

Baptist Briefs

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Southwestern drills for gas. [Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary](#) administrators recently signed a contract with a Fort Worth company to drill for natural gas on the school's campus. The [Barnett Shale](#)—a geological formation of sedimentary rock believed to contain trillions of cubic feet of natural gas—runs underneath the seminary's Fort Worth campus. President Paige Patterson told the school's trustees that over the life of the contract, it potentially could bring the seminary millions of dollars in royalties.

Missouri convention kicks out churches. The [Missouri Baptist Convention](#) voted Oct. 31 to oust 19 congregations because of their affiliations with moderate Baptist groups. During its 172nd annual meeting in Cape Girardeau, the convention voted to refuse to seat messengers from any of the congregations at the meeting or future meetings. The convention has a single-alignment requirement that prohibits churches from belonging to other Baptist organizations. The vote came without recorded dissent. Only one of the congregations—most of which had been warned about the move to oust them ahead of time—sent messengers to the meeting.

Canadian Southern Baptists consider name change. Messengers to

the [Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists](#) at their annual meeting in Ottawa, Ontario, authorized the convention's leadership board to recommend a new name to be voted on at next year's meeting. Any name change—probably dropping “Southern” as not reflecting the geographic and cultural context—would require an affirmative vote at two consecutive annual meetings. Messengers also elected Jeff Christopherson, pastor of The Sanctuary in Oakville, Ontario, president; Rick Lamothe, pastor of Sequoia Community Church in Ottawa, first vice president; and Ralph Griggs, pastor of Dovercourt Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta, second vice president.

Islam a threat to America, Missouri Baptist says. The executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention reportedly claimed the “real threat” to the United States is that “Islam has a strategic plan to conquer and occupy America.” David Clippard, in his address at the opening session of the group's annual meeting Oct. 30 in Cape Girardeau, said the combination of an apathetic church and a changing culture means Islam could push Christianity to the side as the nation's dominant religion. “They have a plan to take over,” he said, according to Cape Girardeau's *Southeast Missourian* newspaper. Clippard said the Saudi Arabian government has funded scores of Islamic study centers and mosques in North America—including ones on or near the University of Missouri campuses in Columbia, Rolla and St. Louis. In addition, Clippard said, the Saudi Arabian government paid for 15,000 Muslim college students to come to North America to study—with the intention, he claimed, of taking the continent for Islam.

Kansas-Nebraska Baptists honor missions workers. Several mission workers received special recognition at the annual meeting of the [Kansas-](#)

[Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists](#) in Salina, Kan. LifeWay Christian Resources honored Jim Turnbo, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Scottsbluff, Neb., as small church pastor of the year. Jennifer Mayfield, a volunteer worker on the Santee Sioux Reservation, received the Kelley Shelton Missionary Service Corps missionary of the year award. Bob and Rhonda Besco, who lead the Omaha Baptist Center, received the John and Shirley Hopkins Church and Community Ministries Award. Kansas-Nebraska Southern Baptists also adopted a \$5.4 million 2007 budget, re-elected a slate of officers by acclamation and celebrated the 25th anniversary of their conference center during the annual meeting.

King takes Illinois Baptist communications post. Marty King, senior communications and development director for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, has been named associate executive director and team leader for the communications, Cooperative Program and public relations team of the [Illinois Baptist Association](#). He also will be editor of the Illinois Baptist newspaper.

Samford inaugurates president. [Samford University](#) inaugurated Andrew Westmoreland as the school's 18th president Nov. 2. Westmoreland was elected Samford president in January to succeed retiring President Tom Corts. He served previously as president of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark.

Spurgeon collection goes to Midwestern. [Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary](#) recently secured the [Charles H. Spurgeon collection](#) from William Jewell College for \$400,000. William Jewell housed the 5,104-volume [private library](#) of Spurgeon—one of the most prominent British

Baptist pastors of the 19th century—for about 100 years, originally buying it for 500 pounds. Midwestern Seminary takes possession of the collection by Nov. 15.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.