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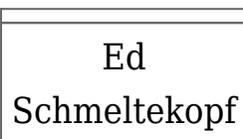
Schmeltekopf served as top aide to two BGCT directors

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

FORT WORTH—Texas Baptist denominational leader Ed Schmeltekopf died March 29 after an extended illness related to his longtime battle with Parkinson's disease.

Schmeltekopf, 73, served nearly two decades as associate executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and a quarter-century as a Texas Baptist pastor. He was elected BGCT first vice president in 1977.



For 19 years and nine months, Schmeltekopf worked as a staff liaison with virtually every major study committee appointed by the BGCT and as a top aide to two executive directors—James Landes and Bill Pinson.

Pinson praised Schmeltekopf as “a devout follower of Jesus Christ and

gifted servant-leader ... (who) helped to shape for good the lives of thousands” of people.

“Ed combined organizational genius and personal compassion—a rare combination. But, then, he was a rare person,” Pinson said.

“He guided multiple committees, study groups and planning teams of the BGCT that helped the convention and its related churches, associations and institutions set record after record. He supervised some of the most creative aspects of convention life. He had a gift for listening, planning and implementation that enabled diverse groups to move forward in cooperative harmony. Much of the success of the BGCT in the years he served can be attributed to his leadership.”

Schmeltekopf was “a man of real integrity,” said Doris Tinker, executive associate to the BGCT executive director, who worked with Schmeltekopf first when he was a pastor serving on various convention committees and later as a colleague at the Baptist Building.

“Ed Schmeltekopf was a person with great sensitivity to and love for people,” Tinker said. “It was evident in all he did. His gifts and talents were many, and he used them well. His attention to detail made him an invaluable asset in all areas of work with the BGCT.

“He had such a wealth of knowledge about the Lord’s work through the BGCT and Texas Baptist churches and institutions that we referred to him as a ‘walking encyclopedia.’”

BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade recalled Schmeltekopf as a good friend who reached out to him when Wade became pastor of First Baptist Church in Arlington.

“He was an effective administrator—creative and dependable,” Wade said. “He was a calming presence in difficult discussions. He was Christian

gentleman who had the respect of every pastor I know. ... We are a better people because Ed lived and served among us.”

Schmeltekopf was pastor of First Baptist Church in Burleson 19 years before joining the BGCT Executive Board staff. He served previously at churches in Graham and LaVernia.

Schmeltekopf was a native of Kyle and a graduate of Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, where he was a record-breaking fullback for the Bobcats, was named to the All-Texas College Team and was inducted into the school’s hall of honor in 1989.

He earned his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Semi-nary.

Schmeltekopf was a 20-year member of Broadway Baptist Church of Fort Worth.

Survivors include his wife of 50 years, Lilla, of Fort Worth; daughter Cynthia Krause and her husband, David, of Dallas; son Jeff Schmeltekopf, and his wife, Judy, of Fort Worth; five grandchildren; two brothers: Robert Schmeltekopf and his wife Bettye of Kerrville and Donald Schmeltekopf and his wife Judy of Waco; and one sister: Mary Pryal and her husband, Alfred, of Gastonia, N.C. He was preceded in death by his parents, Emil and Ruth Schmeltekopf of Kyle and one brother, James Schmeltekopf of New Braunfels.

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