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Foreign Mission Board
approves Hamburg Agreement

By Robert Dilday

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- A 10-point agreement negotiated by representatives of European Baptists and the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board was unanimously approved Oct. 14 by FMB trustees, who said the pact will mend strained relations between the two groups.

Adoption of the "Hamburg Agreement," a highlight of the trustees' Oct. 12-14 meeting, may resolve long-standing conflict between Baptists on the two continents which came to a head with the FMB's defunding last year of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

However, some disagreement apparently remains over whether FMB trustees have apologized for the Ruschlikon defunding. Although European leaders were assured the FMB trustees had apologized for the action, some FMB trustees insisted Oct. 14 they had not.

Ironically, approval of the Hamburg Agreement came during the final board meeting of retiring FMB President Keith Parks, who cited differences with trustees over missions philosophy -- represented in part by the Ruschlikon affair -- as contributing to his decision to leave.

Parks, who turns 65 Oct. 23, will retire at the end of the month.

The Hamburg Agreement was crafted Sept. 11-12 in Hamburg, Germany, by FMB trustees and staff and leaders of the European Baptist Federation. Its signatories agree to maintain partnership based on mutual respect, spiritual freedom, moral integrity, genuine consultation and reciprocal sharing.

Prompting the agreement was the FMB's October 1991 elimination of a

\$365,000 contribution to Ruschlikon, European Baptists' only international seminary. The FMB charged the school's alleged liberal theology made continued ties to the institution impossible. After Europeans warned the move jeopardized relations with the FMB, peace talks were proposed. The result was the Hamburg Agreement.

The EBF executive council, which includes delegates from 38 national Baptist unions, adopted the agreement Sept. 29 with only one opposing vote. In introductory remarks made prior to the council decision, EBF leaders cited FMB trustees' apologies for the action -- apologies offered to European Baptist representatives in Hamburg -- as a key factor in the council's acceptance of it.

Scottish Baptist Peter Barber told fellow EBF leaders that an apology from FMB chairman John Jackson that was seen as "regret over the result of the decision rather than regret over the decision itself" would not have been acceptable. But, Barber said, FMB trustees later exhibited genuine repentance for the action.

During their meeting Oct. 14, however, some FMB trustees sharply disputed the Europeans' contention that further apologies had been made.

Trustee Paul Pressler of Houston criticized a description of the apologies that appeared in an Oct. 1 Associated Baptist Press article, which Pressler cited from Virginia Baptists' Religious Herald.

"I am concerned," Pressler said, "that anyone would allege that the excellent members of this committee who negotiated in good faith and are godly people apologized for the decision that we made to defund Ruschlikon. I have not talked to one person on this board who is sorry that we have defunded Ruschlikon and I think we ought to address this situation."

He added: "I don't think this board is ready or willing or wants to say that we genuinely regret our decision to defund Ruschlikon Seminary. And I think it would be a very sad thing for us to fail to say we do not regret our decision to defund Ruschlikon."

"We do regret the lack of information that was given to Europeans on the depth of our theological concern that caused them not to understand. We do regret some lack of communication in making the decision. We do regret the fact that we thought that they were going to add conservative professors (at Ruschlikon) and they did not."

Several other trustees echoed the view that the FMB apologized only for the effects of the Ruschlikon defunding, not the decision itself. Chairman Jackson cited his own statement to that effect from the ABP article. Skip Smith, chairman of the trustees' Europe committee, said the article quoted him correctly in telling the Europeans, "We deeply regret the grief, anger and frustration brought about by the action...."

Others complained the article misrepresented the apology.

The article quoted an unnamed source who said the apology for the defunding was not included in the Hamburg documents so that FMB trustees could "save face." Both Smith and Jackson, both present in Hamburg, said they did not recall anyone at the meeting using those words or "anything resembling" them.

Pressler added: "I do not think that this (ABP article) gives the right emphasis and I think that we as a board should nip in the bud false reports that will plague us for a long time if we do not address ourselves to the situation."

Pressler requested that the board convene an executive session to discuss the article. Several trustees spoke against the motion, however, and Pressler later said an executive session was not a "necessity." His motion lost when only a few trustees voted for it.

Another concern with the Hamburg Agreement raised by trustees was

apparently put to rest earlier in the three-day meeting when chairman Jackson drew trustees' attention to a 1988 board statement described as a key component of the board's missions philosophy.

Some trustees worried that while the Hamburg Agreement permits the EBF to work with mission agencies -- such as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship -- other than the Foreign Mission Board, the agreement does not explicitly grant the FMB freedom to work with groups other than the EBF in Europe.

Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president, told trustees the 1988 declaration clearly states the board's right to work as it sees fit anywhere in the world and with any group.

Parks' impending retirement was referred to frequently by trustees, who appeared willing to lay aside the tense discussions that have at times characterized their relationship to the president.

On behalf of the board, trustee Alan Thompson of Phoenix, Ariz, presented service pins for 38 years of missionary service to Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, as well as a framed resolution of appreciation from trustees.

"As a Southern Baptist," he added, "I also want to give you a great gift -- our undying love."

Another resolution was delivered by James Williams, president of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, the denomination's agency for missions education for men and boys.

In his last report to the board, Parks thanked family, missionaries, trustees, Southern Baptist leaders and church members, and Baptist and other colleagues around the world for support during his tenure.

He also expressed gratitude for several accomplishments, including the growth of intercessory prayer ministry, development of a global approach to missions, and increased partnering with Baptists around the world.

Parks offered seven suggestions to his successor:

1. "Determine the missiological standard by which decisions will be made and apply it consistently and vigorously...."
2. "Assume responsibility for all tough, unpopular decisions...."
3. "Delegate responsibility and encourage a participative management style."
4. "Encourage, even insist on, the free expression of news and other forms of communication...."
5. "Identify with career missionaries."
6. "Guard against using an aspect of this office to meet personal needs or desires...."
7. "Maintain a daily closeness to the Lord so decisions are made in God's wisdom rather than your own."

Trustees heard a progress report from their committee seeking Parks' successor. In the absence of search chairman Joel Gregory of Dallas, Leon Hyatt of Pineville, La., reported the committee has made no firm decision.

