

Western Recorder

NOVEMBER 30, 1974

Week Of Prayer For Foreign Missions

December 1-8

Stephen B. McSwain was recently ordained to the gospel ministry by the congregation of First Baptist Church, Richmond. His father, T. L. McSwain, delivered the ordination sermon. The ordination was requested by Roundstone Baptist Church, Berea, where young McSwain has been called to serve as pastor. He addressed the Pastor's Conference during the Kentucky Baptist Convention at age 17 and has been a popular youth revival leader in eight states.



McSwain

Garry W. Insko has been elected by the Georgia Baptist Convention's administration committee to the position of associate in the Sunday School department.

A native Kentuckian, Insko is a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Seminary. Besides serving as pastor of the Lenoxburg, Kentucky, Baptist Church, he has served as minister of evangelism with the Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville, and is presently concluding three years as associate pastor and minister of education with the Scott Boulevard Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia.

W. Wayne Johnson of the Georgetown College music department has announced that the annual A Capella Choir Christmas Concert will be presented at 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 3, in the John L. Hill Chapel.

All seats are reserved, but without charge. Send requests for tickets along with a self-addressed envelope to W. Wayne Johnson, Music Department, Georgetown College, Georgetown, Kentucky 40324.

The men of Southside Baptist Church, Princeton, have begun a new ministry to help inmates at the Kentucky State Penitentiary at Eddyville. The men are sending 60 copies of the *World Mission Journal* published by the SBC Brotherhood Commission each month to the inmates.

Attendance Sunday Short Of Goal, But Is Record

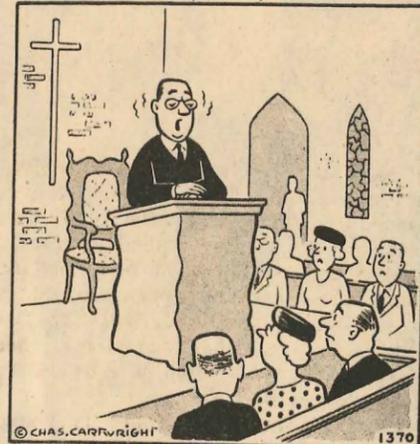
Southern Baptist Sunday Schools reported 4,409,136 present for Bible study on "High Attendance Celebration Sunday."

Although short of the 5,000,000 goal, the attendance on November 17 was the highest single number in Southern Baptist history.

The total attendance represented 61.4 percent of the 7,182,550 enrolled in Sunday School across the SBC.

A. V. Washburn, secretary of the Sunday School department of the SBC, said he anticipated the possibility of as many as 100,000 being added to Sunday School enrollment because of this effort.

Church Chuckles by CARTWRIGHT



"I took all week deciding which of a thousand topics was most urgent — sorry I didn't have time to write the sermon!"

DEVOTIONAL



Ron Stone
Central Baptist Church
Winchester, Kentucky

The correlation between the dull sermon and the sleeping church member has been celebrated in many a cartoon and joke. For the preacher, this correlation is an occupational hazard; for the member, a chance to get even.

All kidding aside, sleep is an important subject that deserves more attention than it gets. We spend sizeable portions of our life asleep — the child, one-half its time; the adult, one-third. In sleep the nervous system becomes inactive. The brain is protected from the streams of impressions and signals from the sense organs. The pulse beats less frequently. We breathe less often.

The ability to sleep is a gift without price, while prolonged insomnia can wreck the nervous system and severely change our disposition. Sleep is never more appreciated than when it eludes us. Some animals can hibernate, but man cannot. He lives in a daily rhythm of work and rest. We may cheat on sleep for awhile but eventually sleep presents its bill and we must pay up.

For the man who trusts in the Almighty, sleep is a gift from God. The Psalmist spoke it for us all when he said, "He giveth his beloved sleep." (Psalm 127:2b)

We do not achieve sleep; we receive it. Oh, we play some small part in getting ready for sleep. We may refuse to drink coffee after seven in the evening. In a pinch we might be found taking a pill to induce sleep. But essentially sleep is of God. It is not something that we achieve, but something we receive from Him.

An ex-convict who had been converted was asked how he knew he was saved and replied, "My pillow is no longer hard; I can sleep at night."

John Ballie reports that "During the bombing of London, a woman was heard to excuse herself for having stayed quietly in bed, by saying, 'Well, I reflected that God does not sleep, and so there seemed no reason why both of us should stay awake.'" "He giveth his beloved sleep."

We have so much to be thankful for. Let us not forget to thank God for sleep.

The dictionary gives four definitions for "reconcile":

1. To bring back to friendship after estrangement.
2. To settle or adjust after a quarrel.
3. To bring to acquiescence or submission.
4. To make or show to be consistent.

My thoughts have to do with the third definition, "to bring to acquiescence, or submission." My premise is that we as Christians have acquiesced, have become content, have been brought into submission to the worst set of moral conditions that have ever existed in any civilization since the beginning of recorded history. This kind of reconciliation is bad.

I would like to list five fields where immorality, dishonesty, and lack of integrity have sunken to such a low state of affairs. It is doubtful in my mind if we can ever recover. They are politics, entertainment, religion, economics and education.

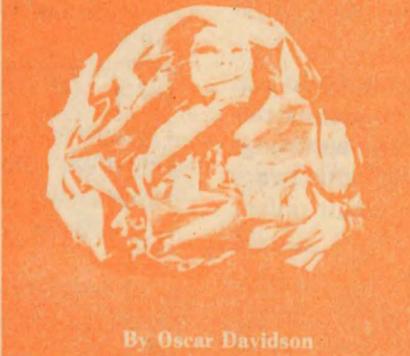
One of my favorite subjects is entertainment — music, motion pictures and television. They are all intertwined, but yet separated. Let's take popular music. If you have not listened to some of the moral depravity and twisted philosophy being foisted on our youngsters through pop music then you'd be shocked or at least I hope you'd be!

Here's a list of the Top Ten for a recent week (I don't know what has happened to "Having My Baby"):

1. "I Honestly Love You," Olivia Newton-John
2. "Can't Get Enough," Bad Company
3. "Beach Baby," First Class
4. "You Haven't Done Nothing," Stevie Wonder
5. "Nothing From Nothing," Billy Preston
6. "The Bitch Is Back," Elton John
7. "Sweet Home Alabama," Lynyrd Skynyrd
8. "Jazzman," Carole King
9. "Whatever Gets You Through The Night," John Lennon
10. "Never My Love," Blue Swede.

