

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

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**Bruce Reynolds, Convention President**

As I look back over the last couple of years and having had the opportunity to serve as President of the State Convention of Baptists for the great state of Indiana, I have been asked this question, "Has it been a good experience?" I can only respond with, "Absolutely."

What I have learned is that we have an incredible staff that truly works hard to give SBC churches in Indiana the best opportunities to thrive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ. I have learned that, like our churches, the convention is made up of just ordinary people that are trying to do their best to make a difference where our King has planted them.

I have also been asked, "What were your goals as President of the convention?" In all truth, I have had only one goal as the convention President and that was to be an instrument of unity. You see I understand that in a family this large there will always be disagreements, and in truth disagreements are not bad. It is only when we, as followers of Jesus Christ, allow these disagreements to cause division among us that it becomes a problem. Of all people in this world, we, as followers of Jesus, should know how to love despite differences and to work together despite differences. We should also remember what our King has told us that "a kingdom divided cannot stand." I give this illustration.

It is said that when the British and French were fighting in Canada in the 1750s, Admiral Phipps, commander of the British fleet, was told to anchor outside Quebec. He was given orders to wait for the British land forces to arrive then support them when they attacked the city. Phipps' navy arrived early. As Phipps waited he became annoyed by the statues of the saints that adorned the towers of a nearby cathedral. He commanded his men to shoot at them with the ship's cannons. No one knows how many rounds they fired or how many statues were knocked out, but when the land forces arrived and the signal was given to attack, Phipps was of no help. He had used up all his ammunition shooting at the "saints."

So, as I finish my term as your President, let me ask this of you, my SBC family. Let's save our ammunition for the real enemy and give Satan both barrels. Let us remember the purpose in which we are called to give truth and love to the lost and a renewed vigor to reach our state for our King. I do love you all. Now go give them Jesus.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT**

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**Greg Byman, Chairman of the Board**

I bring you greetings from the Executive Board on this 60th Anniversary of our State Convention of Baptists in Indiana! We are honored to help every Southern Baptist church in Indiana work better and stronger together for the Gospel of Jesus Christ than any one church could work independently. I truly believe that we are just getting started.

The first Executive Board meeting was held at Plainfield Baptist Church on November 1, 1958 and voted unanimously on December 5th to call E. Harmon Moore to serve as our first Executive Secretary-Treasurer. From that time forward, we have been blessed by many great men who helped us cooperate in Indiana to fulfill the Great Commission here and beyond our state through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Our work today rests on the foundation they laid for us. And like then, our work is equally exciting and challenging.

Cooperation is a relationship that requires constant mutual submission to one another, which flows from our love of Christ. We must grow our trust for one another through clear communication, time with one another and a common vision to share the gospel with every person in Indiana. Dr. Steve McNeil, our Executive Director, recently challenged us with “Eight Markers” for practical partnerships that can help any church or association cooperate better with one another for Christ’s Kingdom work. I believe these are very practical action plans that will grow our relationships and trust. I challenge you to prayerfully commit to fulfilling one or more “Marker” on that list this year. Ultimately, my prayer is that the line to heaven gets longer and the line to hell gets shorter as more people surrender their lives to Jesus Christ! “By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35

I want to close my report with a personal word of gratitude for our convention. Sixty years of cooperation contributed to the spiritual story of my entire family. Cooperation gave me a collegiate minister at Ball State, who connected me with a local church, the association, our convention and the SBC. Other collegiate ministers in Indiana also invested in me through

annual retreats at Highland Lakes Baptist Camp (HLBC), a place made possible through cooperation. The Indiana Baptist Foundation gave me a scholarship to attend an SBC seminary, which was already very affordable thanks to Cooperative Program (CP) funding. Indiana pastors prayed me back to Indiana where I became a church planter, funded in part through the Home Mission Board. Later I would become a North American Mission Board (NAMB) church planter for my current church. My wife has been influenced by Indiana Baptists for most of her life. Our children have made significant spiritual decisions during camps at HLBC. I thank God for Indiana Baptists. I am one of countless lives that has been positively affected by cooperation. I wonder how many more families will be gloriously impacted by the gospel of Jesus Christ as we cooperate in even greater ways after this 60th anniversary celebration!

May Christ be honored and glorified as your Executive Board submits to Him and to one another, to fulfill the work this convention has called us to do under the leadership of His Spirit.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

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**Dr. Steve McNeil, Executive Director**

This has been a year of transition for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. It has been filled with bright days and dark days. Since this time last year, we have experienced staff transitions, ministry evaluations and seeking the open doors that the Lord might open.