Hyatt labeled a recent ABP article -- which named Kammerdiener and former missionary Avery Willis of Nashville, Tenn., as the finalists for the post -- as "a prime example of irresponsible journalism." Of the story, Hyatt said, "some of it is true, some is distorted, and some is patently incorrect."

Hyatt criticized the story's use of unnamed sources but did not identify any inaccuracies. The story cited two unidentified search committee members as confirming Kammerdiener and Willis as the top choices.

Greg Warner, executive editor of ABP, later said "the careful use of

unidentified sources is indispensable to investigative journalism." Noting the story's sources were search committee members, Warner said ABP would correct any inaccuracies that Hyatt identifies.

Trustees adopted a motion asking the presidential search committee to let trustees know of its nominee "as quickly as possible."

The motion was a substitute for another by Pat Bullock of Corpus Christi, Texas, to place all information in "the hands of trustees 30 days before (the nominee) is to be elected." Several trustees said that length of time would pose problems for the committee.

In other action, trustees approved a \$183.8 million budget for 1993, only \$145,000, or .08 percent, more than the current budget. Nearly 88 percent of the total is allocated to work overseas, 67 percent of that for direct support of personnel.

The budget anticipates \$255,000 less from the SBC Cooperative Program, but an additional \$200,000 from the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The Cooperative Program provides about 38 percent of FMB revenues, the offering about 46 percent.

Chairman Jackson noted this is the second consecutive budget that provides no cost-of-living salary increase for Richmond-based staff. "This is an austere budget," he said.

Trustees also acted to distribute funds received above the \$84 million goal for the 1992 Lottie Moon offering to evangelization of former communist nations. They declined to approve a suggestion referred to them by the SBC for a special three-year offering the week of July 4 for the same purpose.

During an appointment service Oct. 13 -- Parks' last -- 41 new mission workers were approved. An additional couple was reappointed the next day.

The appointments bring to 3,918 the total mission force serving in 126 countries.

Some 47 missionary resignations, an unusually high number, were also reported during the trustee meeting.

In other action, trustees:

-- Asked their policy subcommittee to study the feasibility of hiring a consultant to study the FMB's staff organization.

-- Named missionary Jack Shelby as coordinator of volunteers for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The action was an attempt to deal with the large numbers of Southern Baptists eager to participate in short-term mission trips in the region. Trustees have expressed concern with what they said was a slow response to volunteer service.

-- Transferred ownership of the Hong Kong Baptist Seminary to the Hong Kong Baptist Convention and of the Wallace Memorial Baptist Hospital in Pusan, South Korea, to a foundation controlled by the Korea Baptist Convention.

The seminary transfer -- routinely approved without discussion or opposition along with 15 other recommendations from the east Asia administrative area -- was in marked contrast to the fiercely debated transfer of Ruschlikon seminary to European Baptists in 1988.

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FMB-CBF dialogue shows
few signs of progress

By Greg Warner

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. (ABP) -- Leaders of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship spent five hours in dialogue over differences Oct. 15 but emerged with no one predicting any progress in the strained relationship between the two.

The topic was missions. The Foreign Mission Board, with its 3,918 missionaries, and the much smaller Fellowship, with less than a dozen "missioners," nonetheless have become competitors of sorts.

The Fellowship, an organization of moderate-conservative Southern Baptists, launched into missions last January after FMB decisions disrupted the longtime partnership between the FMB and European Baptists. The Fellowship's "missioners," as they are called, are all former FMB missionaries likewise displeased with the direction of the Foreign Mission Board.

The brewing differences between the two organizations prompted Woman's Missionary Union, which raises about half of the FMB's missions money, to suggest the dialogue.

If the objectives of the one-day meeting were unclear, so were the results.

John Jackson, chairman of FMB trustees, said afterward he initiated the dialogue and is open to any proposal that might come from the Fellowship, but he conceded, "I don't know how much interaction there will be in the future."

"We got a chance to understand their viewpoint...without necessarily agreeing," said the California pastor, one of three FMB trustees to participate.

John Hewett, former moderator of the Fellowship, said the meeting "accomplished little" since the 10 participants could not even agree on what changes if any have occurred at the FMB since Southern Baptist fundamental-conservatives gained control of the agency.

Indeed, the issue of change occupied much of the dialogue, which was open to reporters only under background rules that prohibit attributed quotations.

Staff and trustees of the FMB insisted little if anything has changed at the agency. They gave an overview of the FMB's missionary-appointment policies to demonstrate moderate-conservatives were not being excluded from missionary service.

Moreover, the FMB leaders said, the SBC's "conservative resurgence" -- and particularly the political structure that nurtured it -- has played little or no role in defining the FMB's current direction or their participation as trustees.

Fellowship leaders protested, citing the sudden retirement of FMB President Keith Parks and two top administrators as evidence. The three retirees, as well as other employees who have since resigned, blamed SBC politics or the fundamentalist agenda of trustees for diverting the FMB from its traditional course.

Parks announced in February he will leave the agency at the end of October because of his "philosophical differences" with trustees and the disruption caused by SBC politics.

But several of the FMB's dialogue participants said Parks misrepresented the intentions of trustees and overstated the influence of the "conservative resurgence" on the work of the FMB.

They went on to say Parks was responsible for most of the decisions that drew criticism from Baptist constituents and missionaries, such as the so-called "70-30 plan" that redirected 70 percent of missionary efforts to evangelism.

"Most of the things they have trouble with were Dr. Parks' agenda, not trustees' agenda," Jackson said for the record after the meeting.

Even the donnybrook over the trustees' 1991 defunding of the European Baptist seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, could have been avoided if the FMB staff -- presumably Parks -- had come to trustees with a compromise plan to resolve the dispute, the FMB leaders said. The defunding, over alleged liberalism at the FMB-funded seminary, ignited a firestorm of protests that eventually caused the breach in FMB relations with European Baptists.

Since his retirement announcement, Parks has criticized trustees for becoming too involved in administration of the agency.

