

KENTUCKY

KBC to study need for moral education

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

A study committee will be appointed to determine whether the Kentucky Baptist Convention should do more to educate Kentucky Baptists about issues of morality, values, non-violence and ethics.

At the request of the KBC's public affairs committee, the administrative committee of the KBC Executive Board agreed Oct. 13 to authorize the study committee.

Members of the study committee will be named jointly by KBC President Gayle Toole, pastor of Edgewood Baptist Church in Nicholasville, and administrative committee chairman Floyd Price, pastor of First Baptist Church of Scottsville.

The request came to the administrative committee from the public affairs committee, a standing committee of the convention. Rather than bring the matter directly to the convention floor without initial research being done, the public affairs committee believed it was appropriate to appeal to the Executive Board, said Malcolm Lunceford of Frankfort, chairman of the public affairs committee.

The guidelines of the public affairs

committee "require us to pay particular attention to church-state issues," Lunceford told the administrative committee Oct. 13. "But in recent years more and more moral issues have been passed on to our committee."

Constitutional guidelines for the public affairs committee state: "This committee shall keep the Kentucky Baptist Convention advised of all matters of particular interest to Baptists taking place at the state, national and international levels, with particular reference to the separation of church and state. The committee shall also work in close cooperation with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs."

The assigned task of the public affairs committee is not in question, Lunceford said, noting the committee is willing to fulfill that role. But other contemporary issues—such as gambling, bio-medical ethics, abortion and non-violence—need attention but appear to fall outside the assigned scope of the public affairs committee.

In its formal request to the Executive Board, the public affairs committee asked for an examination of "whether there is cause to expand the role of the committee on public affairs,

create a second committee and/or create an office with staff leadership to keep Kentucky Baptists educated about issues such as morality, values, non-violence, ethics and the like."

The request further noted that the committee's intent "is not to create a politically motivated entity, but a means of education for Kentucky Baptists and Kentuckians at large."

During discussion in the administrative committee, several members affirmed their belief that the emphasis of any expanded effort should remain on education and information, not on lobbying elected officials or asserting that churches must do or teach certain things.

Lunceford said one educational resource that could develop from this discussion is a structure for the KBC to sponsor annual forums on contemporary issues of morality and ethics. For example, a statewide or regional forum on gambling could be held, he said.

Currently, the KBC public affairs committee has six members, including the KBC executive secretary-treasurer and Western Recorder editor as permanent members. The remaining four members are elected by the convention to two-year terms.

The tomb is empty, but it isn't always open, so call ahead

COVINGTON—The Garden of Hope is open, but to see its replica of Christ's tomb visitors should call the owner, Immanuel Baptist Church in Covington, before visiting.

Loretta Botkin, a member of Buechel Park Baptist Church in Louisville, said she and her husband found that out the hard way during their recent visit to the garden.

The natives of Northern Kentucky were familiar with the site, having visited when it first opened in 1958, she said.

After reading a recent article in the Western Recorder, they decided to visit again. They couldn't get in, however.

Church secretary Roxie Jacoby said the afternoon of the couple's visit she conducted a pair of garden tours. But the tomb, chapel and carpenter's shop are normally locked unless a tour is previously arranged, she said.

The gift shop is temporarily closed because the woman who had been operating it from an office in the same building has moved, said Jacoby.

"We're doing it by walk-ons or calls," she said. "A lot of times somebody is up there. We're very, very pleased. A Morehead youth group is coming up soon and an Owensboro seniors group."

To schedule a tour, call the church, (606) 331-7136, or Jacoby's home, (606) 261-1953.