Some of the performers are bisexual, asexual, homosexual or transvestites and they make no bones about it. Many are involved with and strung out on drugs. Some die of drugs. Bryan Keith of the Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin are three of the many who have died from overdoses. Al Green, 27 year old singer with five hits, scalded by hot grits poured on him as he left his bathroom. The action was taken by the unmarried mother of three children who then went out and shot herself.

issues & answers: PORNOGRAPHY



By Oscar Davidson

Much of the music promotes the drug culture, is anti-religion, anti-Christ, pro-sexual-promiscuity and profanity. There's a new rock opera out called "Lucifer," and it has already been performed on some college and university campuses. In it the devil is the hero, and Christ is relegated to a simple-minded soft shoe dancer who says, "This is a dance my Daddy taught me."

Some of the rock culture is being incorporated into so-called religious rock. Somebody said, "Saying religious rock is like saying Christian adultery." So much for the music of today. I should hope we don't become reconciled to it! (The above does not include folk songs, spirituals and the like.)

Motion pictures — this type of entertainment is also deeply important to our young ones and influences their thinking tremendously. In 1969 the motion picture industry was on the rocks. Big companies (MGM, Twentieth Century Fox, and Universal) were nearly broke. The main reason was television! Now five years later, it is back with immoral, violent, pornographic movies like "The Godfather," "The Exorcist," and "Deep Throat." The last of these was produced for \$25,000 and has made and continues

to make millions. The movie industry is operating in the black and, according to many, is booming.

Now, I contend that if a nation is fed a continual diet of violence and pornographic filth, we'll become reconciled to it. In fact, I already see that we are becoming reconciled to and contented with it.

Television? What can we say about it? I understand that the Saturday morning fare aimed at the children has been improved. However, other television, the stories and even the news, are liberally sprinkled with words, phrases, thoughts and graphic portrayals of sex and violence. Just a few short months ago this would have been repugnant and totally unacceptable to Christians, and even to many who profess no faith at all. You think television is bad now? Just wait. The movies, R- and X-rated, continue to come. The longer they come, the worse they will get. I hope you are not reconciled to this situation.

You hear the statement once in a while that to criticize the morals of today is Victorian. We are called Victorian pruders. Well, people of the Victorian Age knew exactly what people were like, what they thought and what they did in their private moments. They merely insisted that such moments be kept private (Ephesians 5:12), and that society preserve a decent reticence about whatever it cared to designate as "indecent." You may call this hypocrisy if you want to, but I think that it's far better than the modern attitude of "kissing and telling" everything that goes on.

Perhaps the Victorians wanted to be thought of as better than they were. But it seems that today our youngsters, and some adults, want to be thought of as much worse than they really are.

Gossip columnists today don't have to peep through the keyhole anymore. The doors are wide open and the press, radio and television are right there to tell it in lurid details.

"Kissing" and not telling everything may be hypocrisy, but if the pre-, post-, and extra-marital carryings on of a Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor are the goals or examples of our new-found so-called freedom, then I submit that such "hypocrisy" just might be the best policy after all. At least, it would be the lesser of two evils. I hope you're never reconciled to either.

You know what the Bible says about being reconciled to such things. Paul wrote (in Romans 1:22, 32), "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

WESTERN RECORDER

"Earnestly contend for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints"—Jude 3

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Two Kinds Of Bread For Two Kinds Of Hunger

Our happiness at Thanksgiving this year will be somewhat blunted by the knowledge that millions of our fellowmen are starving instead of feasting. At least we should have some condemning of conscience for our lifestyle of plenty in contrast to the meager existence of millions in the world. The leftovers from our Thanksgiving plates would make a bountiful meal for a multitude who have never gone to bed with a full stomach.

There has always been hunger in this world and probably always will be. But this is no excuse for us to brush it aside and forget the suffering. Famine seems to be more widespread with every passing year and only catastrophe can result unless drastic steps are taken.

Kentucky Baptists took note of this hunger crisis with a strong resolution adopted in the Paducah convention. Reports from other states reveal that Baptists in these states are also concerned. This concern hopefully will find expression in special gifts to help relieve world hunger.

Traditionally Southern Baptists have majored on spiritual hunger instead of physical hunger on foreign mission fields. This we should have done but not left the other undone. We are providers as well as preachers and the bread of life should be accompanied by bread that sustains physical life.

The gospel sound is hard to hear by one whose stomach aches with hunger pains. To the suffering hungry the offer of the grace of God sounds more authentic when it is accompanied by a morsel of bread in the name of Jesus Christ. It is not enough to promise pie in the sky in the bye and bye. The hungry yearn for bread on the earth here and now. Too long we have let the label of the social gospel deter us from our truly Christian responsibility and privilege of sharing our materials as well as our faith.

Encouraging signs are now coming from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. More than \$370,000 have been available for relief so far this year. Actions in state conventions this fall may result in a million or more dollars designated for

world relief. These funds should be channeled through our Foreign Mission Board. From missionaries all over the world can come dependable reports of needs and the mission board already has the organization and the expertise needed to reach the suffering. All that awaits is the sharing of our bounty.

The convention messengers at Paducah endorsed the idea of a day of fasting and the giving of the equivalent of one meal per week to the World Relief Program of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The Executive Board in its December meeting will likely make some specific suggestions for implementing this. With or without any suggestions I am one who is determined to do this.

I challenge you to join me in foregoing one meal a week and giving at least one dollar extra a week for relieving world hunger. This is not to come out of our present tithes and offerings but over and above. Gifts for that purpose sent to the Kentucky Baptist Building by churches and individuals will be sent in their entirety to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for use in relief.

How about forming a Helpers For Hunger club? If you will skip one meal a week and give \$1 a week to be used by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for relief of hunger, write me. We will keep a list of members and report the number if enough respond. Names will not be printed for this would be too much like Pharisees. Don't send the dollars to me. Give them through your church to be sent to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and thence to Richmond and the world. If this is not possible, just send gifts to Helpers For Hunger, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Middletown, Kentucky 40243.