But Parks' leadership style and not "philosophical differences" created the impasse with trustees that produced his earlier-than-planned retirement, the FMB leaders said.

Parks was incapable of sharing leadership of the FMB with trustees, several FMB participants said. While trustees were willing for him to stay as president, they said, Parks would not accept the heightened involvement in decision-making sought by trustees.

The 65-year-old president probably didn't even recognize that as the true nature of his problem with trustees, one added.

Afterward, Hewett disputed the contention by the FMB representatives that the "conservative resurgence" has not altered the course of the Foreign Mission Board or influenced the decisions of trustees. Accepting that argument, he said, means ignoring all statements to the contrary from Parks and other FMB administrators who have left in protest.

"If you believe all these people (former employees) are deluded...then those guys have a good argument," said Hewett, a pastor in Asheville, N.C. "The thrust of their argument is, 'We know more about the Foreign Mission Board than these people do.'"

Dialogue participants came closest to agreement on the topic of how they should treat each other. Both sides said they want an end to the harsh rhetoric that has flown in both directions.

But they acknowledged difficulty in that both groups are competing for missions money from Southern Baptist churches.

Fellowship leaders complained about charges -- spoken publicly by Jackson and others -- that the Fellowship is "cutting the throat" of the Cooperative Program by encouraging churches to divert funds to its missions program. The Fellowship is providing more than \$2 million directly to the FMB this year, Fellowship leaders said, which is more than it is spending on its own missions. "That hardly sounds like cutting the throat," one said.

But FMB leaders insisted the Fellowship's funding program is sowing "seeds of destruction" that could damage the Cooperative Program, the unified budget that supports most SBC agencies.

"If what we're doing is evil," one Fellowship leader responded, "then have the moral conviction to give the money back."

At least one FMB leader agreed with that logic. But others disagreed.

"I appreciate any money that comes to the Foreign Mission Board from any source that helps keep 3,900 missionaries in the field," Jackson said for the record after the meeting.

In addition to Jackson, others representing the FMB in the dialogue were trustees Don Bullock of Texas and Phyliss Randall of Virginia, Executive Vice President Don Kammerdiener and personnel administrator Harlan Spurgeon.

Representing the Fellowship, in addition to Hewett, were Cecil Sherman of Atlanta, CBF coordinator; Pat Ayres of Texas, moderator; and James Slatton of Virginia and Jean Bond of Mississippi.

Patterson installed as fifth
president of Southeastern

By Todd Deaton

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (ABP) -- Paige Patterson, a prominent leader in the fundamental-conservative movement in the Southern Baptist Convention, was installed as the fifth president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in an inauguration ceremony Oct. 13.

Responding to the challenges issued by inauguration speakers, Patterson said, "I take them as a mandate not only from men but from God."

Patterson asked trustees, faculty, students and inauguration guests to pray "that we at this seminary will always remember that education is not an end within itself but only a means toward the reaching of...lost people to the cause of Christ."

The installation of Patterson, formerly president of Criswell College in Dallas, marks a new chapter in the seminary's history, which has been fraught with controversy for five years.

The seminary became a target for SBC fundamental-conservatives, who gained a majority on the seminary board in 1987. Trustees changed seminary policy to ensure that only biblical inerrantists were elected to the faculty, prompting then-president Randall Lolley and most top administrators to resign. Patterson, who began work at Southeastern in June, succeeds Lewis Drummond, who retired under pressure from trustees.

In the inauguration address, Edwin Young, president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston, made three predictions about Patterson's presidency and the future of Southeastern seminary:

-- Academic. Young predicted Southeastern will develop a "product-driven" curriculum under the leadership of the president, dean and faculty. Young continued: "What kind of product? Young men and young women called by God, intellectually equipped to deal with and handle the holy Word of God, on fire with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

-- Ecclesiastical. "I believe this seminary will gear its graduates to serve primarily in the local church...", Young said.

-- Evangelistic. Young predicted Southeastern will produce "scholars on fire" who will be the beginning of a revival that has been prayed for since his days as a student at the seminary. Of his seminary experience, he recalled, "As we doubted our salvation, as we questioned our call by God, as we wondered what kind of Bible we had left to preach, we prayed for revival in this faculty, for revival in this student body, for revival in our lives...."

When he arrived at Southeastern as a student, he continued, there were clear lines drawn in the faculty and student body primarily on the basis of conservative and liberal theology. "But in the hand and providence of God and his history, changes have taken place," he declared.

He said the inauguration of Patterson signals the school "has come full circle."

Morris Chapman, newly elected SBC Executive Committee president, described Patterson as committed to four principles: the absolute truth of God's unchanging word, Christ and his commission, compassion for the lost, and courage in the face of adversity.

Other inauguration messages were brought by the trustee chairman, student council president, alumni president and a faculty member.

The seminary's trustees also met during the inauguration week. In

recent years, declining enrollment, a faculty exodus and financial struggles have plagued the seminary, which was put on probation by both of its accrediting agencies, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools.

Patterson, in an address to trustees during their two-day meeting, identified primary areas of trustee concern:

-- Esprit de corps. Acknowledging that Southeastern seminary had been a "campus in turmoil," Patterson stated that his assignment is "to restore peace...and get things moving again." He observed that there are faculty members who are less than thrilled about the new direction of the school while others are elated. Patterson reported, however, that the campus is basically at peace.

-- Accreditation. Patterson expressed optimism about the recent visit from representatives of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The seminary will seek full restoration of accreditation, Patterson pledged, "until the time comes when the accrediting association asks us to do that which is unconscionable, either from an ethical or theological perspective."

A decision regarding the seminary's accreditation is anticipated following the December meeting of SACS.

-- Student recruitment. Contrary to rumors, Patterson claimed enrollment is up about 10 students over last year. Since 1987, the school's enrollment has fallen from more than 1,000. A figure released by the school's communication division placed fall enrollment at 628. But Patterson and trustees hope that the school will now begin to attract more fundamental-conservative students.

-- Finances. Patterson said the seminary faces its most critical days ever in the next 36 months as funding from the SBC decreases. The seminary needs to endow 10-to-12 academic chairs at \$1 million each, he said.