In the fall of 2017, we said goodbye to two on our staff team - Mitch Whidden felt God's call back to the local church as pastor, and Dale Eakes suddenly died at too early of an age. Dale's death left a deep mark on our staff team and on many around our state. We also said goodbye and hello to Bob Weeks as we felt God leading for him to move from being a "Church Planting Catalyst" (CPC) to being the Team Leader for Church and Leader Development.

Over the course of these developments, we began dialogue with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) about how these three loses to our CPC team would affect our overall strategy around the state in Church Planting. In May, we found that we would need to scale back our CPC team by two more people as NAMB was reducing CPC staff. We have made adjustments by assigning Doug Jividen to the northern area of the state above Indianapolis and John Horn will serve the associations and churches from Indianapolis south. Jesus Pacheco will serve our language church planting opportunities.

With several key leadership positions changing, we have been able to evaluate where we are and how we are doing things. We continue to evaluate through the filter of our common purpose statement, "The State Convention of Baptists in Indiana exists to Exalt Jesus, Encourage Pastors and Equip Churches." Simply put, it is our desire to hear what God is doing in the local church and then to come along side of the church to help them live out God's will for that church.

We have had another good year in our camps with nearly all of the SCBI camps approaching full capacity. You can see more detail about our specific ministry areas in their individual reports. Cooperative Program (CP) giving overall was down slightly (-4.1%).

Your SCBI staff has worked diligently to continue to provide the same quality ministry, camps and consultations while doing that with fewer resources.

We have a legacy of 60 years of ministry all over our state, done by great, servant leaders who have planted churches, built ministries and served Jesus in helping Him build His church. We stand today on the shoulders of people like E. Harmon Moore, Tom Wood, C.E. Wiley, Margaret Gillaspie and so many others. Those years are worthy of remembrance and honor. But we can't get stuck in those memories with the realization that God is opening new doors of ministry for US to walk through.

We are currently asking all of our churches and associations to choose to engage in a new move of God. A move of God that seeks to see churches helping churches! Churches planting churches! Churches serving each other! Churches doing ministry together! We are calling this movement, "Mile Markers 2025." We have set goals and actions steps for the accomplishment of these goals. They will only be exciting and spiritually impactful when we all choose to get involved in these goals. Here is the plan:

- 1. Revitalization Marker** - Goal; see all of our 14 associations prayerfully seek out at least two churches per year to help with revitalization efforts. So by 2025 we can together help 196 of our churches.
- 2. Planting Marker** - Goal; plant at least 20 churches each year or 140 new church plants.
- 3. Church Equipping Marker** - Goal; churches invite other churches when they are having a training event. "Churches Helping Churches." That is what an association and convention is supposed to be about - helping each other.
- 4. Leadership Development Marker** - Goal; to develop ministry leaders in our churches who will help strengthen our churches and church plants. This goal has four layers. Proverbs 27:17 "Iron Sharpens Iron"
  - a. Layer 1** - Associational Leader Labs.
  - b. Layer 2** - Churches Helping Churches!
  - c. Layer 3** - Equip-U training events.
  - d. Layer 4** - HILL (High Impact Leader Lab).
  - e. Wives in Ministry** conference.
- 5. Mission Partnership Marker** - Goal; to see that "the sun never sets on the work of SCBI mission work."

6. **Highland Lakes Camp Marker** – Goal; salvation to students and leaders, to continue to expand our facilities and see HLBC be the equipping hub of SCBI.
7. **Cooperative Program Marker** – Goal; churches take the 1% CP Challenge by giving 1% more than last year.
8. **Evangelism Marker** – Goal; to see 50% of our 450 churches take the ESP 2020 Challenge.

**Cooperation Marker** – Goal; to see our churches “choose” to find ways to help each other. Find one thing that your church can do to help another church this year. To see “Churches Helping Churches.” This marker will be the umbrella of the other eight. This is the glue that holds everything (including us) together (John 17).

Each year we will emphasize two of the markers:

- Year 1: 2019 Revitalization Marker & Evangelism Marker;
- Year 2: 2020 CP Marker & Church Equipping Marker;
- Year 3: 2021 Mission Partnership Marker & Planting Marker;
- Year 4: 2022 HLBC Marker & Leadership Development Marker;
- Year 5: 2023 Revitalization, Evangelism, CP and Equipping;
- Year 6: 2024 Mission, Planting, HLBC, Leader Development;
- Year 7: 2025 Celebration Year.

We have many open doors to take the Gospel to Indiana, but we must give, go, serve, work, help and be committed to helping HIM build his church and us be a “Great Commission” convention of churches.