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91-54

Zeb Moss named to fill  
Bill O'Brien's job at FMB

By Bob Stanley

N-FMB

BALTIMORE (BP)--Zeb Moss, 61, a missions veteran whose work has ranged from media consultation to mission administration, will succeed Bill O'Brien as executive director of public affairs at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

The appointment was announced by President R. Keith Parks April 10 during the board's trustee meeting in Baltimore. It will become effective July 1 or earlier if a replacement for Moss in his current assignment is named sooner.

O'Brien left the board March 1 to become director of a new global strategies center in the Beeson School of Divinity at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala.

As head of the public affairs office, Moss will administer liaison relationships with other Southern Baptist Convention entities and direct the the FMB's Global Desk. In the latter role he will monitor the status of global evangelization and work as liaison worldwide with other evangelical denominations that share the same goal.

He also will be special assistant to the president and a member of the board's Global Strategy Group, the top administrative team that develops strategic plans for the most effective use of personnel and resources.

Moss, a North Carolina native, brings 32 years of missions experience to his new role. Since August 1987 he has been the Richmond-based associate area director for eastern and southern Africa.

He and his wife, the former Evelyn Krause of Union Mills, N.C., were appointed Southern Baptist missionaries in 1959. After language study in Zambia, they worked in evangelism there from 1960-69. For the next four years, Moss directed the Baptist Communications Center in Lusaka, Zambia.

From 1974-87 he was stationed in Nairobi, Kenya, as media consultant for the board's Africa region. In this role he worked with the board's area directors, missionaries and African Baptists in the development, coordination and expansion of mass media evangelism in the region.

Moss's North Carolina roots run deep. He grew up in Hoke County but considers Aberdeen his hometown. He is a graduate of Gardner-Webb College, Boiling Springs; Wake Forest College (now Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem); and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, where he received the bachelor of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees.

He also received a certificate from the School of Pastoral Care, North Carolina Baptist Hospital, Winston-Salem, and did a year of graduate study in the school of communications at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Before missionary appointment Moss was pastor of Caroleen, Baptist Church, N.C. for three years. Previously he was pastor of Hoffman Baptist Church, N.C. and assistant pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.

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He is the author of "Missions Alive" and has produced numerous films, radio and TV productions in Africa.

The Mosses have two daughters, Lynn Moss, associate dean for counseling at Wingate Baptist College, N.C. and Suzanne Moss Mullen, a free-lance journalist in Dallas and former news co-anchor of KDFW-TV in Dallas and WTVR-TV in Richmond.

In Richmond the Mosses helped start Innsbrook Baptist Church, under the sponsorship of Ridge Baptist Church.

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(BP) photo sent to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Postal rates dramatically affect  
state Baptist newspapers

By Maria Sykes

F-CO

Baptist Press  
4/10/91

NASHVILLE (BP)--The most recent second-class postal rate increase has seriously affected non-profit publications, including state Baptist newspapers.

The U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors approved the rate increase effective Feb. 3, 1991. The increase is about 22 to 25 percent, said Al Ogelton of U.S. Postal Services in Nashville.

While the cost of printing and other factors have increased with the cost of living, "... Postage has grossly increased and surpassed as the highest percentage expense of production," said Theo Sommerkamp, editor of the Ohio Baptist Messenger, newsjournal of the Ohio Baptist Convention, who struggles to produce 24 issues yearly.

"We are watching it closely. We do not know if we will have to take remedial action this year or not," continued Sommerkamp whose publication postage cost was increased by 25 percent, from \$2,800 to \$3,500 per week.

R.G. Puckett, editor of the Biblical Recorder, newsjournal of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina said, "This is grossly unfair. The postage increases (over the past few years) have been inconsistent in what has happened in the economy," explained Puckett. "The (postal) increases prove to be more than 1000 percent compared to the economy."

The Biblical Recorder, with a postage increase of \$1000 per week, raised subscription rates \$1 and skipped the first issue of April to help recover from the budget crunch. The North Carolina paper is also receiving more state Cooperative Program assistance.

"Postal services could eventually price non-profit organizations out of business," said Presnall Wood, editor of the Baptist Standard, newsjournal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the largest circulation Southern Baptist newspaper publication. "I'm not sure they (postal services) understand our constituency," Wood continued. He recalled a 50-year period for the Baptist Standard without one increase in subscription prices.

