

# **THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION**

## **Executive Committee**

### **OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR BAPTIST PRESS**

*Baptist Press is the news service for the Southern Baptist Convention*

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of Baptist Press is to report factually and fairly the news of, about, and for Southern Baptists.

#### **General Guidelines**

1. Ownership and management of Baptist Press is vested in the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention to provide the required freedom and responsibility necessary for the benefit of Southern Baptists.
2. The news service will be a cooperative endeavor of Southern Baptist organizations, agencies and institutions, coordinated and directed by a staff elected by the Executive Committee.
3. Baptist Press will be alert to the needs of Baptists to fulfill their role as a priesthood of believers who must have adequate information about the issues and developments of the day to function thoughtfully and prayerfully in a democratic fellowship of faith.
4. Baptist Press will utilize the highest professional standards and techniques of the journalism profession in a ministry of news and information about the life and work of Southern Baptists.
5. The news service will implement the working arrangements for news handling between the Southern Baptist Convention, its Executive Committee, the Baptist Press bureaus, the Baptist state papers, and other news media.
6. The Baptist Press central office staff will strive to develop and maintain a trustworthy working relationship with news sources, such as bureau personnel, Baptist state paper editors and associates; news, information and public relations personnel in Baptist organizations, agencies and institutions; and with a wide variety of newsmakers and news handlers both inside and outside Southern Baptist life..
7. The Baptist Press central office staff also will strive to develop and maintain a trustworthy working relationship with the users of the news service, both religious and secular, being open and responsible in correcting errors and active in improving performance, regularly discussing news handling with knowledgeable leaders and impartial observers.

8. The news service will strive to be factual and fair, as objective as possible, staying not only in the bounds of legality but also at a high level of professional and Christian ethics.
9. In its role of reporting to the Southern Baptist constituency, Baptist Press will encourage and have a right to expect Southern Baptist agencies, institutions, boards, commissions, organizations, and committees to be open and cooperative in newshandling.
10. Baptist Press releases will be prompt, reporting events, activities and newsworthy developments as quickly as possible, but not at the expense of accuracy and good judgment.
11. The news service will concentrate on news and newsworthy features, rather than on promotional, repetitious and routine activities and developments.
12. Baptist Press releases are expected to be positive and constructive. When necessary Baptist Press also will report forthrightly and accurately the valid news produced by controversy and adverse events.
13. All who serve in the Baptist Press system will keep in mind that to achieve its ultimate purpose, the news service must be both highly professional in its journalistic function and highly useful as one specialized means employed in the broad denominational effort to bring all persons to God through Jesus Christ.