Questions about Dr. Betty W. Talbert's involvement in the charismatic movement almost cost her a job as interim assistant chaplain at Wake Forest University.

The executive committee of the Baptist State Convention approved Dr. Talbert's appointment Tuesday by a 9-4 vote, with several members abstaining. The committee had to approve Dr. Talbert's appointment because the convention will pay half her salary. She also will serve as interim director of the Baptist Student Union at Wake Forest.

The Rev. Cecil A. Ray, general secretary-treasurer of the convention, had asked that her appointment be delayed until the committee's Aug. 21 meeting. He said he had questions about her charismatic experience.

Charmastics believe in using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, including speaking in tongues, healing and prophecy. They also believe in a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Some Baptists fear that the charismatics will divide the church. Others see the movement as a force for renewal within the church.

In a telephone interview from Nashville, Tenn., Dr. Talbert chose not to label herself as a charismatic. "I consider myself a Christian in mature life who has experienced baptism of the Holy Spirit. I consider myself a devoted Baptist. It has enhanced my devotion to the church," she said.

Dr. Talbert is a member of First Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. She was defended by a fellow member, Peggy Chestnutt, who is also a member of the executive committee.

Mrs. Chestnutt said that Dr. Talbert has not tried to form a charismatic group within the church. She said Dr. Talbert has not disrupted church services by speaking in tongues.

She described Dr. Talbert as being very spiritual. Some Baptists have criticized Wake Forest for lacking a spiritual atmosphere.

Dr. Talbert will work at Wake Forest at least through the fall semester. The school is looking for a Baptist seminary graduate to fill the position permanently. She will succeed the Rev. Richard W. McBride, who resigned to become campus minister at Gardner-Webb College.

Dr. Talbert has a bachelor's degree from George Peabody College, a master's from Vanderbilt University and a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. All of her degrees are in history, which she has taught at the N.C. School of the Arts and Salem College.

She is married to Dr. Charles H. Talbert, a professor of religion at Wake Forest, and has a son and a daughter.
Assistant Chaplain Appointed

By VIRTIE STROUP
Sentinel Religion Reporter

While Wake Forest University has been under fire for its lack of spirituality, "a spiritual person" almost didn't get an appointment yesterday because of her involvement in the charismatic movement. However, Dr. Betty W. Talbert, 42, was approved as interim assistant chaplain and director of the Baptist Student Union at the university by the executive committee of the Baptist State Convention's General Board. The committee's approval was necessary because the convention pays half of her salary.

When the appointment was brought up by the Rev. Cecil A. Ray, convention executive, he asked that her appointment be deferred until the August meeting "because there were questions that needed to be answered."

He added that he did not want to "be heard as making a judgment" against Mrs. Talbert. "Everyone says she is a qualified person, but I can't
Women Aglow

Mrs. Charles H. Talbert will speak on "Jesus — Victor Over Depression" at the 9:30 a.m. meeting Thursday.

The group will meet at the Little Theatre auditorium of the Hanes Community Center.

There will be a fellowship hour from 9 to 9:30 a.m.

Mrs. Talbert will speak about "how God is able to deliver us from hurtful emotional patterns by the renewing of our minds through the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit." An active member of First Baptist Church on West Fifth Street, she has a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has taught at Greensboro College and Salem College. Her husband is a professor of religion at Wake Forest University.

Beginning this month the group will meet on the first Thursday of each month rather than the second Thursday.
continued from Page 13 because I don't know her.” He indicated the major question was her involvement with the charismatic movement.

Many Baptists consider the charismatic movement a divisive topic, others consider them “of the devil” and still others see the movement as a force for renewal.

Ray said that he could not accurately define her history in the charismatic movement. “If I knew that,” he explained, “I would be better able to approve her appointment. I do not want to do her harm.”

Mrs. Talbert was defended by a fellow member of First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem. Peggy Chestnutt, a member of the executive committee.

She said Mrs. Talbert, wife of Dr. Charles H. Talbert, a professor of religion at Wake Forest, was a very active member of First Baptist, but there was no charismatic group at her church and Mrs. Talbert was not attempting to start such a group nor did she speak in tongues in characteristic of the charismatic and disrupt services at the church.

Mrs. Chestnutt rated the discussion “unfortunate.” called Mrs. Talbert “a very spiritual person” and suggested that Wake Forest “should not be judged for seeking a spiritual person.”

She said Mrs. Talbert knew she could not be considered for the permanent position. She called the Talberts a plus for the congregation and she moved that the group “accept this position today” so that the university “would not be held in any kind of question because of false questions.”

The Rev. Dr. Dewey Hobbs of Marion also suggested that the delay on the appointment would be “almost a smear on her and those close to her.” He also said the Talberts, who are frequent speakers at Baptist meetings, “inspire me.”

The Rev. Dr. Frank Campbell of Statesville said, after reviewing Mrs. Talbert’s written account of her major religious experiences in recent years, it appeared “she had made a fine spiritual pilgrimage.”

The Rev. Dr. Dwane R. Campbell of Elkton, chairman of the executive committee, said he was “appalled at the McCarthy touch” of the discussion just because “someone doesn’t believe as we do, we call them charismatic.”

Ray acknowledged that the committee perhaps was sensitive to the charismatic connection because the Rev. E. W. Price Jr. and three staff members resigned in April from Green Street Baptist Church in High Point after the congregation adopted rules restricting charismatic activities in the church.

Charismatics, best known for speaking in tongues (glossolalia) and healing, trace their roots back to Pentecost. The members of the charismatic renewal movement are often called Neo-Pentecostals and zealous belief in being “filled with the Holy Spirit” or baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Mrs. Talbert has taught history at Salem College and the N.C. School of the Arts. She received a Ph.D. degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a master’s from Vanderbilt University and a B.A. degree from George Peabody College.

Christian said Mrs. Talbert will fill the position at least for the fall semester while he searches for a permanent replacement for the Rev. Richard V. Hubel, who resigned to become campus minister at Gardner-Webb College.

The committee also approved his appointment yesterday. Both will begin their new work in August.

Christian said applicants for the permanent post must be Baptists and seminary graduates. They do not have to be ordained but they should have the commitment that ordination is consistent with ordination. They should have had experience working with high school and college-age persons.”

Person Named to Post

Mrs. Talbert’s religious history. Ray said he had based his opinion of her appointment on what Christian had said. The matter was brought to his attention by the Rev. Marvin Corts, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church here and convention president.

Corts was not at the meeting of Camp Carraway because he is the speaker at a Bible conference at Ocean City, N.J., Baptist University. However, in a telephone interview Corts said the appointment bothered him because of Mrs. Talbert’s involvement with the charismatic movement.

The committee voted 9 to 4, with some members abstaining to approve the appointment Dr. Campbell said he hoped both Christian and Mrs. Talbert would understand that the discussion was based mainly on the procedure of the appointment rather than the personality involved.

Mrs. Talbert, reached in Nashville, Tenn., said she was not upset that questions were raised “I do appreciate the trust of the committee and their reaffirmation (by the approval of the appointment) of my religious experience. As Baptist history, religious experience is a key factor. Their approval is their reaffirmation of my Baptist heritage.”

Christian, reached in Greenville, S.C., said he was “very pleased” the appointment had been made and he feels Mrs. Talbert “will make a positive contribution to the ministry of Wake Forest.”

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