

SIMPLE TRUTH: Shining our light

*By Shawn Parker
Correspondent*



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Among the highlights for me was the commissioning of 52 International Mission Board missionaries to serve in all parts of the world. In addition, over 540 people called on the name of the Lord to be their Savior as part of the Crossover event sponsored by the North American Mission Board. If nothing else had happened, this would have been enough to make the trip worthwhile!

In addition to these fabulous reports, we also elected Bart Barber as our new SBC president. He is the longtime pastor of First Baptist Church in Farmersville, Texas, and has a proven track record of leadership with the SBC. I'd like to encourage you to be in prayer for him as he makes critical decisions in the months to come.

The hallmark development of the meeting, no doubt, was the adoption of the Sexual Abuse Task Force (SATF) recommendations. The Task Force offered two recommendations intended to help us deal more effectively with abuse situations that occur within the ranks of SBC churches. While debate about this issue was a bit divisive in the buildup to the meeting, the SATF offered a solid set of recommendations that seemed to unite the SBC family to move forward.

As usual, we made decisions on a healthy dose of resolutions and heard motions on a broad array of issues. These ranged from closing the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (that effort failed), to adopting a budget focused on continuing the cooperative work of fulfilling the Great Commission. All in all, the discussion of all these matters was healthy and productive.

Maybe the one thing I was most encouraged by was the participation of Southern Baptists from across the country. This is one year when many from the heart of the SBC could have begged off from attending and relied on others to make these critical decisions. However, Southern Baptists came from every corner of the country representing every age bracket and

invaded southern California to conduct the business of the Kingdom.

I talked with several locals and heard them be very complimentary of the spirit of Southern Baptists. At the end of the day, that's what we need! We need to be the light in the darkness that points others to the glory of the Father.

I think we did just that in Anaheim, and I'm thankful to the Lord for that grace!

Parker is executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He may be contacted at simpletruth@mbcb.org. Opinions expressed on this website are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, The Baptist Record, nor the publication's Advisory Committee.