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The remarkable involvement of Southern Baptists here, there and everywhere has produced in recent years . . .

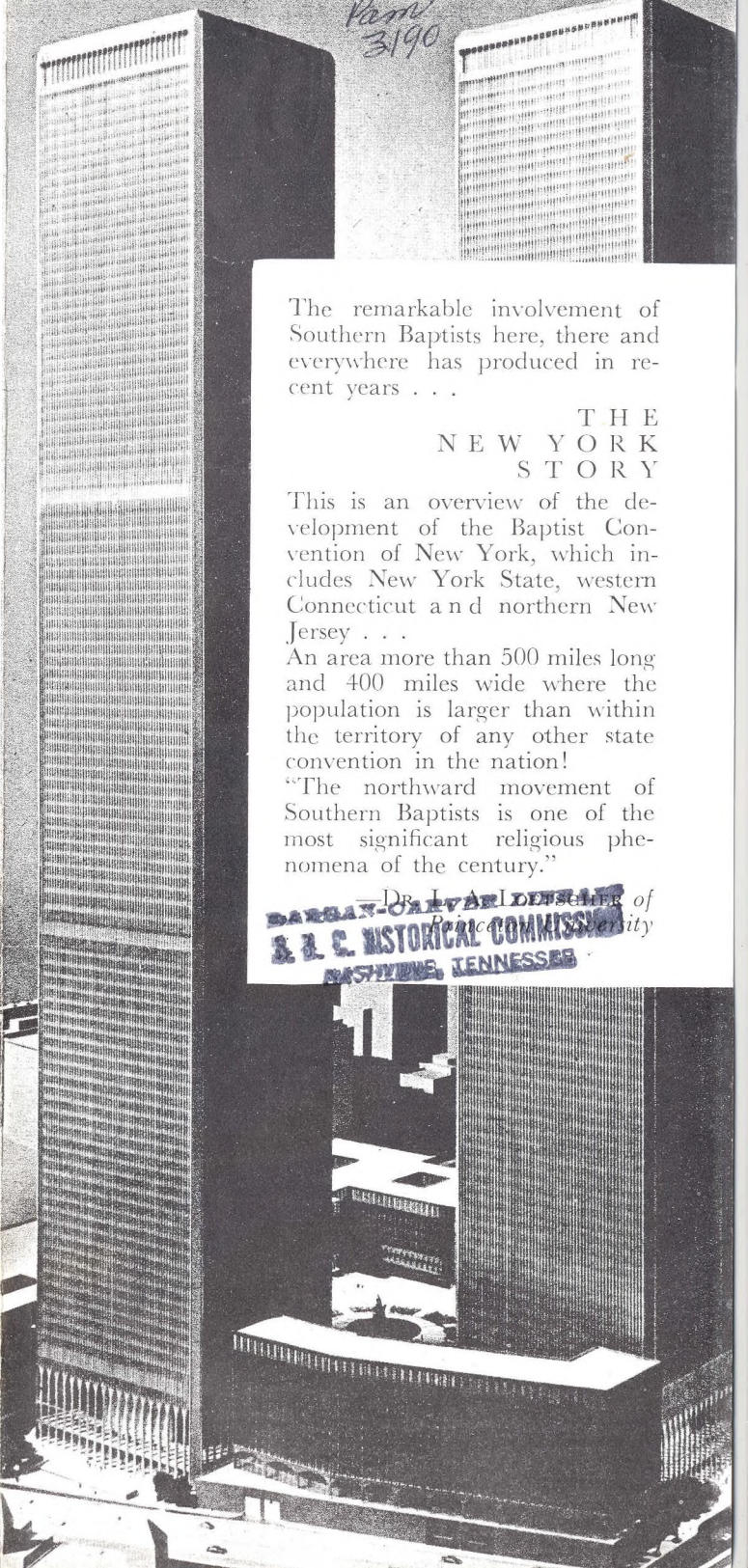
### THE NEW YORK STORY

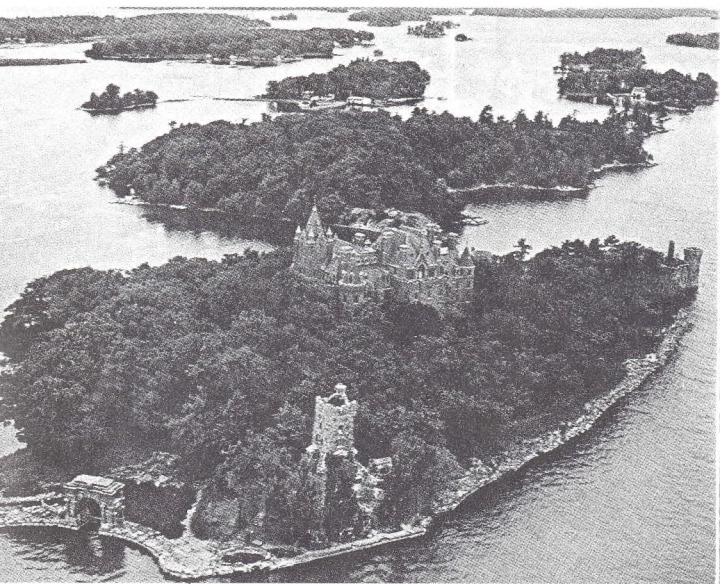
This is an overview of the development of the Baptist Convention of New York, which includes New York State, western Connecticut and northern New Jersey . . .

An area more than 500 miles long and 400 miles wide where the population is larger than within the territory of any other state convention in the nation!

"The northward movement of Southern Baptists is one of the most significant religious phenomena of the century."

—DR. L. CARL DITSCHEL, Director of  
**S. B. HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
Princeton University  
Nashville, Tennessee





*Alexandria Bay on the St. Lawrence River is gateway to the Thousand Islands and just across the river is Canada. Our church here had its beginning in what used to be a tavern.*

surveyed a community of 1200 new homes where there was no church.

- ★ Nazareth, Raritan Valley, Terrill Road, Twin County and Somerset Hills churches, in the middle of rapidly growing communities.
- ★ Vassar Road and Ridgecrest churches in the Hudson Valley and the BSU ministry to cadets at West Point where more than 4,000 future army officers are enrolled.
- ★ Clinton Road Church, only Southern Baptist work in a city of 100,000 people. Rome Church, mother of several other churches.
