



## **-- BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 11, 1981

81-41

West Named Liaison  
To Black Baptists

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--In a move toward encouraging more black Southern Baptists to consider missionary careers, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board named Elmer West as liaison to work with the Home Mission Board's Emmanuel McCall and the nation's black Baptists.

McCall, a black, directs the Home Mission Board's department of black church relationships, which works with white and black Southern Baptist congregations and with National Baptists.

West, who will continue to carry his primary duties as director of the foreign board's ministries and deputation department, has worked both as a pastor and a denominational worker to foster closer relationships between Southern Baptists and Christian blacks. In his new responsibility he will work with McCall to provide information and resources about foreign missions to the 600-plus black Southern Baptist churches.

The 90,000 black Southern Baptists represent only a small fraction of the 13.6 million-member denomination. But for years the Foreign Mission Board has been responsive to qualified black candidates seeking missionary appointment. Much of Southern Baptist work overseas is with black populations.

The board's current missionary force of 3,032 includes two blacks—one a career missionary and the other a missionary journeyman on two-year assignment. About six other blacks have served in recent years, and some 25 others have helped overseas as Baptist Student Union missions workers.

West's new assignment was announced after a meeting of the human resources committee during the board's March session. At the same meeting guidelines on church and national identity for missionary candidates were set forth.

The statement specifies missionary candidates should be citizens of the United States, but also indicated the board will consider naturalized citizens under certain conditions. Each such request, it noted, requires "careful study by members of the human resources, overseas and administrative staff and board members."

The board said it "welcomes the appointment of qualified persons from all ethnic, social and economic backgrounds who are active members of Baptist churches related to the (Southern Baptist) convention. But it has not attempted to send as missionaries persons who have no identification or only superficial identification with Southern Baptists."

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The guidelines regarding persons from other countries who want to be missionaries are:

1. Persons who have moved to the United States from countries where Southern Baptists do not have missionaries assigned, such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and have developed significant identification with Southern Baptist church life may be considered.

2. Persons who have moved with their families to the United States prior to completing secondary school and have grown up in Southern Baptist church life may be considered.

3. But persons coming to this country at college, seminary or other graduate levels will not be considered.

"The development of overseas indigenous churches with their own national leadership is a central purpose of the board," the statement said. "Any arrangement which would take potential indigenous leaders and make them instead missionaries of the Foreign Mission Board would undercut that purpose."

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L.O. Griffith, Retired  
Missions Leader, Dies

Baptist Press  
3/11/81

JONESBORO, Ga. (BP)--L.O. Griffith, 74, retired director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's communication division, died March 10.

Griffith began work with the Home Mission Board as director of promotion in 1951. He was named director of a newly-organized division of education and promotion in 1959. He retired Dec. 31, 1971.

After retirement, Griffith was instrumental in starting Faith Baptist Mission in Stockbridge, Ga., and was its pastor from 1972 until 1976. In 1979 when the mission was constituted as a church, the name was changed to Griffith Memorial Baptist Church in his honor.

A native of Kentucky, Griffith was pastor of numerous churches in the mountains of Kentucky before joining the staff of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky in 1945. He was assistant to the state executive secretary for Kentucky Baptists until 1951.

Funeral was in Jonesboro and burial was in Shelby, N.C.

His wife, Grace, requested contributions be made to the Griffith Memorial Baptist Church, Stockbridge, Ga.

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Valentine, Maddox Question  
Reagan Alcohol Abuse Cuts

Baptist Press  
3/11/81

WASHINGTON (BP)--A pair of prominent Southern Baptists criticized proposed cutbacks by President Reagan in federally funded programs to treat victims of alcohol abuse.

Foy Valentine, executive secretary of the SBC Christian Life Commission, and former Carter White House aide Bob Maddox questioned the proposed cutback of more than 75 percent of the budget of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Under the president's proposed 1982 budget, funds for the Rockville, Md.-based agency would be slashed from \$161 million to \$37.9 million.

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Under the proposed Reagan budget, the agency's authorization to spend \$123 million of its \$161 million current budget would be removed. Those funds would be consolidated with similar funds from some 40 health service programs and sent directly to the states to spend as they choose, following an across-the-board 25 percent cutback.

Governors would then be allowed to use their discretion in spending the so-called "block grant" so no state would be obligated to spend any portion of the funds for alcohol-related programs.

Valentine, who heads the ethical and moral concerns agency, said: "The continuing fight against alcohol and its pushers in business and advertising ought to be bipartisan."

Many alcoholics, he said, are among "the truly needy" Reagan has repeatedly vowed would be spared from budget cuts. "Particularly deserving of society's compassionate help are the families of these alcoholics," Valentine continued, "most often abused wives and neglected children."

Valentine said waste and corruption ought to be eliminated from all tax-funded programs, "whether military, business or social." But he added that "what America ought not to do now and what America is not going to do in the long run is to honor and reward the rich and powerful while turning away from the poor and needy, including the truly needy among the nation's addicted victims of alcohol."

Maddox, former President Carter's liaison with the religious community, said in Washington that while all Americans "want to check inflation," the nation "surely does not have to hazard human life in the process."

The former Georgia pastor, now assistant to the president of Pitt Community College in Greenville, N.C., said: "It does not make sense to pour money uncritically, for instance into El Salvador, while thoughtlessly obliterating the federal alcohol abuse program."

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Special Evangelism Work Funded;  
Some 17,000 Conversions Reported

By Bob Stanley

Baptist Press  
3/11/81

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Evangelistic crusades in the Philippines and Mexico have resulted in more than 17,000 professions of faith, directors of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board were told in their March meeting.

