

# Virginia Baptists change budget for educational entities

November 21, 2007

Posted: 11/21/07

## Virginia Baptists change budget for educational entities

**By Robert Dilday**

*Virginia Religious Herald*

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP)—Virginia Baptists increased their support for a variety of state, national and international ministries—and for the second year in a row persuaded their budget committee to modify its proposal because of concerns about funding for educational institutions.

The \$14.36 million 2008 budget is \$160,000 more than this year's. A new feature includes a reduction in direct allocations to affiliated academies and colleges but also new allocations to each of the institutions offering scholarships to students. In addition, a newly created student- and ministry-formation scholarship fund will assist students at any college or seminary.

The change was initiated by the [Virginia Baptist Mission Board's](#) emerging leaders subcommittee and was developed in conversations among key leaders of the state association's Mission Board and budget committee.

But messengers balked at the reductions for the [John Leland Center for Theological Studies](#), a seminary near Washington, D.C., whose allocation

would have been reduced from \$165,000 to \$100,000.

After hearing concerns raised in a budget breakout session the day before the budget vote, the budget committee altered its proposal, giving both Leland and Bluefield College, another affiliated school which was slated for reductions, direct allocations of \$140,000 each, with the planned reduction phased in over the next few years.

Messengers to the annual meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia also elected a slate of officers who ran unopposed—the 11th straight year that candidates endorsed by the advocacy group Virginia Baptists Committed have won the state association’s top offices.

Joe Lewis, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Petersburg, was elected president in one of several brief—and discussion-free—business sessions, which included the approval of a \$14 million budget for 2008 and adoption of a resolution on the New Baptist Covenant.

The resolution encouraged Virginia Baptist leaders to continue participation in the national meeting of Baptists in Atlanta, Jan 31-Feb. 1, while urging participants to “honor its promise and pledge for a nonpartisan gathering.”

Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.