Paul Fletcher, vice president for internal affairs, noted the SBC's return to an enrollment-driven seminary funding formula will reduce Cooperative Program funds for Southeastern. As a result, SEBTS could face a budgetary shortfall of \$815,673 in 1995 if outside funding, endowments and student enrollment do not increase.

-- Faculty. Earlier reports indicated only seven of the 35 professors who were at the school in 1987 will be left by the end of the year. In rebuilding the faculty, Patterson commented that many of those recently named to one-year teaching posts, will be invited to return as permanent professors.

New faculty members include Danny Akin, dean of students and adjunct professor of church history; Gerald Cowan, professor of pastoral theology; Gary Galeotti, professor of Old Testament; David Lanier, associate professor of New Testament; Paul Carlisle, assistant professor of pastoral theology; Keith Eitel, professor of missions; and Scott Tatum, visiting professor of preaching and pastoral ministry. Many of the new professors come from Criswell College, where Patterson was recently president.

The trustee's instruction committee awarded Patterson the faculty rank and title of professor of theology.

During their meeting, trustees approved the long-range plan for the school's future and responded to four items referred to all of the SBC agencies by the 1992 Southern Baptist Convention.

Regarding the request to limit salaries to \$100,000 annually, trustees noted no Southeastern employee receives a salary approaching \$100,000, and the trustees at this time have no intention of raising any employee's salary to that amount.

In response to two SBC motions concerning a limit on severance benefits, trustees requested the incoming chairman of the board appoint a

committee to study formulating a policy for severance agreements.

Concerning an SBC motion to prevent seminaries from awarding degrees to students who have not first met prerequisites required from an accredited college or university, trustees referred the convention to the school's admission policies.

Trustees also heard reports from the board's various subcommittees on audit and investments, campus planning, communications, gifts and endowments, instruction and student development.

In other trustee business, Gastonia, N. C., pastor Ned Mathews was elected as chairman. Other officers include Dale Thompson of Arkansas, vice chairman; Kenneth Stevens of Michigan, secretary; and Cecil Rhodes of North Carolina, treasurer.

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Southern to add third professor
in ethics; Simmons' status unclear

By Mark Wingfield

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- A third Christian ethics professor will be added to the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in an apparent attempt by trustees to counter the teachings of professor Paul Simmons.

Trustees met behind closed doors for two hours Oct. 12 to discuss a subcommittee's study of charges against Simmons. He has been the target of intense trustee scrutiny for several years due to his support for abortion rights.

At the previous trustee meeting in April, the chairman of the academic personnel committee appointed a subcommittee "to examine all relevant data concerning charges" against Simmons. That subcommittee was charged to "bring a full report" to the October meeting.

Since the motion to approve the subcommittee was approved in executive session, the report of the committee also had to be heard in executive session, explained trustee chairman Wayne Allen.

However, participants in the executive session and sources close to the Simmons issue declined to discuss what went on behind the closed doors.

Seminary President Roy Honeycutt issued only one brief statement: "The trustees voted to allocate funds to permit the hiring of an additional professor of Christian ethics by the beginning of the fall semester of 1993."

Honeycutt said the rules of the closed meeting meant he could not comment any further.

Trustee chairman Allen also declined to comment, as did Simmons and Gary Taylor, chairman of the subcommittee created to study the charges against Simmons.

Honeycutt announced the plans to add another person to the ethics department during a faculty meeting Oct. 14 but reportedly did not elaborate.

For trustees to initiate the creation of a faculty position is a departure from past procedure. Such decisions traditionally have begun with the faculty and administration and worked their way to trustees for final approval.

Decisions to add faculty also have been based on increasing student loads and the availability of funding, seminary sources said. However,

neither of those factors appears to have driven the trustee decision.

Southern's ethics department has had only two faculty members since 1967, when the second professor was added. The other professor is Glenn Stassen, who is on sabbatic leave this year.

In recent years, the seminary's total enrollment has increased only slightly, and finances have become increasingly tight. Through a series of budget reductions, more than \$500,000 has been eliminated from the school's budget in the past two years.

Seminary Provost Larry McSwain said no decision has been made yet about what rank the new faculty member will hold. The position could be a contract instructor or an assistant, associate or full professor on a tenurable track, he said.

McSwain declined to project the cost of the addition until a decision is made about rank. However, seminary sources confirmed that the cost of adding a professor on a tenurable track could range from \$30,000 to \$60,000 annually.

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-- Marv Knox contributed to this story.

Moderate Baptists recollect
decade of their dissent

By Dan Martin

MACON, Ga. (ABP) -- Southern Baptists who launched the "moderate movement" more than a decade ago recalled their journey during a gathering Oct. 8-9 at Mercer University.

For many of the 22 program personalities and 150 participants, the trip down memory lane did not recall a path lined with primroses but rather with briars.

Cecil Sherman, an early organizer in the movement and now head of its most prominent entity, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, said he has no regrets for his involvement in the movement's failed attempt to wrest control of the Southern Baptist Convention from fundamental-conservatives.

"We did not win, but we were right," he said. "We did all we could at the time when it could have made a difference."

Walter Shurden, convener of the meeting, told Associated Baptist Press the meeting was aimed at "deliberately and intentionally collecting our memories" of the decade-long theological-political war in the Southern Baptist Convention.

He said he feared "that the best of this movement could get away from us if we did not deliberately attempt to capture it."

Shurden, a church historian who is chairman of the department of Christianity at Mercer, said historical archives already are in place at the library of the Georgia Baptist-related university.

Shurden told the presenters -- whose topics included politics, finance, women and education -- that they "are living documents" of the effort to prevent fundamentalism from capturing the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Emphasizing the need to collect the historical data from the decade-long conflict, Shurden said the fundamentalists who now control the SBC "already are involved in revisionist history" of the 1979-90 strife.

Part of what has happened, he said, is that the SBC has been afflicted with "an identity crisis of massive proportions...which confuses

confessionalism with creedalism...the Southern Baptist Convention with a Southern Baptist Church...the priesthood of the believer with the priesthood of the pastor...religious freedom for all with religious tolerance for some...separation of church and state with the 'figment of some infidel's imagination'... and a free-church mentality with lock-step conformity."