Incomplete reports from a 355-church simultaneous crusade in the Mindanao and Visayan areas of the Philippines list 14,200 persons who professed faith in Jesus Christ as savior, according to Bill Wakefield, area director for South and Southeast Asia.

Charles Bryan, vice president for overseas operations, told directors the recent Billy Graham crusade in Mexico City resulted in 95,500 total attendance and 3,522 decisions.

In addition to hearing the reports, directors also appropriated \$420,000 for special evangelistic projects, of which \$200,000 will be used to pay field-related expenses as the board moves ahead with plans to begin assuming responsibility for partnership evangelism projects.

The projects were planned in cooperation with the World Evangelism Foundation. The foundation, based in Dallas and headed by former missionary W.H. (Dub) Jackson, voted last fall to phase out its operation because the Foreign Mission Board is working in partnership evangelism areas.

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The projects, to involve volunteers from Southern Baptist churches working in coordination with missionaries and Baptist churches overseas, are planned this year in Korea, Indonesia, Singapore, England, Spain and Portugal.

Directors also were told the March 7 murder of Wycliffe Bible staff member Chester Bitterman in Colombia, apparently by M-19 guerrillas, "underscored the ever-present reality that missionaries serve in a disturbed world."

Bryan urged prayer support for Southern Baptists' 30 couples, three single missionaries and two missionary journeymen assigned to Colombia. In February the board put in official form its unwritten policy that it will not pay ransom money or yield to demands of anyone who would take one of its people hostage.

In other action, two new associates were named to assist the area director of east Asia, a more liberal policy toward overseas adoptions was approved, and cautious optimism was expressed about Lottie Moon Christmas Offering receipts.

The new associates for east Asia are Robert Hardy, missionary to Japan, who will be a liaison between the board and missionaries in Hong Kong-Macao and Taiwan; and Milton Womack, missionary to Hong Kong, who will be a liaison for missionaries in Japan and Korea.

Hardy, 51, will be stationed in Hong Kong, but current duties will prevent his accepting his new responsibilities until the beginning of 1982. He has been a hospital chaplain in Kobe since 1972 and earlier was assistant chaplain at the Japan Baptist Hospital in Kyoto and did evangelistic work in Niigata. He is a Kentucky native; his wife, the former Mavis Shiver, is from Alabama.

Womack, 41, will be stationed in Japan and expects to assume his new responsibilities in late summer. He has been assigned to Hong Kong Baptist College since 1976. Before going overseas he was a psychologist at University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas. He also worked in various counseling capacities in Texas and Tennessee. Both Womack and his wife, the former Mary Ann Clark, consider Texas their home state.

The board decided to extend the benefits it provides to missionaries' adopted children to include those adopted overseas, within certain limits. With fewer children available now for adoption in this country, the board voted to provide child benefits to childless couples or couples with only one child who adopt children overseas after consultation with their area director and the board's medical and family consultants.

A maximum of two such adoptions would be covered for a childless couple, or one in the case of a couple already having one child. The board said that should additional children be born to the couple, benefits to the adopted children would not be affected.

Treasurer Carl Johnson said receipts for the Lottie Moon offering through March 6 were \$33,513,078, up more than \$3.8 million over the same period last year. The total represents 74.5 percent of the \$45 million goal. At the same time last year 73.2 percent of a \$40.5 million goal had been received.

Cooperative Program receipts to the board were up \$1,024,959, or 15.58 percent, during the first two months of 1981.

President R. Keith Parks, in an overview statement, noted that financial pressures are building up in field and work budgets overseas. These pressures, plus the board's increased tempo in gearing up for volunteer programs, have caused him to put a freeze on new Richmond staff positions that had already been authorized by the board. He said priorities are being reviewed to be sure any new positions are absolutely essential.

The board's relief ministries reported \$269,486 distributed in hunger and general relief funds since the February board meeting. This figure brings the total distributed in 1981 to more than \$357,000, an increase of 31 percent over appropriations through the same time in 1980.

Don and Betty Fry Moore, of Texas and Oklahoma, respectively, were reemployed as missionary associates. They will live in the Philippines where he will be a refugee worker and she will do church and home work.

Robert and Eloise Garrett, from Oklahoma and New Mexico, were reappointed to Zimbabwe where he will be a physician and she will be in home and church work.

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(BP) photos of Womack and Hardy mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

Retired RE Director  
Named By Fellowship

Baptist Press  
3/11/81

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Henry E. Love, who retired a month ago as administrator of First Baptist Church of Memphis, has been named the first executive director of the Southern Baptist Medical-Dental Fellowship.

The five-year-old, 350-member spiritually oriented professional organization has headquarters at the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. Its purpose is to "provide Christian professional fellowship among the membership and to strengthen individually and collectively the relationship and commitment of the membership to Jesus Christ."

In recent years, members of the fellowship have supported missions by sharing their professional skills in Southern Baptist disaster relief operations and in short-term missions efforts in the United States and overseas.

The Brotherhood Commission has provided the fellowship with liaison staff services for the last two years and will continue to assist the physicians and dentists, said James H. Smith, executive director.

Love said he will concentrate on increasing the membership, developing the work of the fellowship, and on organizing state meetings.

Membership in the fellowship is open to any Southern Baptist physician, dentist, dental or medical student, Love added.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Memphis bureau of Baptist Press.

CORRECTION: In (BP) story "'Our Man' In Eastern Europe Aids Baptists in Eight Countries," mailed 3/9/81, please change quote in 15th paragraph to read: "Our policy is to respect the laws..." rather than "our problem ...."

Thanks,  
Baptist Press