needs of the seminaries we already have and the establishment of two others, this appeal to seek contributions from individuals and corporations in addition to receipts for capital needs already provided for through the Co-operative Program.

8. That this Convention appoint a committee of one from each state to promote the long range seminary program in co-operation with this Convention and the several state conventions.

9. That such committee be authorized to recommend sites, enlist financial support, draw up charters, and perform other necessary duties pertaining to the carrying out of the above recommendations.

10. That the memorial relative to the Golden Gate Theological Seminary, and all other correspondence relative to the location and establishment of seminaries be referred to this new Committee on Theological Education.

11. That all actions of this committee be subject to ratification by the Southern Baptist Convention or its Executive Committee.

12. That the Convention provide out of its expense budget the necessary expenses of this committee, the total to be determined by the Executive Committee of the Convention.

13. Since the Committee reporting to this Convention on theological education did not regard Bible Schools which seek to serve God-called men who are not college-trained, and who because of age and limited previous schooling cannot enter college, as coming within the purview of the Committee, as evidenced by conclusion, it is understood that the new Committee, whose appointment is called for in Recommendation 8 of the report, be instructed to give careful study to the work of such Bible schools with a view to the obtaining or establishing of an institution to serve the host of God-called preachers who cannot obtain the training they desire in the colleges or seminaries..

Dr. J. W. Storer was made chairman of the new Committee on Theological Education. (See recommendation No. 8 above.)

1950-- The Committee on Theological Education reported that it had considered the offers of ten cities in the eastern section of the Convention for the location of the new seminary. The Convention adopted the following recommendations of the committee:

Seminary in the East

9. We recommend that the seminary in the East be located in Wake Forest, North Carolina, and that it be named "The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc."

10. That we accept the offer of the Wake Forest College Trustees and as ratified by the North Carolina State Convention, and that the Southern Baptist Convention pay Wake Forest College the sum of \$1,600,000; \$300,000 on or before January 1, 1952, with the expressed hope of annual payments thereafter being not less than \$300,000, and with the provision that the Convention will pay the entire sum on or before January 1, 1961.

11. We recommend that articles of incorporation for The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary be as follows (see report, page 414).

12. That this Convention proceed to elect the trustees of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc., as prescribed in the articles of incorporation and to instruct the said trustees to take such legal steps as are necessary to ratify the agreement between Wake Forest College and the Southern Baptist Convention.

13. We recommend that the Convention reconsider Item 60, paragraph 7, of the 1949 Convention proceedings in so far as it is related to a unified financial appeal for the whole long range seminary program and that this matter be referred to the seminaries for their action within the Convention Business and Financial Plan, and to the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, recognizing the imperative need for same.



The Convention approved an allocation of \$100,035 for the new seminary from the 1941 Cooperative Program budget, and elected a board of trustees.

- 1951-- The Trustees of the Southeastern Seminary (C. C. Warren, Chairman) reported the election of Dr. Sydnor L. Stealey as President of the institution in February. They consummated the agreement with Wake Forest College and made plans and preparation to open the seminary in the fall of 1951. The seminary provided first-year class work and enrolled 85 in the fall.
- 1952-- The new seminary reported a successful year with an enrolment of 95 at the end of its first academic year. The faculty was increased from three to nine full time professors in the fall and second year work was added to the curriculum. . . . Cooperative Program allocation for operating expenses was \$100,000 in 1952, \$161,250 in 1953. A capital needs allocation of \$1,500,000 for the years 1952-56 was approved by the Convention with the understanding that \$1,300,000 of this amount was to be used to pay the debt to Wake Forest College.
- 1953-- The seminary enrolled 230 students. . . . Its library now had 9,000 volumes. Three members were added to the faculty.
- 1954-- The Convention extended the five-year capital needs program two years: Southeastern was to receive \$350,130.34 in 1957 and \$358,567 in 1958. Southeastern enrolled 343 students (seven women) during its third session and graduated 66 men with the B.D. degree. Th.M. course was added in September.
- 1955-- The seminary reported that Wake Forest College would move to its new campus at Winston-Salem and give the seminary full possession of the old campus June, 1956. Thus the seminary anticipated a large renovation project to prepare the campus for full occupancy.
- 1956-- The Convention approved an increase in the allocation for the operating budget of Southeastern from \$288,000 in 1956 to \$321,000 in 1957. Religious Education curriculum was now sufficient for students to get B.D. degrees with a major in that field. . . . The seminary gained full possession of the Wake Forest campus July 1, 1956. The SBC Executive Committee approved the Sunday School Board's request for permission to give \$50,000 to the Southeastern Seminary for a Children's Building.
- 1957-- The Convention approved a "Suggested Capital Needs" budget of \$1,300,000 for Southeastern Seminary, 1959-63. . . . The Seminary began to offer (1956-57) some courses in Church Music. Some new buildings were constructed, many old ones were renovated, several were converted into student apartments. Student apartments continued to be a pressing need.
- 1958-- The Convention granted Southeastern Seminary permission to "postpone final payment of \$200,000 to Wake Forest College until January 1, 1961, in order to begin construction on the first unit apartments." . . . Certificate courses

were available for men and women without college degrees (limited this group of 10% of total enrolment) . . . . Faculty now numbers 21 full time and 7 part time teachers. . . . The Convention approved the following recommendation relative to all Convention seminaries which was offered by the Committee to Study Total Southern Baptist Convention Program:

Recommendation 28

To make more effective use of existing seminaries, it is recommended that:

(1) Before more new seminaries are established, every effort should be made to utilize the full potential of the present seminaries.

(2) A plan for year-around operation of the seminaries be developed.

A study should be made under the sponsorship of the seminaries of the feasibility and cost of year-around operation, and detailed plans for year-around operation should be developed and presented to the Convention for approval.

(3) The seminaries should make every effort to avoid duplication of college courses.

(4) Graduate study and special programs should not be offered in the newer seminaries until faculty, facilities, equipment, and library resources justify such procedures.

It is recommended that the seminary presidents establish a committee to study this matter in detail. If desirable, specialized subcommittees could be established in the various fields where need for expanded programs or conversely unnecessary duplications are felt to exist.

(5) Seminary sponsorship of Christian training and certificate programs should be studied carefully and held at a minimum.

It is recommended that a special study be conducted under the sponsorship of the seminaries to determine how the needs for degree and non-degree training can best be met with the resources available to the denomination. Alternatives to continuation and expansion of non-degree programs which might be studied would include (a) an expanded seminary extension program, (b) expanded Bible, religious education, and music education in Baptist colleges, and their extension programs, and (c) expansion of assistance to state convention sponsored Bible schools by the seminaries to improve the quality of these programs.

1959-- Southeastern reported an enrolment during the 1958-59 session of 752 students representing 25 states and six foreign countries. The Southeastern Seminary operating budget of \$545,430 for 1958-59 included \$414,530 from the Co-operative Program.