Shurden said his dream for the conference to collect the reminiscences of participants in the conflict developed as he returned to Macon from the May 1992 convocation of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

"I am aware that it is more fun to make history than to collect it, but the time has come for us to begin the process of collecting, recording and interpreting it," he said.

The meeting, Shurden said, will result in the publication of the 14 papers as a book, hopefully in time for the May 1993 convocation of the CBF in Birmingham, Ala.

Each presenter was asked to write a 25-page paper on the slice of moderate history he or she had directly and personally participated in.

There were two overview papers, one presented by church historical Glenn Hinson, a former faculty member at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., who has been involved in the movement since the beginning, frequently as a target of fundamentalists who hurled a "liberal" label at him.

In his "background to the moderate movement," Hinson "confessed" he does not like the designation "moderate" because it "suggests...that we came into existence as a divergence from our Baptist tradition, when, in fact, I think we want to accentuate our continuity with that tradition.

"Indeed, I think the continuance of the Baptist tradition is what this 'movement' is all about. We are Baptist people trying to conserve an endangered species."

Hinson, now professor at the new, moderate-oriented Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.), said the real issue of the controversy is "freedom for the Word of God."

"I see here two different understandings of faith as the most basic point of divergence," he said. "For fundamentalists, faith is faith in the inerrancy or infallibility of the Bible. For us, faith is faith in the living God, the 'I am who I am' who has sought constantly to disclose God's self in nature, in history and in human experience but whose majesty no human statements can ever suffice to express."

He added that the question is "whether human beings can have absolute certainty in matters of faith." Fundamentalists say yes; moderates no "because only God is infallible, and anything human beings are involved in will partake of their fallibility. To be a believer means to live with uncertainty, trusting the Unseen and Unknowable."

Cecil Sherman, coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, traced his involvement in the moderate movement from its very beginning: a September 1980 meeting of 17 pastors at a Gatlinburg, Tenn., hotel to launch an effort to counter the rising wave of fundamentalism in the SBC.

Since he currently heads up the CBF, an organization which remains within the SBC but has a growing structure, Sherman said his hope for the meeting was that it would be "more than a Confederate reunion."

For the former North Carolina and Texas pastor, the journey began in June of 1980 in St. Louis, at the annual meeting of the SBC, the "first presided over by a fundamentalist."

"It was different. Speakers seemed compelled to identify themselves as biblical inerrantists. Speeches and business sessions were filled with digressions so the house could be evangelized to the new orthodoxy," Sherman said.

He said he and his wife wondered if they had arrived during the "wrong week. This must be a political convention, not the SBC," he said they thought.

"We felt the change. The SBC was redirecting her energy. Before 1980, the SBC was outer-directed in mission and ministry to the world. After 1980, the SBC would be turned inward. We would fight against not 'the world, the flesh and the devil'; we preferred to fight against each other. The needy world could wait."

Sherman traced his involvement in the movement through several stages -- serving on the Peace Committee (1985 until his resignation in 1986), his political involvement, his difficulty in defending the SBC institutions, to his current role as administrator working to form and mobilize the CBF.

"Are there any regrets," he asked. "No. Not at all. There has been pain. When it finally hit me that we had lost it, that the SBC was beyond anything I could retrieve, I wept.

"I am a child of the SBC. But I did what I could. And several hundred other good people could rise to say the same....

"It was an honorable exercise. We made the right choices. It was one of the few noble things I've done in my life. No regrets. Although fundamentalists now control and guide the old SBC, Baptist ideas are alive and well."

Key players in other aspects of the moderate movement also presented papers:

James Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., on the political network; John Hewett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, N.C., on the Forum; Jimmy Allen, a former SBC president and agency executive and now a Georgia pastor, on the Baptists Committed organization;

Alan Neely, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, N.J., on the Alliance of Baptists (formerly Southern Baptist Alliance); Libby Bellinger, a social worker in Waco, Texas, on Southern Baptist Women in Ministry;

Walker Knight of Atlanta, on the newsjournal Baptists Today; Stan Hastey of Washington, D.C., executive director of the Alliance, on Associated Baptist Press; Tom Graves, president of Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, on the seminary;

Robert Parham of Nashville, Tenn., executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, on BCE; Cecil Staton of Macon, publisher of Smyth & Helwys Publishing Company, on the publishing house;

Duke McCall, Jupiter, Fla., on the Baptist Cooperative Missions Program; Daniel Vestal of Houston, on CBF.

Other program/panel participants included Pat Ayres of San Antonio, Texas, current CBF moderator; Carolyn Cole Bucy of Waco, Texas, second vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; Nancy Ammerman, professor of the sociology of religion, Emory University in Atlanta; Rob James, professor at the University of Richmond (Va.); and Bill Leonard, professor of church history at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

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Moderate Baptists form
new 'heritage' society

MACON, Ga. (ABP) -- About 150 participants at a conference on the

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history of the "moderate movement" in the Southern Baptist Convention voted Oct. 9 to form a new Baptist "heritage" society.

More than 70 of the participants signed up to be charter members of the William H. Whitsitt Baptist Heritage Society."

Conference convener Walter Shurden, chairman of the department of Christianity at Mercer University, told participants:

"I hope you will join with me in forming this new society. I hope the society can be instrumental in getting our Baptist heritage into pulpits, Sunday school material, choirs and other parts of our churches, and that our history and heritage will be something more than a play-pretty for historians."

A committee comprised of Lloyd Allen, chairman of the department of religion and philosophy at Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.; Loulie Owens Pettigrew, Greenville, S.C.; and Tom Halbrooks, dean of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.) presented the recommendation to form the new society.

It is named for Whitsitt, one of the early casualties of the battle against fundamentalism in the SBC. Allen said Whitsitt "was a professional historian who represented the resistance movement among Baptists."

Whitsitt, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., was forced to resign in 1899 when an article he wrote challenged the belief that Baptists are not Protestants but trace their lineage in an unbroken line -- a "trail of blood" -- to John the Baptist and the apostolic age.