Do you know how it feels to be hungry? I don't. Let's join in a day of fasting and prayer for suffering humanity. Then we might feel for a few hours a fraction of the suffering many of our fellowmen feel every day of their lives. And Thanksgiving 1974 would be one of our most remembered.

Preacher, Make That Marriage Legal

Every minister should know he has to be bonded to be qualified to perform a marriage in the state of Kentucky. Many young ministers coming from other states have sometimes learned this at the last moment and had to rush to the courthouse with someone to sign their bond before tying the couple.

Once having made bond a preacher forgets all about it because he understands no other bond is required as long as he remains in Kentucky. Nor does a preacher, so far as I know, receive any written document attesting to his qualification. But apparently this is a technicality preachers ought not ignore.

A letter from Charles W. Runyan, assistant attorney general in Kentucky, answering questions submitted by Little River associational missionary Joe Weaver, reveals many of us are not properly qualified to perform marriages in Kentucky. In my case apparently I have two additional things to do. One is to secure a written document as evidence bond has been made and the other is to secure

another person as surety since the original person serving as surety is now deceased.

Here are some quotations from the letter from Mr. Runyan. On the matter of a written document for the qualified minister he says, "while the statute (KRS 402.060) does not prescribe any form of license, it does require, we think, a formal document indicating that pursuant to KRS 402.060 the county clerk (judge) has extended to the therein named minister or priest, as a resident of his county, a license to solemnize marriages in Kentucky."

On the matter of a new bond if the surety dies, Mr. Runyan says, "If the surety dies, then the minister should procure another surety and execute a new bond."

And so let us ministers act accordingly lest some couples we marry wake up to discover they are not legally married. Once properly bonded in one county we can perform marriages everywhere in Kentucky but until then we cannot perform marriages legally anywhere in Kentucky.

BAPTIST FORUM



THERE ARE LEGAL SUBTILITIES

Dear Editor:

In any name change of the Southern Baptist Convention there are many legal ramifications. After the Convention was formed, it was "incorporated and made a body politic by the name and style of the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION with authority to receive, hold, possess, retain and dispose of property . . . not inconsistent with the laws of this State of the United States."

This charter of incorporation was enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Georgia, "in General Assembly met" on December 27, 1845. Nearly a hundred years later, on February 17, 1942, the Georgia legislature passed an enabling act to authorize eleemosynary or religious corporations previously chartered in Georgia "to exercise and carry on certain powers."

These are just elementary in all of the legal entanglements involved in any change of name. The Convention was

formed in Georgia, but its headquarters are now in Tennessee. The Convention Annual lists 22 official names of the Convention and its incorporated agencies.

These agencies, all incorporated, operate out of offices in 10 states, all the way from Virginia to California. Convention change of name evidently would involve legal subtleties and procedures in all of their states.

But these legal perplexities to accomplish a name change would not be the most serious frustration. How long, think you, would it take to convince Mr. John Q. Public that we are no longer Southern Baptists?

We've got a lot of thinking to do about that, before we make a change. Nashville, Tenn. Joe W. Burton

CHILDREN LOSE

Dear Editor:

I have just returned from West Virginia and saw the bombed school at Campbell's Creek and other evidences of destruction and violence. I visited the headquarters

of the Concerned Parents who seem nice average Americans who are religious and zealous for their children. Most of their objections were due to use of nudes in art and physiology as well as some realism in current novels which were to be read. Reason should have brought about a compromise but both sides have refused, so the struggle goes on and will leave some scars of hate and hostility. The real losers are the children who are being denied their education.

Lexington, Ky. George Herman Kendall

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Dear Editor:

The question has its birth in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"—"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

Southern Baptists are going through the second debate in the last 10 years over a name change. Like Shakespeare's rose, a person with the basic convictions of a Southern Baptist would be the same person regardless of what name he or she was given. The question still remains, however, do we have the best name to identify us and does it communicate to others who we are, what we are, and where we are? We think not so. We propose the same name change we did in 1965, hopefully this time with more success. Look at the three things a name ought to do for us.

[Continued on page 14]

Offering Goal Set At \$23 Million

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions December 1-8 will come at a time when many of the 2,536 missionaries in 81 fields are facing political and economic situations that only miracles of prayer can solve.

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, with its national goal of \$23,000,000, offers Southern Baptists a chance to hold back the jaws of inflation that are biting severely into missions buying power in several countries.

The annual foreign missions emphasis gives Southern Baptists an opportunity to aid in the worldwide program to proclaim the news of Christ's coming at the same time that they celebrate His birth.

Theme for the 1974 observance is "Grace So Amazing . . . Love So Divine," featuring not only the story of God's gift of his son, but also on his modern-day miracles in missions.

Secretaries of two foreign missions areas have pointed out critical needs for prayer during this season. Frank K. Means, secretary for South America, and Davis L. Saunders, secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa, pointed out that missionaries in headline-making countries face overwhelming opportunity along with danger because of turmoil.

"Missionaries assume that we are praying for their personal safety," Saunders said. "Danger does exist and could be imminent, and we have plans ready to help in case of personal danger. But missionaries feel peace. Their main prayer request is for reinforcements."

Saunders requested special prayer for missionaries and Baptists in Ethiopia, Uganda, Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Angola.

Saunders said, "The political situation is uncertain, but missionaries do not take this as a sign to quit. There is more openness to the gospel. Our main concern is for more missionaries to help the one couple already on the field to meet the opportunities."

Frank Means noted similar trends of unusual opportunity in troubled areas of South America. "The missionaries have a sense of well-being and security," Means said, although he pointed out that terrorist kidnappings and killings have made a tense environment. "The missionaries are not praying for a way out but for resources to face up to opportunities that are created in times of trouble," he said.

Means mentioned missionaries in Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay as requesting increased prayer and funds. He

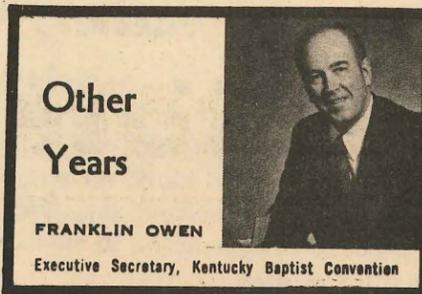
said that missionaries in Chile have survived the communist crisis, but face great economic problems. "They are giving thanks that they have been able to remain in Chile," Means said. Missionaries have requested \$30,000 from the Lottie Moon Offering to assist in building small chapels for starting new congregations.