- ★ Churches in the great "North Country" of the Adirondacks. Churches at Endicott on the Southern Tier and Fredonia in the far west of the state. But with 40 communities in western New York of 2500 population up to 60,000 with no Baptist witness, and the unreached millions in other parts of our convention, the goal of 60 churches in the next five years seems modest.
- ★ Work on twenty campuses. But with 800,000 students in the 250 colleges and universities of our convention this is but a start.

## A Look Down the Corridor Of the Years Ahead

We are here because too few Christian churches and unreached millions demand that we make every commitment necessary to witness to Christ as representatives of America's largest evangelical denomination. We are not here to colonize South Baptists but to evangelize. We find that when a pastor is called, a church is organized, a program is promoted and a building is secured, local people are reached in numbers. Our pastors serve as presidents of local ministers conferences, leaders of community religious

surveys, and in other cooperative endeavors; and are widely appreciated. There is growing awareness we are here not to compete but to cooperate. It has taken the population shifts, trek to urban centers, building boom and financial growth of the recent decades to develop our work in strength in the so-called "pioneer" states.

Christian social ministries, as at Park Slope in Brooklyn, are helping us relate to the needs of people. Results in recent revival services may portend a spiritual awakening in the communities where we serve. With zeal, individual congregations have started new chapels that are assisted by Southern Baptists through the Home Mission Board to become strong churches.