Whitsitt said Baptists developed as part of the Reformation and emerged in the early 17th century.

Allen said the first meeting of the society will be in conjunction with the May 1993 meeting of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Birmingham, Ala.

Elected president of the new society is Walker Knight of Atlanta, publisher of the newsjournal Baptists Today.

Allen said Knight was chosen because he has an interest in Baptist history and heritage, is "a well-known name in the convention, is not identified as a deadly dull historian and has expertise in getting new organizations started."

President-elect is Pettigrew, and Shurden is secretary-treasurer.

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-- By Dan Martin

Ethics, not just law, should guide
political involvement by churches

By Kathy Palen

NEW ORLEANS, La. (ABP) -- Churches facing the thorny issue of political involvement should consider what is ethically right, not just what is legally allowable, advised a Southern Baptist ethicist.

Churches sometimes focus only on avoiding political activity that would jeopardize their tax-exempt status, explained Joe Trull, associate professor of Christian ethics at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Instead they should think through what is the right thing to do, he said.

In the days leading up to the November elections, Trull and two other Southern Baptists -- a pastor and a former political candidate -- offered advice for churches considering political involvement.

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While concern about society is appropriate for Christians and churches, Trull said, "the danger is when a church gets involved in what's loosely called partisan politics."

"I think it's inappropriate and dangerous for a church to go on record as supporting any candidate," warned Trull, an associate of the Baptist Center for Ethics.

While churches should be mindful of the legal restrictions on their political involvement, Trull acknowledged, churches should be more concerned about doing what is right. Instead of focusing upon the letter of the law or trying to push the legal limits, he said, churches should stop and consider the ethical implications of such actions.

"Regardless of what's legally allowable," he said, "I think it's wrong for churches or pastors to endorse any candidate because they are taking advantage of their position in the community or congregation and using that influence to persuade people."

Engaging in partisan politics is a "real high-risk avocation" for pastors, Trull said.

As a rule of thumb, he said, a minister should focus on issues that are clearly moral, not merely political. "Otherwise you run the risk of loosing your credibility and your ability to minister," he explained.

Ron Sisk, pastor of Western Hills Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, agreed.

"It is never the minister's prerogative to tell the people how to vote," explained Sisk, likewise an associate of the Baptist Center for Ethics. "That is simply unacceptable in a free-church tradition. It is the minister's responsibility to help people clarify issues from a Christian standpoint."

Sisk suggested that a responsible approach to an issue like national health care would be to bring in a speaker to explain the issue and different proposals to the congregation and let the members of the congregation draw their own conclusions.

While sharing such information "is always appropriate," he said, "political maneuvering or political pressure is always inappropriate in the church."

Sisk said a difficult ethical issue for ministers relates to their personal political involvement.

"I would like very much to be involved in my political party," he said, "but I have never yet been able to persuade myself that it was OK for me to be publicly involved. That mainly is because of the need to minister to everybody in the congregation and to do that in an impartial kind of way.

"I think there are certain things one gives up when one comes into the ministry, and one of the things you give up is the right for a great deal of partisan political involvement."

One of the key things a minister can do is to be an informed and active citizen and to encourage members of his or her congregation also to be informed and active citizens, Sisk said.

"That is the most basic level of Christian participation in a democracy," he explained. "Because we govern ourselves, we do not have the right as Christians to refuse involvement in government. It is a responsibility that comes to us by virtue of living in a democracy."

Trull warned that public endorsements of political candidates by ministers are rarely, if ever, the right thing to do. "In private conversations, it's OK to express your convictions," he said. "But in a public endorsement, it is almost impossible to disassociate yourself from your congregation."

Trull also warned against the trap of civil religion. In order to gain

the support of a political party or candidate on a specific issue, Christians sometimes are willing to acquiesce to a political agenda that has nothing to do with moral issues, he said.

This involvement, he explained, can lead to the trap of anointing the "Christian candidate" or the "Christian position" on an issue.

"It's dangerous to talk about the 'Christian position' on specific issues," Trull said. "Most of the time in most churches there would be people taking opposing views. To say that one view is the Christian view is a manipulation of people and a misuse of a position of influence."

Churches should be wary of printed slates of "Christian candidates" put together by an individual or a group, advised Reba Cobb, executive director of the Center for Women and Families in Louisville, Ky.

Cobb, a member of Louisville's Crescent Hill Baptist Church who was defeated in her bid for a state representative seat in Kentucky in 1988, offered suggestions for appropriate ways that churches can be involved in the political process:

- Register people to vote.
- Organize a candidate forum for the congregation or perhaps the larger community.
- Offer a workshop on how individuals can get involved in the political process. Provide non-partisan information on how people can become involved in a political campaign or some other activity.
- Give voters rides to the polls.
- Provide information on where people are to vote.
- Educate people toward good citizenship and the responsibility for voting and participating in the political process.

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Evangelicals misunderstood
as voting bloc, Barna says

By Mark Wingfield

GLENDALE, Calif. (ABP) -- Evangelical Christians are misunderstood as a voting bloc, according to a report from the Barna Research Group.

The California-based research service, headed by church-growth author George Barna, specializes in collecting data on religious issues and practices. Based on data from four studies conducted in 1992, the organization suggests that evangelical Christians cannot be categorized as the "Religious Right," "fundamentalists" or "ultra-conservatives."

"Evangelical refers to personal beliefs rather than to activities or denominational preferences," the Barna report explains. "Evangelicals exist in various denominations, ranging from conservative to liberal.... Increasingly, religious and political lines are blurred as groups which differ strongly on theology work together politically -- such as some evangelicals and Roman Catholics working together to oppose abortion."

For the Barna study, evangelicals are defined as individuals who:

- Have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important to them today.
- Believe they will go to heaven when they die because they have accepted Christ as Savior.
- Believe the Bible is the reliable, accurate word of God.
- Believe in a God who is involved in their daily lives and who answers prayer.
- Believe Christians have a responsibility to tell others about their spiritual beliefs.