Missionaries in Argentina, in the process of transferring major responsibilities to nationals, want to establish a revolving building and loan fund for churches. Only if the Lottie Moon Offering passes its goal will they get the desired \$220,000.

The Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering each provide approximately half of foreign mission support. The first \$14,500,000 of the Lottie Moon Offering will blend with Cooperative Program allocations to maintain the basic operating budget for foreign missions.

It will pay salaries for 700 missionaries, will place new missionaries on the field, will educate missionary children, and will cover a listing of specific budget items running for more than 30 pages.

Christmas offering money beyond \$14,500,000 will be allotted according to a priority listing to special advance projects, to purchase of new equipment and property, and to improvement of mission facilities. These new items would be sacrificed in favor of maintenance if the Lottie Moon funds did not provide sufficient supplement to offset inflation.



Proofing Executive Board minutes in our office arouses interest in such records of other years. Would you like to read a few of them?

"1837 — . . . on motion and second, the General Agent was directed to purchase a horse for his tours out of the expenses of the General Association.

1854 — On motion, Board requested Corresponding Secretary to ask all ministers in the state to labour one month more or less gratuitous in collecting funds for the General Association and also to lay the claims of the *Western Recorder* and Christian reporting before the people in their fields of labour.

1856 — Whereas the books, papers, and accounts of our office seem to be in a deranged condition, and need immediate and vigilant attention, therefore resolved that our Corresponding Secretary be requested to disengage himself (as soon as possible) from field service and apply himself to business of the office until such time as the business of this Board is put in complete trim and all accounts properly posted up and adjusted.

1858 — On motion resolved that Elder J. G. Miller be allowed 33 1/2% for collecting \$170 from life members of General Association in very rough region of country.

1860 — Salary of Bro. Dobbins was doubled at Eight Mile. He is to receive for these months eight and one third dollars per months instead of four and one sixth dollars, as now.

1866 — Corresponding Secretary is instructed to procure map of Kentucky by next regular meeting.

1875 — Amount owed missionaries — \$979.07. Corresponding Secretary stated the rule was to pay those most in need—others waited.

1898 — The Corresponding Secretary called attention to the first New Era Institutes to be held for colored people in Louisville from January 18, 19, and 20 to February 1, 1898.

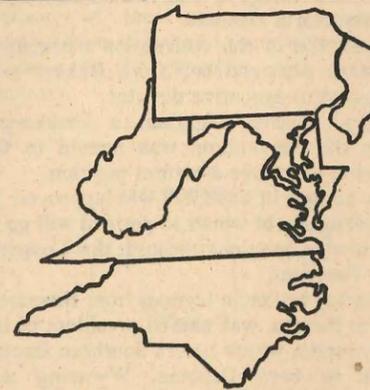
1903 — Dr. M. B. Adams, T. T. Eaton, and H. E. Tralle in conjunction with the secretary was appointed a committee to prepare and have published a pamphlet in defense of our board methods."

Frank Owen

WESTERN RECORDER

State Conventions

REPORTS REPORTS REPORTS REPORTS



Atlantic Coast

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA —

District of Columbia Baptists became the first state or regional body affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention to go on record in favor of the ordination of women as ministers.

The approved recommendation, which urged that "women requesting ordination as Baptist ministers be considered in the same manner as their male counterparts," also called for women to be named as deacons and lay ministers in local bodies, and for the D.C. convention to provide equal opportunity for women in leadership roles.

In other action, the body approved a statement of affirmation to the 1973 Supreme Court decision on abortion. The high court decision said that during the first three months of pregnancy the woman has the right to order abortion. During the second and third trimesters of pregnancy, the state has some say in whether abortion can be done, as does the danger of the physical health of the woman, according to the decision.

The D.C. Baptist Convention is aligned with two national bodies, the SBC and the American Baptist Convention.

A resolution on unconditional amnesty was tabled by the convention.

MARYLAND —

The Baptist Convention of Maryland at its 139th annual session adopted a \$1.5 million budget, elected a woman vice-president, and registered a 40 percent

attendance increase over last year's meeting.

Some 1,122 messengers voted to construct a proposed convention facility for conferences, retreats and camping, at a cost of about \$600,000.

One of the two vice-presidents elected during the session was Mrs. Cecil Anderson, wife of a suburban Washington pastor.

The convention also celebrated the 125th anniversary of its state paper, the *Maryland Baptist*. R. G. Puckett, former associate editor of *Western Recorder*, is editor of the publication.

NORTH CAROLINA —

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, meeting in Raleigh, soundly defeated a proposal which would have ousted those churches not requiring rebaptism of members coming from other denominations.

The proposal has dominated the North Carolina convention for the past three years, but with the 3-1 defeat the issue appears finally dead.

This year's 144th annual session featured three joint sessions with the predominantly black General Baptist State Convention.

Resolutions were adopted opposing the state's three percent sales tax on food and calling on government to ration grain and food products to breweries and distilleries.

Two additional resolutions added "World Hunger Sunday" to the convention calendar and called for a decrease in the use of fertilizer on lawns, golf courses and cemeteries.

Charlotte attorney Allen Bailey was re-elected convention president.

PENN-SOUTH JERSEY —

The Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, in its fourth annual meeting, elected Frank E. Bowman, pastor of Main Street Baptist Church in Boylston, Pennsylvania, as their president.

Messengers also approved a record 1975 budget of \$653,700, recognized the formation of a new association of church-

es, Northwest Baptist Association in the Erie, Pennsylvania, area, and heard that 18 new congregations had been formed in the convention since the 1973 annual meeting. The convention now has four associations with more than 12,000 members in 108 congregations.

The Penn-Jersey convention, formed in 1971, raised its percentage of Cooperative Program unified budget giving to 24 percent for Southern Baptist Convention causes.

A. C. Queen, editor of the *Penn-Jersey Baptist*, said convention messengers had increased the SBC giving one percent every year since the convention's founding.

VIRGINIA —

Expected controversy over the status of two Virginia Baptist colleges failed to materialize as the Baptist General Association of Virginia completed its 151st annual session.

Registered "messengers" to the three-day meeting set a record budget of \$6.1 million and elected Joseph Smiddy, chancellor of Clinch Valley Community College, as president.