"It's a different philosophy now," he explained. The publication has had to resort to an increase in subscription rates. The postal rate increase has elevated postage for the Texas paper 23 percent, which translates to a weekly average of \$25,000. About \$1 million will be paid for postal services this year by the Baptist Standard.

Jack Brymer, editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, newsjournal of the Florida Baptist Convention, said the rate change will increase his publication's mailing costs by 22 percent. "We anticipated the increase, but not the size of it," said Brymer.

While the postage increase has significantly affected most state Baptist newspapers, the effect may be a bit more dramatic for the Witness. In addition to raising subscription rates, Brymer may propose cutting two staff positions, due to increasing postage and declining circulation.

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When asked how this action might affect quality of the newsjournal and how it would relate to its readers, Brymer said, "It will hurt. Ultimately, with 20 percent less staff it will affect quality and quick response and coverage. Sure it will hurt."

For Marv Knox, editor of the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist Convention's newsjournal, the increase was not quite as devastating.

"Because we anticipated the increase and shared that increase with our readers in subscription costs last February (1990), we were able to build up for this," Knox continued, "We have about broke even. We weren't as badly hit as others."

To help recover the postage increase, the majority of state Baptist newspaper editors are increasing their subscription rates. However, Jim Watters, editor of the Northwest Baptist Witness, newsjournal of the Northwest Baptist Convention, which includes Washington and Oregon, utilizes a unique plan.

The Northwest Cooperative Program funds the production cost of the Witness. There are no subscription costs. The Northwest paper is mailed to every family in every church. However, churches are billed to cover the postage cost for their members.

"There are no penalties for churches or members receiving the paper if churches choose not to respond to the statement," said Watters. "This is completely voluntary."

The postage increase has boosted Northwest Baptist Witness costs 25 percent. "This plan has cushioned us from immediate shock," said Watters who reports close to 100 percent involvement from churches in reimbursement of postage.

The rate hike increased postage costs for the Baptist and Reflector, newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, 29 percent. "I don't want to cut issues or lose readers. People need this information. We can't afford to cut," explained Fletcher Allen, editor.

"The feeling from the state editors is mixed. Most think we should pay our fair share if we in turn receive service due," said Allen, who is also president of the Southern Baptist Press Association, organization of state Baptist newspaper editors.

"Some editors may choose to ask for more state Cooperative Program money or more support from their state conventions," explained Allen. "Others may choose to cut down on issues or pages, while most will raise subscription rates, which will run a high risk of losing subscriptions."

Asked by Baptist Press why such a large increase in second class postage rates was needed, Leslie Clark, attorney for the U.S. Postal Service in Washington, who handled the second-class rate design, said, "There were no specific reasons stated, though there is lots of speculation. ... Legally, rate increases can be proposed only when there is an increase in cost."

U.S. Postal officials contacted by Baptist Press were not able to indicate if state Baptist editors can expect more efficient service in paying higher rates.

"Second class non-profit mailers have been dealt with unfairly," said Sommerkamp. "It is unjust to raise us 20-25 percent. There is a bias and a don't care attitude (from the postal service)."

Presnall Wood seemed to sum up the overall feelings of state Baptist editors: "This is not good. It hurts. It hurts because it means fewer people will receive Baptist news. It's a serious thing."

Land decries Supreme Court's  
decision on pregnant employees

By Tom Strode

N-10  
c/c

WASHINGTON (BP)--Richard D. Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, has described as "reprehensible" a recent Supreme Court decision invalidating "fetal-protection" policies of corporations.

In a unanimous decision, the Court ruled that a policy barring women who are able to bear children from jobs that entail danger to unconceived offspring amounts to sexual discrimination. The ruling was hailed by civil liberties and women's rights groups.

"I am appalled at the barbaric, pagan and callous disregard for unborn life revealed in this decision," Land said. "To give more weight to a mother's employment opportunities than to the potential for fatal or permanently disfiguring injuries to her unborn child is reprehensible.

"Sexual discrimination is bad. Fetal discrimination is even worse when it leads to severe and often lethal deformities. This is a sad day for unborn children and for the nation."