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Individuals who meet these criteria represent 12 percent of American adults, or 22 million people, the report says. About 80 percent of this group -- 18 million people -- are registered to vote in the November election.

Evangelicals are more likely to consider themselves conservative than moderate or liberal, but that label doesn't fit neatly in all areas.

For example, 66 percent of evangelicals claim to be conservative on economic and financial issues, while 26 percent call themselves moderate and 5 percent say they are liberal. And on domestic and social issues, 60 percent said they are conservative, 32 percent moderate and 6 percent liberal.

Evangelicals are more likely than non-evangelicals to be Republicans, but the evangelical population is evenly split between Republicans and Democrats. Evangelicals account for 13 percent of registered Democrats, 17 percent of registered Republicans and 7 percent of registered independents.

Among the total population of evangelical voters, 42 percent are Republicans, 42 percent Democrats and 10 percent independents. The remaining 6 percent are either undecided or affiliated with other parties.

The generally conservative perspective of evangelical voters becomes more pronounced when viewed in comparison to non-evangelical voters' views on certain issues, the Barna study found.

For example:

-- 77 percent of evangelicals believe homosexual behavior is immoral, compared to 42 percent of non-evangelicals.

-- 77 percent of evangelicals strongly consider abortion to be morally wrong, compared to 41 percent of non-evangelicals.

-- 69 percent of evangelicals would like to see America return to the "traditional family values" of the 1950s, compared to 39 percent of non-evangelicals.

-- 79 percent of evangelicals believe public schools should teach sexual abstinence rather than how to use condoms to combat AIDS. Non-evangelicals prefer condom education over abstinence education 49 percent to 38 percent.

-- 79 percent of evangelicals believe the moral standards of Americans are lower than they used to be, compared to 46 percent of non-evangelicals.

-- 94 percent of evangelicals believe there is too much sexual activity on network television, compared to 61 percent of non-evangelicals.

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-- By Mark Wingfield

Gallup publication recalls
amazing facts about U.S. religion

PRINCETON, N.J. (ABP) -- Call it the religious version of "Ripley's Believe It Or Not."

To commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Princeton Religion Research Center, the center's newsletter has published a sampling of some of the more amazing facts gleaned by research through the years.

The center is affiliated with the Gallup Organization and is run by George Gallup Jr.'s daughter, Alison.

Its monthly newsletter, Emerging Trends, lists these among the center's most interesting findings:

-- America's five favorite hymns are "Amazing Grace," "How Great Thou Art," "Rock of Ages," "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "The Old Rugged

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Cross."

-- Low- to moderate-income people are more generous than upper-income people in contributing volunteer time and money. Surveys have consistently shown that minority group members, most often in need themselves, are among the most generous of all people.

-- Most adults think people can still be good Christians or Jews if they don't attend church or synagogue.

-- Only 44 percent of Americans say they would vote for an atheist for president.

-- 44 percent of Americans believe God has spoken to them, and one in eight Americans believes God speaks out loud today.

-- 70 percent of Americans believe in the devil, with half this group saying he is a personal being and half saying the devil is an impersonal force. Only 20 percent of Americans believe the devil does not exist.

-- 60 percent of Americans believe the only assurance of eternal life is personal faith in Jesus Christ.

-- Although 80 percent of Americans describe themselves as Christians, only about half can identify who delivered the Sermon on the Mount.

-- One American in six claims to give a tithe of his or her income to a church.

-- Those most likely to watch religious TV programs are Protestants, older adults, non-whites and people living in the South.

-- 60 percent of American households report that someone says a prayer before meals eaten at home.

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Supreme Court turns down appeal by Oregon churches

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Fourteen Oregon churches operating Christian schools have lost their bid to get the U.S. Supreme Court to review rulings that subjected the schools to state labor laws.

Several Baptist church schools were among those arguing that requiring their participation in the state unemployment tax program violates the First Amendment's guarantee of free exercise of religion and its ban against governmental establishment of religion.

A referee for the state employment division initially sided with the churches, citing a provision that exempted churches and church-related organizations from the state labor law.

But the referee's ruling was reversed after the Oregon Supreme Court ruled in another case that the state could not constitutionally distinguish between religious organizations that are church-affiliated and those that are not. Subsequent appeals by the churches were rejected.

While the case has no direct legal impact outside Oregon, a Baptist church-state attorney expressed concern about the declining status of the First Amendment's religious-freedom guarantees.

"The Oregon court's failure to take seriously the churches' constitutional arguments is further evidence of how the First Amendment's religion clauses have been eroded," said Brent Walker, associate general counsel at the Baptist Joint Committee.

"Cases like this one encourage financially strapped governments to chip away at churches' tax-exempt status as they seek to replenish public coffers."

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-- By Larry Chesser

Bill encouraging charity
faces likely veto death

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Tax reform, including key provisions impacting charitable giving, probably will have to wait until the 103rd Congress, which begins in January.

President George Bush is expected to veto a wide-ranging tax bill (H.R. 11) that contains a tax hike on the very wealthy. Several of the bill's provisions would encourage charitable giving by changing tax laws governing non-profit institutions and their donors.

Both houses of Congress approved a conference report on H.R. 11 that would make all gifts of appreciated property fully deductible on a permanent basis.

Appreciated property includes real estate, stocks and tangible items such as collectibles whose value increased after being purchased. A 1986 tax act subjected the appreciated portion of charitable gifts to the alternative minimum tax, causing a decline in large gifts to charitable institutions.

The bill would permanently repeal the alternative minimum tax provision so that all donors would receive a deduction equal to the property's fair market value.

Two other provisions would require more disclosure and substantiation of charitable contributions.

One would bar a taxpayer from deducting any contribution of \$750 or more without receipts from the charity receiving the donation. Previously, the administration proposed that the charity report taxpayers who gave \$500 annually to the IRS. The new proposal involved single contributions of \$750 or more and would require only that the taxpayer attach a receipt to his return.

The other provision involved disclosure requirements related to "quid pro quo" contributions, payments made partly as a contribution and partly for goods and services provided by the church or charity.

