

New Baptist Covenant to convene again in 2011: Triennial meetings are historical Baptist pattern

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Organizers of the New Baptist Covenant celebration are recommending a repeat of the historic pan-Baptist event in 2011 but not a new denomination or other permanent organization.

An estimated 15,000 Baptists crossed denominational, ethnic and ideological lines to meet in Atlanta January 30–February 1 for fellowship, worship and discussion about cooperation on evangelism and other areas about which they can agree.

The meeting was spearheaded by Jimmy Carter and endorsed by the other living Baptist ex-president, Bill Clinton. Critics alleged that it was a thinly veiled attempt to stir up Baptist support for Democratic candidates, although the event largely avoided partisan overtones and included prominent Republican speakers.

Carter, Mercer University president Bill Underwood and other event planners said March 19 that at an earlier follow-up meeting about 70 Baptist leaders were present. They decided to repeat the event in three years “in the historic Baptist pattern of triennial meetings.” -*Associated Baptist Press*