Messengers accepted an earlier action of the state convention's general board to refer the controversy over charter changes at Virginia Intermont and Averett Colleges to the board's executive committee for study. The committee will make a special report in April.

Earlier in the year, trustees of the two Baptist schools changed their charters to qualify as technically "non sectarian" so their students could receive state tuition grants.

A report of the convention's long-range planning committee was accepted. It included a recommendation that Virginia Baptists seek to "strengthen and enrich ties with other Baptist organizations in Virginia."

Other points in the report called for priorities in evangelism, strengthening local churches, stewardship, ecumenical concerns and ministries for aging, children and youth, and students.

Priorities of ministry to the aging, a spokesman said, will include a study of the needs for additional facilities in Virginia.

Baptist churches in Oklahoma, "in the spirit of reconciliation . . . to practice Paul's more excellent way . . . with those who differ in doctrine or practice."

TEXAS —

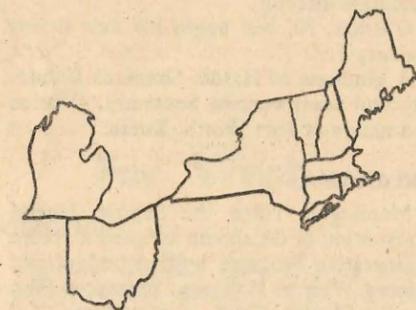
The Baptist General Convention of Texas, meeting in Amarillo, sounded a call for increased evangelism.

Ralph Smith, elected for his second term as president of the convention, called on Texas Baptists to win at least 100,000 persons to Christ in the coming year.

The 2,500 messengers in attendance heard James H. Landes, executive secretary for the convention, urge Baptists to involve themselves in the fight against gambling, obscenity, pornography, selfishness and racial snobbery.

A carefully worded statement on the charismatic movement warned of potential dangers. It called for individual Baptists "to act with great sensitivity lest the fabric of Christian fellowship be seriously impaired."

Another resolution calling on individual Baptists to forego at least one meal a week to help alleviate world hunger also passed unanimously.



Northeast

MICHIGAN —

Michigan Baptists, reporting a record 674 registered messengers and visitors, adopted their first budget of more than \$1 million, voted to purchase a new convention office building and urged Southern Baptists to confront the problem of world hunger.

The convention's new building, which it will occupy about April 1, is a five year old structure on the northwest edge of metropolitan Detroit and will cost \$288,000.

In other action, the convention voted to

participate in the 50th anniversary celebration of the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. In conjunction, the Michigan convention adopted its proportionate share of the 1976 Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program goal of \$150 million.

Michigan Baptists also adopted a resolution calling on Southern Baptists to help meet the needs of those suffering famine and starvation in many parts of the world, through the Baptist World Alliance, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board or "other avenues that would be in accord with the missionary spirit of Southern Baptists."

NEW YORK —

The New York Baptist Convention strongly endorsed a name change for the SBC in its annual meeting in Syracuse.

The resolution calling for a name change said the current SBC name "implies geographical attachments that are no longer valid for a convention which embraces an entire nation."

It continued by stating the country was in the process of breaking down "racial, cultural, ethnic, linguistic and sociological barriers." The messengers stated that those committed to "the Great Commission of Jesus Christ" should be willing to forsake the human traditions, whether names or customs, if they are hindering any man's relationship with God through Christ.

In other action the convention urged that the five year old convention be granted representation on SBC committees, boards and agencies.

Retiring state convention secretary Paul James was honored for his more than 17 years of service to New York Baptists, first as a pastor and then as state secretary.

OHIO —

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio launched a 10-year program which will include reorganization of the convention structure.

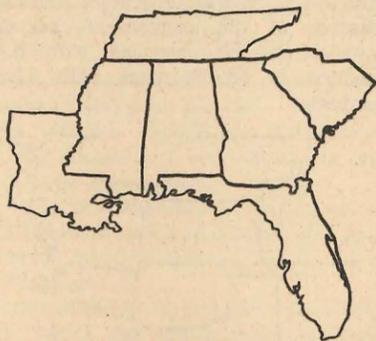
Under the new structure the Ohio convention will have a new church missions division and a church development division.

The restructure also calls for elevation of the convention's evangelism department to a level comparable to a division.

The 10-year program, launched at a session attended by more than 3,000 persons, includes a goal of establishing

350 new churches and adding 100,000 baptisms.

Ray E. Roberts, the convention's first and only executive secretary, was honored for his 20 years of service to Ohio Baptists.



Southeast

ALABAMA —

Messengers to the Alabama Baptist Convention in Mobile approved "the Alabama Baptist State Convention Scholarship."

The scholarship will provide \$200 annually to entering college freshmen who belong to cooperating Alabama Baptist churches and who are recommended by their pastor.

The college must provide an additional \$100 to qualified students.

The motion came in an effort to equalize tuition of Baptist schools and state supported schools.

An \$8.5 million budget was adopted with 34.5 percent going to world missions.

The convention adopted a resolution protesting state legislation making possible a "no-fault" divorce system in Alabama.

Messengers voted to table a motion calling on the Alabama State Convention to go on record as favoring the present name of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dotson M. Nelson, Jr., pastor of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham, was reelected to a second term as president of the convention. For the first time in the convention's history, a minister of music, Asa Couch of First Baptist Church, Center Point, was named as second vice president.

FLORIDA —

The Florida Baptist Convention, meeting in Lakeland, adopted a record budget of \$6.2 million.

Forty-seven percent of the state's

Cooperative Program receipts will go to world missions.

Messengers also passed a strong resolution for specific action to combat world hunger.

The resolution called for setting up World Hunger Sunday. It urged Florida Baptists to give \$1 over and above their entire tithe and offering for world food relief.

James F. Graves, pastor of First Baptist Church, St. Petersburg, was elected president of the convention. He will succeed Mrs. Henry Parker who was elected last year as second vice president. After the resignation of the president and the first vice president, she served nearly the entire year.

GEORGIA —

One of its "most harmonious" annual meetings in years, according to observers, saw the Georgia Baptist Convention uphold "freedom of discussion" rather than honor an attempt to censure its news publication, *The Christian Index*, for recent editorials on bus ministry.

The weekly publication in recent months has run editorials warning Baptists about excesses and gimmicks and excessively young converts through the bus ministry. James F. Tisdell, the pastor of Pine Forest Baptist Church in Macon, asked the Georgia convention to censure the *Index*.