But *you* can help too. You can tell us when people you know move into this area. You can give faithfully, and increasingly, for this work through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions. You might encourage your church to adopt a mission here. You can keep informed of developments through "The New York Baptist," which we will gladly send you. Above all, you can pray earnestly for this strategic new mission adventure.



*Convention is called "The Baptist Convention of New York" because it embraces all of New York State and the New York City metropolitan region, which includes western Connecticut and northern New Jersey.*

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## THE BAPTIST CONVENTION OF NEW YORK

400 Montgomery Street  
Syracuse, New York 13202

PAUL S. JAMES, *Executive Secretary-Treasurer*

JOHN M. TUBBS, *Director, Education Division*      JON F. MEEK, JR., *Director, Missions Division*

LEOBARDO ESTRADA  
*Director of Language Missions*

ELDON JONES, KEN LYLE, ELLIS TURNER  
*Superintendents of Missions*

MRS. ROBERT FLING  
*President, Woman's Missionary Union*

RAY GILLILAND, ALTON HARPE  
*Directors of Student Ministries*

# THE NEW YORK STORY

BY

PAUL S. JAMES

*Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the  
Baptist Convention of New York*

The cover introduces you to the World Trade Center, scheduled for completion in 1973, which will have the world's tallest buildings: two 110-story towers surrounded by low-lying plaza buildings.

New York City, America's biggest city and heart of the world's largest metropolitan community! It is a part of the Empire State, which extends from Niagara Falls in the west to Montauk Point on the eastern tip of Long Island. It is the hub of an urban complex extending into western Connecticut and northern New Jersey, embracing more than twenty million people. This is the commercial, financial, educational and cultural center of modern America. For a lot of us it is a vast mission field and "Top Priority Area" because so many people are involved.

## How The Work Started

In 1954 R. Z. Boroughs resigned his pastorate in Alabama to go to Niagara Falls and minister to some of his non-resident members living there. In June 1955 the LaSalle Baptist Church was organized with fifty-four members, the first work in the Northeast to be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The voice of the Lord sounding in the concrete canyons was heard by Mr. and Mrs. James Aaron of Granite City, Illinois, when they moved to New York in the fall of 1956 with their two small sons. Mr. Aaron enrolled in New York University as a student. Not finding a church that met their spiritual needs, they took steps to locate other Southern Baptists living in the Greater New York area who might be interested in forming a mission. Dr. Roy Roberts of Ohio provided help in this. Several months later the voice of God was heard by three dozen Southern Baptists. It was the summer of 1957. Renting space in a YMCA they started Sunday morning services. A church in Maryland extended an arm of fellowship to them, accepting them as a mission; and encouragement was given by the Home Mission Board. That fall Paul James was called from Atlanta to direct the work, under the auspices of the Home Mission Board. It meant giving up the happy 16-year pastorate of a large church to become the mission pastor of a chapel of 37 members.

On an historic night in January, 1958 the Manhattan Baptist Church was organized with 99 charter members. It was the lighting of another candle in the 33-counties area which makes up Metropolitan New York. It was an historic event because the world's largest Baptist body had a beachhead within the shadow of the world's tallest building, at the vortex of the world's largest concentration of cities, and at the gateway to New England with its six states in which there was no Southern Baptist work.

When the founding fathers organized the Southern Baptist Convention at Augusta, Georgia in 1845 they declared it was "to provide a general organization for Baptists in the United States and its territories." Emblazoned on the banner of the Home Mission Board are the words "Our Land for Christ." For the first time in our history as a denomination it now is possible to realize these goals inasmuch as Southern Baptist laymen and women have gone into every state in the Union as a nucleus for Southern Baptist work. And they have gone with a built-in drive for reaching, teaching, winning, training, and enlisting others for Christ.

## A Growing Work and An Expanding Witness

Since the night the candle was lighted a lot of ships have come into the harbor and a lot of water has run under the Washington Bridge. Under the blessing of God the circle of light has widened.

