

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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January 19, 1971

Stewardship Commission Honors
Merrill D. Moore On Retirement

NASHVILLE (BP) --On the eve of his retirement as executive director-treasurer, the Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention paid tribute to Merrill D. Moore as "Mr. Stewardship" in the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

Moore, who has served as chief executive for the commission since it was organized in 1961, was honored at a banquet sponsored by the commission, which adopted a resolution the following day expressing appreciation for Moore's service.

The resolution praised Moore for rendering "superior leadership in stewardship promotion for over 23 years" in the SBC.

Before becoming executive director-treasurer of the commission in 1961, Moore was director of stewardship promotion for the Southern Baptist Executive Committee for 13 years.

The resolution also cited Moore's ministry as a pastor, state denominational worker, college president, and Southern Baptist denominational leader for almost 47 years.

During the retirement testimonial dinner sponsored by the commission, more than a score of co-workers and friends stood to give brief testimonies of Moore's influence in their own lives and work.

Repeatedly, the testimonies praised Moore's role in bringing the Stewardship Commission into being as an agency of the SBC, his role in producing materials for the Forward Program of Church Finance used by SBC churches in their stewardship efforts, and the influence of his book, Found Faithful. Several called him "Mr. Stewardship" in the SBC.

Robert Lee, executive secretary of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, in a special tribute to Moore at the close of the testimony period, called Moore "one of the hardest working and prolific workers I've ever know."

During the banquet, a musical skit written by Frank Hart Smith of the SBC Sunday School Board's church recreation department was presented, describing the personality of Moore and emphasizing his hobby as a sportsman and bird watcher. It was entitled, "A Million Moore in '54."

At the close of the banquet, the commission presented to Moore a complete outfit of clothing--suit, sport coat, all weather coat, hat, shoes, shirt and tie. To Mrs. Moore, the commission presented a silver pitcher.

"We love this man," said William Purdue, secretary of the commission and pastor of First Baptist Church, Kingsport, Tenn., who made the presentation. "There just isn't enough money in the world to buy you all the gifts we'd like," he told Moore.

Joe L. Ingram, chairman of the commission and executive secretary-elect of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, presided at the testimonial dinner, held at Immanuel Baptist Church where Moore was pastor before assuming SBC-wide stewardship responsibilities.

Previously, Moore had been pastor of Baptist churches in Newport, Tenn., Selma, Ala., New Salem, Ky., Albany, Ind., and Money, Miss. He has also been president of Tennessee College for Women, Murfreesboro, Tenn., and a field worker in the Sunday School department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

A native of Mississippi, he is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

His retirement is effective Jan. 31, at age 65. James V. Lackey, former senior staff assistant for the commission, assumes the position as executive director on Feb. 1.

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Chas. F. Leek, Retired
Baptist Minister, Dies

1/19/71

NASHVILLE (BP)--Chas. F. Leek, 78, retired Baptist minister and charter member of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, died here Jan. 17.

Leek had been pastor of First Baptist Church, Thomasville, N.C., and Highland Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala., before retirement.

He was a part-time member of the staff of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission here. His death came two days after the death of Davis C. Woolley, executive secretary of the commission.

He was the father-in-law of Howard B. Foshee, secretary of the church administration department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here. Funeral services were held at Crieveewood Baptist Church here.

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Thai Baptist Pastor Named
Bible Societies' Top Exec

1/19/71

BANGKOK (BP)--Pastor Boon Krong Pitakanon of Immanuel Baptist Church here has been elected the first Thai executive secretary of the United Bible Societies of Thailand and Laos. He succeeds Chan Y. Choi, missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Korea to Thailand.

The 45-year-old Boon Krong has been pastor of Thailand's largest Baptist church for the past four years.

Boon Krong said he hopes to emphasize Thai Baptists' responsibility for reaching their own countrymen through increased monetary support from local churches and individuals and increased participation by voluntary colporteurs from the churches in scripture distribution.