But the motion was referred by registered "messengers" to the resolutions committee, which, the next day, asked the convention to resolve that "each church is free to pursue this or any form of witness under the leadership of the Holy Spirit" and to urge convention agencies to "strengthen this and all means toward effective evangelism."

The resolutions report also stressed that "freedom of discussion on the part of any concerned Christian in relation to this or any other method of evangelism should be supported. Only through free and open exchange can methods be examined and kept in harmony with the spirit of Christ's message."

Tisdell challenged the report and debate ensued. But the resolutions committee report was adopted by an overwhelming majority of messengers, observers reported.

The only other item of controversy involved a motion that a committee be appointed to study the Biblical posture on the charismatic movement and report back to the Georgia convention in 1975.

LOUISIANA —

The Louisiana Baptist Convention meeting adopted a record \$6 million budget and passed a resolution on the so-called charismatic movement, stating that certain practices and teachings of neo-Pentecostalism "lack sufficient scriptural support."

The convention resolved, "that while we make no judgment on the validity of any person's experience or practice of worship, and while we accept all who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour as our brothers in Christ, we believe that certain practices and teachings of neo-Pentecostalism—more commonly known as the charismatic movement—lack sufficient scriptural support for acceptance in our churches.

The convention therefore exhorted "all our churches to be aware" of the dangers of any "practice, profession, principle or precept not sufficiently supported by the infallible Word of God."

MISSISSIPPI —

Messengers at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention went on record opposing a name change for the SBC.

Currently, a seven-member committee, approved at last year's SBC session in Dallas, is studying the possibility of a name change for the 12.3-million member SBC.

A record \$6.6 million Cooperative Program unified budget was approved. More than \$2 million will go to world missions.

James Richardson, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Leland, was elected president of the convention.

Two women, thought to be the first in convention history, were elected to the state board.

Messengers voted to reconstruct Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, a facility destroyed by hurricane Camille in 1969. A committee was also appointed to study building a retirement home near the assembly site.

The convention adopted a recommendation from its board to separate the affairs of Mississippi Baptist Seminary, a school for blacks, from those of the convention's department of cooperative ministries with National (black) Baptists.

SOUTH CAROLINA —

Registered messengers to the 154th annual meeting of the South Carolina

Baptist Convention adopted a record \$6.9 million budget, set up guidelines for the use of federal money for their four colleges and approved construction of a conference center.

The federal aid controversy has come up periodically in the South Carolina convention over the years. Each of the four Baptist schools affiliated with the convention accept some forms of federal aid — some acceptable to South Carolina Baptists, some controversial.

The committee was named to work with the trustees of the school to help them deal with debatable areas of federal aid acceptance, according to reports.

Generally, over the years, South Carolina Baptists have found federal construction loans and grants, for services rendered, acceptable, and aid direct to students has created little question, a spokesman said. However, the previous convention position was not clear and the report, accepted by messengers, attempted to clarify it for the future.

Messengers also gave nearly unanimous approval to the purchase of 740 acres of land for \$367,695 on which to build the conference center about 25 miles northwest of Columbia.

TENNESSEE —

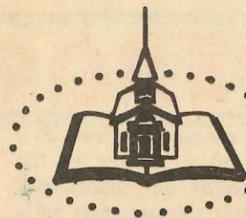
Commemorating its centennial year, the Tennessee Baptist Convention voted to establish a new statewide ministry on aging, elected its first woman convention officer and spoke out against violence on television.

The convention elected its first woman officer, naming Willodene (Mrs. Bob) Peek of Athens, Tennessee, as second vice president. Mrs. Peek, a pastor's wife, was also elected president a fourth time of the state Woman's Missionary Union at the Tennessee annual WMU meeting, held in conjunction with the convention's annual meeting.

The convention approved a 1975 Cooperative Program budget of \$7.6 million, with one-third to go to Southern Baptist Convention causes.

Messengers also approved the charter for the Tennessee Baptist Service Corporation, which will include services and facilities for a ministry to the aging, along with other religious, charitable and educational activities.

In other action, messengers approved a resolution expressing their "disapproval to the television networks for their willingness to depict violence . . . in the homes of American citizens."



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON



By H. C. Chiles

(These Lessons for December 8, 1974)

LIFE AND WORK SERIES

Explaining His Coming

John 1:1-18

These remarkable verses contain some rich and important truths about the eternal and historical aspects of Christ, the son of God, the Messiah of the Jews, and the Saviour of sinners, which are not revealed elsewhere.

Christ Is The Logos 1:1-3

Logos is the Greek term which has been translated "Word." "And his name is called the Word of God" (Revelation 19:13), indicates that one of the names of our Lord is "The Word." Therefore, it is not surprising that John's gospel opens with the statement "In the beginning was the Word." Here we are taught that Christ is co-eternal, co-existent, and co-equal with God the Father. There was never a time when He did not exist. "The Word was with God" reveals His separate and distinct personality, even though an inseparable union existed between the Father and Him. "The Word was God" is a very clear declaration of the deity of Christ. Any lower estimate of Him is certainly insufficient and untrue.

Christ Is The Light 1:4-10

Christ is the source of all life and every living being is dependent upon Him for the sustenance of life. He, Who is the source of all life, is also the Light. In the incarnation Christ was the light blazing in the darkness, but men would not receive the illumination which He brought. Through the intervening centuries Christ has kept on shining in the midst of the darkness, ignorance, and hostility of sinful men, but happily the darkness has never been able to overcome or extinguish the light.

John, the remarkable man who was sent from God, never sought to usurp the place of Christ, Who was before him in time and above him in rank and dignity, or to call attention to himself, but came to bear witness concerning Christ, the Life and the Light, and to seek to influence others to believe on Him as their Saviour.

Christ Is The Lord 1:11-18

Christ "came unto his own, and his own received him not." This verb "came" denotes a definite act — the incarnation. "Unto his own," neuter

plural, refers to His own possessions, or things, or land which He created. "And his own received him not." "His own," masculine plural, means His own people. Christ came to be their Redeemer and Saviour, but they rejected Him.