The quid pro quo disclosure provision would require the church or charity to inform the donor that the deductible amount is limited to how much the gift exceeds the value of goods or services provided. The church or charity also would have to provide the donor with a "good faith estimate of the value of such goods or services."

Both disclosure provisions would result in churches dealing exclusively with the donor, not the government.

The measure also dropped proposals to extend beyond 1995 or make permanent the 3 percent floor for itemized tax deductions.

Present law limits itemized deductions, including charitable contributions, for higher-income individuals. Itemized deductions for high-income taxpayers are reduced by an amount equaling 3 percent of their adjusted gross income of more than \$100,000.

Even though H.R. 11 probably will not become law, several provisions in the bill may be addressed in the next Congress.

-- By Pam Parry

Virginia Baptist proposal
would channel funds to CBF

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Virginia Baptists will consider a proposed 1993 budget in November that would send mission contributions to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, an organization of moderate-conservative Southern Baptists.

Under the proposal, to be considered at the Baptist General Association of Virginia's annual meeting Nov. 10-11 in Virginia Beach, churches could select one of three options for distributing their contributions to "global missions."

Under the plan, those contributions could be directed to the Fellowship, to the Southern Baptist Convention's traditional missions budget, or to a customized budget that funds SBC causes and non-SBC causes, including some supported by the Fellowship.

The "World Missions 1" option would forward all money to the SBC's Cooperative Program, the traditional unified missions budget.

The "World Missions 2" option would be divided evenly between the Cooperative Program a list of other causes, including the SBC Foreign and Home Mission boards, the SBC Annuity Board and five of the six SBC seminaries (excluding Southeastern Seminary).

Also to be funded are the Baptist World Alliance, the Baptist Joint Committee, Associated Baptist Press, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the Baptist Center for Ethics, the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, and a series of "world mission initiatives" to be suggested by members and staff of the Virginia Baptist General Board.

"World Missions 3" would forward all funds to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, specifically the Fellowship's Vision 2000 plan which, unlike the Fellowship's other two giving options, supports no SBC causes.

However, Virginia churches could ignore all three options and craft their own giving plan while remaining full members of the state association.

The global-missions portion of Virginia's \$16.3 1993 million budget is \$5.7 million, or 35 percent of the total.

The proposed funding for the Fellowship drew criticism from some of the state's general board members when the BGAV budget committee presented its proposal to them Oct. 6. The board does not approve the BGAV budget but may offer comments and suggestions prior to the financial plan's consideration at each November meeting.

"I feel like this is an issue that will be divisive in our association at a time when we're calling for peace," said Dempsey Jones of Farmville. "We're throwing fuel on the fire."

But Clint Hopkins of Chesapeake said the third option gave his church "a chance to continue doing what we already have been doing. It means very much for our congregation to have this channel opened for us."

Another proposal to be voted in November would seek representation for Virginia Baptists on the governing boards of the Baptist Joint Committee, the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond and Associated Baptist Press, each of which is allocated funds in the current and proposed BGAV budgets.

The recommendation comes from the BGAV denominational relationships committee, which briefed members of the general board on the proposal. The committee recommends the state association negotiate a trustee relationship with each of the three organizations.

Such a relationship would ensure accountability to Virginia Baptists, said Ray Spence of Richmond, denominational relationships committee chairman.

Also to be considered at the November BGAV meeting will be a resolution opposing homosexual behavior, which the board approved Oct. 7 for recommendation to the BGAV.

"We affirm the biblical teaching that homosexual behavior is sinful and unacceptable for Christians," states the resolution. "Therefore, we do not endorse elevating those who practice it to positions of leadership."

The resolution was prompted by the actions of two North Carolina Baptist churches, one of which licensed a homosexual to the ministry and another which performed a marriage-like ceremony for a homosexual couple.

Both churches' SBC membership was withdrawn by the convention last June.

T. C. Pinckney of Alexandria, Va., a leader of fundamental-conservatives in Virginia and the faction's candidate for president of the BGAV in November, described the Virginia resolution as "weak," raising speculation that attempts to modify the statement may emerge at the annual meeting.

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-- By Robert Dilday

Fundamental-conservative leader
to be BGAV presidential nominee

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- T.C. Pinckney, a key fundamental-conservative organizer in Virginia, has announced he will be a candidate for president of the state's Baptist convention next month.

Pinckney, a retired Air Force general from Alexandria, will face retired Deltaville school administrator Walter Harrow, who is endorsed by the state's moderate-conservatives. The presidential election will be part of the Baptist General Association of Virginia's annual meeting Nov. 10-11 in Virginia Beach.

Fundamental-conservatives have acknowledged the 62-year-old Pinckney's leadership since 1987, when he assumed organizational responsibilities from Lynchburg pastor Art Ballard, who moved to Florida.

Since that time, fundamental-conservative candidates in Virginia have won an increasing percentage of votes in presidential elections -- 34 percent in 1991. At a meeting in Memphis, Tenn., in August, Pinckney joined other Southern Baptist fundamental-conservatives to share ideas for extending their control over state conventions.

The Virginia election is expected to attract record crowds to the Virginia Beach meeting, unusual in a year when laypersons are nominees. Virginia's presidency traditionally alternates each year between clergy and laity.

In an Oct. 6 interview with Virginia Baptists' newsmagazine, the Religious Herald, Pinckney expressed strong commitment to an inerrant view of Scripture and support for the Southern Baptist Convention's shift to the theological right.

He also cited the state association's recent budget options -- permitting churches almost unlimited flexibility in providing financial support for moderate-conservative causes such as the Baptist Joint Committee -- as examples of Virginia's leftward drift.

Joining Pinckney on the fundamental-conservative slate are pastors Al Gilbert of Hampton for first vice president and Kelly Burris of Virginia Beach for second vice president.

Other moderate-conservative candidates are Charlottesville pastor

Eddie Freeman, first vice president, and Margaret Wayland of Danville, second vice president. Wayland is a former president of Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia.

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CORRECTION: In the Oct. 13 story about the ABP board meeting, it was incorrectly stated that the Freedom Forum was started by the Gannett Co. In fact, it was started by Frank E. Gannett.

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