He has appealed to the leaders of Thai churches, many of whom he knows personally, for their cooperation. He said scripture distribution is an excellent way of expressing the revival spirit evident among many groups in Thailand. "God is working here as never before," he added.

Boon Krong is the author of 10 books and a professor in the Thailand Baptist Theological Seminary here. He has preached for radio programs and was featured in two films about Thailand produced in 1967 by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. He has preached in Vietnam, and he represented Thailand Baptists at the Baptist World Congress in Tokyo in July, 1970.

A native of Uttaradit, Thailand, he became a Christian while convalescing in a hospital. As a student in a Christian and Missionary Alliance Bible School, he spent vacations working with leprosy patients in Chonburi, where he came in contact with a Baptist church.

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He and his wife were baptized into the Chonburi church on the day it was organized in March 1959, and he became pastor there the next year, serving until he came to Immanuel Church in 1966.

The Thailand Bible House, the United Societies' outlet in Bangkok, celebrated its 80th year in 1970 by distributing over 2 million portions of the Bible, more than in all its previous history. First steps toward an autonomous Thailand Bible Society also were taken with the establishment of an advisory council.

Boon Krong's election is an unusual honor for work in Thailand related to Southern Baptists, said SBC Missionary Ronald C. Hill. Now in its 20th year, Southern Baptist work has only 13 churches and 15 chapels with a total membership 1,225, although it does project a program including a hospital, seminary, student center, publications department, book store, and mass communications office, Hill reported.

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Mary Hardin-Baylor President
Injured In Small Plane Crash

1/19/71

FORT HOOD, Tex. (BP)--William Tanner, president of Mary Hardin-Baylor College in Belton, Tex., was hospitalized at Darnell Army Hospital here with injuries received when a small commercial airliner groundlooped while landing at Killeen, Tex.

A hospital spokesman said Tanner, one of 13 passengers aboard the Rio Airlines plane, suffered compressed vertebrae in the lower back and would be hospitalized for about two weeks. He is expected to recover satisfactorily.

The pilot of the Beech 99A Turboprop apparently misjudged a landing in heavy fog at the small airport at Killeen. The plane bounced and groundlooped.

The passengers were hospitalized overnight for observation. The most serious injury besides Tanner's was a broken back suffered by the co-pilot. Most of the others aboard, who have been released, were military personnel.

A Mary Hardin-Baylor spokesman said Rio, owned and operated by Hood Airlines, is used frequently by personnel of the Baptist school and has "an outstanding safety record." Last summer the airlines provided free transportation to an embarkation point for a singing group from the college which participated in a tour of Japan during the Baptist World Alliance.

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SBC Stewardship Commission
Staff Assignments Revised

1/19/71

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission here approved of the appointment of four professional staff members for the commission to revised positions, and the addition of a new staff member.

Michael L. Speer, F. Paul Allison, Ben G. Gill and Paul M. Darden have each been given new or additional responsibilities on the commission's staff, and effective Jan. 1, Fred Chapman joined the commission staff.

Speer, former stewardship secretary for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has been named director of Cooperative Program Promotion for the commission, succeeding James V. Lackey who is the new executive director.

Allison, formerly of Missouri, has been named director of stewardship development, a position Speer had held for the past three years. Allison has been director of communication for the commission for the past two years.

Gill's appointment as director of endowment and capital giving service, and Chapman's election as consultant in the endowment and capital giving service had been announced in December by Lackey.

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Lackey said that as a part of the reorganization of staff assignments, Paul M. Darden, publishing supervisor for the commission, had been given additional responsibilities as liaison representative for the commission with the stewardship (marketing) services of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

In addition to the new staff assignments, the Stewardship Commission in annual session reorganized its committee structure to provide for three committees over each of the staff function areas--Cooperative Program promotion, stewardship development, and endowment and capital giving service.



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