While Christ was rejected by the masses of the people, there were individuals who received Him and became the children of God. The expression, "But as many as received him," indicates that a small but noble and courageous minority received Christ. In Christ we place our faith and to us He gives the power to become the children of God. Then we enjoy all the rights and privileges pertaining to that position. The only way for any to become the children of God is by a definite and personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour. To accept Christ is to be saved, to become a child of God, to enjoy the divine favor, and to spend eternity in heaven.

All who are the children of God are such by the communication of His life to them. It is only by supernatural power that people enter God's family. Salvation is not earned, but it is received as a gift. Being children of God means having God as our Father, Christ as our Saviour, the

Holy Spirit as our Guide and Comforter, the saved as our brethren, and the angels as our friends. Now, that we have been born into the family of God, our love should become more ardent, our reverence more genuine, and our obedience more wholehearted.

Even though Christ came and revealed the grace, love, and mercy of God, and men have heard the glorious gospel message, still there are many who reject the Saviour and will remain lost forever.

Verse 13 corrects three erroneous ideas that are still prevalent, namely, that regeneration comes by heredity — "not by blood," through self-effort — "nor of the will of the flesh," or through the efforts of organized society — "nor of the will of man."

In human flesh Jesus Christ exemplified and demonstrated grace and truth. Christ is the very embodiment of truth. He is still full of grace for those who do not deserve anything and of truth for those who are as yet in ignorance. John asserted that Jesus Christ was both divine and human. From us Christ rightfully expects an absolute trust in Him and an unquestioning obedience to Him.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES

Preparing The Way

Matthew 3:1-12

Matthew presented John the Baptist in his role of forerunner and herald of Christ, who boldly announced the presence of the King and the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Concerning this remarkable preacher, who had such an effective ministry, three things are noteworthy.

His Preparation

In addition to the instructions which John the Baptist received in the godly home in which he was born and reared, he studied the Old Testament for himself. Then he went into the wilderness where he lived an ascetic life and underwent a discipline which fitted him for the task which he was to perform. "The word of

God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness." That in itself was a manifestation of grace.

God needed a man of strong physique, irreproachable character, genuine humility, firm will, absolute loyalty, and spiritual insight to be obedient to His will and to deliver for Him a flaming message of judgment. Therefore, He prepared him out there in the wilderness, far from politically decadent Rome and spiritually dead Jerusalem.

John the Baptist did not choose the ministry as a profession or enter upon it as a means of earning a livelihood, but because he received a personal call from God to preach and to baptize. Concerning his going forth upon his mission, the

Bible says: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (John 1:6). God chose, equipped, called, and commissioned him for the important work of preparing the way for the coming Christ. In modern parlance, he was the advance man for the Messiah.

His Preaching

This rugged, unique, and striking preacher was heavily burdened on account of the prevailing wickedness and the disorders of society. He preached in "the wilderness of Judea," east of Jerusalem along the Jordan River. His preaching attracted the multitudes. This fearless preacher denounced sin and rebuked sinners. He was not adept at using honied words. In charging his hearers with being deceitful, hypocritical, and wicked, he called them "a generation of vipers."

He challenged his hearers to change their minds with respect to sin, to God, and to self. He not only preached repentance, but he baptized the penitent as an evidence of the fact that they had repented. He demanded harmony between profession and conduct.

It was inevitable that such positive and powerful preaching as John the Baptist did would create an awareness of need on the part of many listeners. Many from various walks of life inquired as to what they should do in order to obtain the forgiveness of their sins.

His Prediction

The preaching of John the Baptist kindled afresh the Messianic hope in many of the people. In view of what they heard him preach, it is not strange that some began to wonder if the preacher himself were not the long-expected Messiah. As soon as he learned what they were thinking, with characteristic humility he at once disabused their minds of that idea by asserting that he was only the "voice of one crying in the wilderness."

With commendable humility John the Baptist acknowledged his insignificance in contrast with the Messiah. Whereas, he had baptized many in the waters of the Jordan River as a symbol of a new life and a new allegiance, he predicted that Christ would baptize them with the Holy Spirit and with a fire which would consume the worthless and leave the imperishable. He boldly declared that Christ would be so superior to him that he would not even be worthy to perform the menial act of a slave in loosing the latchet of His shoes.

With great joy John the Baptist spoke about the Christ Who would take away their sins and enable them to live righteously. He told them that as an Oriental farmer separated the grain from the chaff, saved the grain and burned the

chaff, so in His ministry Christ would separate the good from the bad. We shall ever admire John the Baptist for his willingness to take second place for the good of the cause. When the popularity of Christ exceeded that of himself, instead of becoming jealous as others might have done, John the Baptist accepted it with joy and remarked, "He must increase, but I must decrease." What a commendable spirit!



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New Structure Follows Debate

Missouri Baptists, just one year after a divisive meeting in Columbia over management of the body's financial matters, overwhelmingly approved recommendations for restructuring many of the convention's financial procedures in Joplin recently.

The recommendations were made by the convention's structure and organization committee, a group born out of last year's turmoil.

"Joplin was a long way from Columbia in terms of the mood and temperament of messengers, who dealt with difficult and potentially divisive problems in a tolerant, sometimes light-hearted manner," one convention spokesman said.

The committee, responding to problems over reported mismanagement and mixing of Missouri convention funds, brought six recommendations in all, featuring sweeping changes in convention procedures and structure.

One recommendation, involving mandatory retirement of executive board employees, drew sharp, but good natured debate, as did a section on the executive board's reorganization recommendation dealing with the *Word and Way*, the convention's weekly newspaper.

Three recommendations, dealing with business and financial matters, and continuation of the structure and reorganization committee, passed without serious debate.

Another, concerning constitutional changes, got a first reading and was referred for final action to the convention's 1975 meeting.

Debate centered around a committee recommendation that executive board employees be compelled to retire, effective the first day of the month following the employee's 65th birthday and that any employee who has reached the age of 65 prior to January 1, 1975, must retire no later than that date.

An integral part of the debate involved a decision by the Missouri Baptist executive board to terminate some convention employees under a similar policy before the convention met in Joplin to react to the committee's recommendation. Earl Tharp, pastor of First Baptist Church, DeSoto, Missouri, asserted that the executive board's action in terminating the employees violated action taken at last year's meeting.

Messengers to the 1973 convention had declined to refer the retirement issue to the executive board, referring it, instead, to the structure and reorganization committee.