The Niagara Falls Church extended an arm to Syracuse in the central part of New York State, and a church was organized here in 1957 with Paul Becker, a Syracuse native, coming from a pastorate in South Carolina to become the first minister. This church has sponsored seven missions, most of which are churches.



*Western New York is best known for Niagara Falls which carries the waters of Lake Erie northward to Lake Ontario with a drop of 326 feet in its 36-mile course. More than half the drop is in a single plunge over the Falls. Each year 4 million people thrill to this world-famous sight and sound.*

In 1961 the building of the Amherst church was erected in the Buffalo area as the first building constructed by Southern Baptists in the state. This church sponsored missions which are now churches.

Manhattan Church related to seventeen missions which are now churches. One of these is Farmingdale, first SBC church on Long Island with its millions of people. Farmingdale became the mother church of three other churches, and now has "grandchildren." Another is Madison, first church in populous New Jersey. This church has sponsored six chapels which are now churches and its members have given \$694,000 of which \$143,000 has been for the denomination's mission causes.

From three churches in 1958 the work developed to a state convention, The Baptist Convention of New York, organized in 1969, which consists of 115 congregations, six associations, and 11,000 members. Another association in southern New Jersey which came out of the early beginnings is a part of the newly-organized Pennsylvania-South Jersey Convention, and Southern Baptist work has penetrated the six New England states where there are three associations.

The first Southern Baptist church organized in New England was Screven Memorial at Portsmouth, N. H., which was formerly a chapel of Manhattan Church. Portsmouth is across the bridge from Kittery, Maine, where Pastor William Screven and his congregation fled their persecutors in 1681 and moved to Charleston, South Carolina to plant the first Baptist church in the South. The wheel of history has turned a full revolution: Southern Baptists are back in the area of Kittery, Maine, where Southern Baptist work began in the heart of William Screven!

In the ten states of the Northeast there are about fifty million people, which is one-fourth of the population of the nation, and one southern state may have more Baptist churches than in the heavily populated Northeastern states.

## Foothold Established in Metropolitan Centers

With a concern to reach the largest number of people in the shortest possible time, Southern Baptists of the Baptist Convention of New York have made their major thrust in the cities and surrounding suburbs: Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Schenectady and New York; and with a concern to open up avenues of approach to all kinds of groups: internationals, military, students, high-rise residents, and others.

In Buffalo, which is the second largest city in the state with a metropolitan population of 1½ million, the oldest Polish church building in America is used for a Polish ministry of our convention. We have no foreign missionaries in Poland, but among the half million Poles in New York City we have a church in Brooklyn, and two churches serving in Harlem, which is America's largest ghetto.

In New York City one person out of eight speaks Spanish. Many Spanish-speaking congregations affiliated with our convention have been formed. We have work with nearly thirty different language groups, in nine languages. Among the 60,000 French-speaking Haitians in New York City we have four congregations; the central work in Brooklyn having more than 300 in attendance each Sunday, including many youth.

Among the two million people in the borough of Queens (NYC), Highland Avenue Church conducts a day nursery, operates a youth hostel and sponsors ministries in the seventeen 20-story highrise apartments which make up LeFrak City where more than 20,000 people live. At LeFrak there are language, sewing and tutoring classes in addition to the chapel services. At Highland Avenue there are translations in half a dozen languages during worship services.

So the thrilling story goes on:

- ★ A church now on Staten Island with its 310,00 people.
- ★ A church in Greenwich, Connecticut, part of the New York City commuting area; the first non-negro Baptist witness in this affluent city, and already mother of two other churches. This church has just dedicated a new educational building.
- ★ First Baptist, Brooklyn, in whose membership are people of more than twenty different nationalities. It started with twelve people from the Canal Zone and has sponsored five chapels that are now churches.
- ★ Two churches in the Bronx, which started in Jewish synagogues.
- ★ Bergen Church in New Jersey's million-population county; Monmouth Church in New Jersey's largest county with its outreach in starting missions that become churches; the church at Medford, L.I., which began several years ago when summer missionaries