However, observers said last year's convention also instructed the executive board to operate the convention's financial affairs in 1974 without deficit spending.

One method the board chose for cutting costs, a spokesman said, was the termination of jobs for employees age 65 or older. That move terminated three employees before the convention met.

A motion to reprove the executive board for its action was tabled and another motion, calling for reimbursement of financial losses to the employees, terminated prior to the convention, failed to pass.

W. Ross Edwards, editor of the *Word and Way*, would be one of the first convention employees affected by the new ruling, a convention spokesman said. Under the new ruling, he would retire September 1, 1975.

The *Word and Way* was the subject of another debate, which centered around whether it should continue to be incorporated in the executive board structure or put under a separate board of trustees. The committee's reorganization plan, adopted by the convention, calls for a communications division headed by the *Word and Way* editor, but another motion, which would involve a constitutional change, urged a separate nine-person board for the *Word and Way*, answerable only to messengers in annual session and not to the executive board. The motion for a separate board was referred to the 1975 meeting, when other constitutional changes will be considered.

O. K. Armstrong of Springfield, Missouri, whose earlier motion to have retirement evaluated at 65 with the individual rather than uniformly applied to all was defeated, moved that the section on the *Word and Way* in the reorganization recommendation be deleted. That section dealt with the communications division. Messengers later allowed a request by Armstrong to withdraw his motion in light of a motion on a separate board of trustees for the *Word and Way*.

Part of the *Word and Way* debate, observers reported, centered around the freedom of the paper's editor to attend executive board meetings. Edwards said he was invited to general meetings of the executive board but he had not been invited to attend executive board committee meetings.

Recent editorials in the *Word and Way* by Edwards have implied, a convention spokesman said, that the editor would

have greater editorial freedom if the paper had separate trustees. Multiple copies of a cartoon depicting executive board "strings" of control on a puppet editor, identified as "Ross," were circulated among messengers.

Some points in the recommendation on the convention's business and financial plan institute strict budget drawing and control procedures, bonding of employees handling funds, reporting of all funds and sources of them, and maintenance of cash flow and control in keeping with proper accounting procedures. Also included are stipulations that trust funds be used only for their intended purpose, that there be no commingling of funds and that the convention and its agencies, in addition to internal auditing procedures, retain independent certified public accountants to conduct an annual audit and that their findings be made available to the public.

The plan calls for the executive board to be reorganized into five standing committees — an administrative committee (made up of the chairmen of the other four committees), a church development committee, missions and evangelism development committee, communications committee and interagency relations committee.

The executive board's elected administrative staff will consist of an executive director, directors of offices of general program coordination and general stewardship and Cooperative Program promotion and four division directors.

The four new divisions will be the business division, church development division, missions and evangelism division, and communications division.

In other action, the messengers re-elected Hugh Wamble, a Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor, as convention president and voted a \$5 million Cooperative Program budget. A potentially controversial proposal concerning a new method of distribution of funds to state Baptist colleges by the executive board was not presented.



[Continued from page 5]

Who are we? Our name says we are Southern Baptists although many no longer live in the south. In fact, one would guess that nearly half of us live outside the old traditional southern states.

Any adjective that you place in front of Baptist is limiting. Geographical adjectives limit us to areas, and theological adjectives limit us to theological concepts. Some adjectives like Cooperative or Friendly or Missionary do not give a correct picture of us all the time. Most any adjective takes away rather than adds to, so why not begin our name with Baptist? That is who we are.

What are we? The word Convention describes our structure better than any other word with the exception of Association. The word Association, however, is used to describe a smaller structure within a state convention so that word is out. The word Union has been used, but in our society this belongs to labor, so it would not best describe a religious body. The second word of our name is then Convention. That's what we are.

Where are we? There would be two ways of saying it: (1) United States of America, or (2) America. America makes for a shorter title and is just as descriptive. The third word in our name then should be America. Put the three together, along with the article "The" and the preposition "of" and you have, of course, The Baptist Convention of America (BCA). It does more for us than any other names. Let's adopt it!

Washington, D.C. James O. Duncan

Broadcast Ruling Stands

In a dispute between a religious broadcasting corporation and the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously refused to decide whether the company has a constitutional right to employ only persons who hold to certain religious beliefs.

The practical effect of the high court's action in *King's Garden, Inc. v. FCC* was to let stand a lower court ruling that the FCC can require religious broadcasting companies to hire individuals without discriminating on religious grounds.

The FCC is a federal regulatory agency charged with exercising control over the nation's airwaves. An important part of its work involves the licensing of radio and television stations and the setting of policy related to broadcasting.

King's Garden owns and operates two radio stations in Edmonds, Washington. In appealing to the Supreme Court, the corporation argued that religious organizations have the legal right to hire only persons of a particular religious persuasion. The argument was based on a 1972 congressional action exempting religious groups from provisions contained in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 related to employment policies.

King's Garden, Inc., also challenged the FCC's authority to require religious organizations to hire persons unsympathetic with their views, claiming that such action violates the free exercise of religion clause of the First Amendment.

The FCC maintained that the only relevant question in the case was whether it was exercising its "public interest responsibility" by requiring all broadcasters to employ personnel without regard to their religion.

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Dear Kentucky Baptists:

As we all enjoy this holiday weekend, I just wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude for the way in which you have shared with this ministry over these past years. Your spirit of openness and sharing has made it possible for us to continue to provide a ministry of child care to many children and their families. For this we are deeply thankful and grateful.

I also would like to remind you of the importance of this year's Thanksgiving Offering. Our theme of "CARE A DOLLAR" is our way of saying to you that in the coming year we need for the total offering to represent a dollar from every Kentucky Baptist. Some of you will be able to give only a dollar....others again this year will give much more than a dollar....still others will be unable to share anything. Since there are more than 600,000 Kentucky Baptists, you can begin to understand both our need and the importance of your gift equaling--and even surpassing--your gift of previous years.

The year ahead holds much excitement and challenge for us. It is my sincere hope and prayer that you will do everything possible to help this offering make possible a continued ministry of redemptive service to children and youth from very troubled families. In a spirit of gratitude and hope, we look forward to another exciting year of service in the name of Jesus Christ and Kentucky Baptists.

Sincerely,

Bill Amos

William E. Amos
Executive Director

SERVING FAMILIES IN TRANSITION

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