The case, Auto Workers v. Johnson Controls, Inc., resulted after the company, which manufactures batteries, announced in 1982 that "women who are pregnant or who are capable of bearing children" would be barred from jobs that expose them to lead, according to the opinion written by Justice Harry Blackmun.

Lead is an ingredient in batteries that can be harmful to future children of women exposed to it. Johnson Controls' policy prohibiting women from certain jobs was initiated after eight of its employees became pregnant while registering blood lead levels of more than 30 micrograms per deciliter, which is the crisis level, according to the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

The Court said the policy violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it did not "apply to the reproductive capacity of the company's male employees in the same way as it applies to that of the females."

Blackmun's opinion said Johnson Controls' "fetal-protection" policy did not qualify as a safety exception because the sex or pregnancy of an employee did not interfere "with [her] ability to perform the job." Unconceived offspring of female workers are "neither customers nor third parties whose safety is essential to the business of battery manufacturing," Blackmun added.

"Decisions about the welfare of future children must be left to the parents who conceive, bear, support and raise them rather than to the employers who hire those parents," the opinion said.

Land said, "We believe that sexual discrimination is an important issue. The points made by the Supreme Court concerning the potential genetic damage of fathers in such industrial situations are well taken. The remedy should have been to insist on the same protections and restrictions for the potential fathers as were in place for the potential mothers, not to put the babies at risk."

Four justices agreed with the decision announced on March 20 but disagreed with some of the findings of the majority.

Justice Byron White, joined by Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Anthony Kennedy, wrote in a concurring opinion that a "sex-specific fetal protection policy" could be legal in certain cases. Justice Antonin Scalia wrote a separate concurring opinion, which included the suggestion that "cost-based" exceptions could be justified.

Hobbs helps laymen get  
acquainted with the Bible

By Ginny Whitehouse

F-SSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--The modes of transportation and the ways people live may have changed since the days when Christ walked on earth, but "the needs of man have not," according to Herschel Hobbs, author of soon-to-be released "Getting Acquainted with the Bible."

A former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City, Hobbs has written 167 books and even at age 83 he continues preaching and lecture tours across the nation.

His introduction to the Bible offers "a bird's eye view" of each Old and New Testament book plus historical background and modern day application, said Art Burcham, manager of the general officers program section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"The Bible was written out in the arena of history of people dealing with their problems," explained Hobbs, who has written the quarterly "Studying Adult Life and Work Lessons" since its inception in 1968.

The average Christian studying God's word wants biblical commentary but needs simpler language than most commentaries provide, Hobbs said. "Getting Acquainted with the Bible" is targeted for Sunday school teachers, lay leaders, church members and even seminary-trained pastors who "want a refresher course."

"It's like sending a million volts of electricity into a city. If it all goes to one house, the house explodes. But the electricity goes through a transformer so it can serve a 60-watt bulb," said Hobbs. "The goal is to try to take high scholarship and transform it for the minds of the people."

Hobbs examines the record of God's revelation to humanity written by authors inspired by the Holy Spirit, who illuminates the Bible's message to readers today.

"Archaeologists have unearthed sites where the Bible's events took place. Wherever there has been a historical controversy archaeology supports the Bible," Hobbs said.

Hobbs' book replaces a previous Bible background book -- L.D. Johnson's "Introduction to the Bible" first published in 1969 -- for the Sunday School Leadership Diploma in the Church Study Course.

Published by Convention Press, "Getting Acquainted with the Bible" will be available in May, along with a companion research kit written by C. Ferris Jordan, chairman of the division of religious education ministries at New Orleans Theological Seminary.

Hobbs will be available to autograph "Getting Acquainted with the Bible" on Wednesday, June 5, at the Southern Baptist Convention Baptist Book Store. He will also be signing new releases "My Favorite Illustrations" published by Broadman Press and "You are Chosen: The Priesthood of All Believers" published by Harper and Row.

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New churches more efficient  
in evangelism, study shows

By Mark Wingfield

N-HMB

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ATLANTA (BP)--New Southern Baptist churches are more efficient than older churches in evangelism and per capita giving, but older churches provide more of the denomination's financial base, a Home Mission Board study reveals.

Additionally, the 1980s could be the second-greatest decade of church starting in the Southern Baptist Convention's history, the study says.

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The study on the contribution of new churches to the SBC was compiled by Clay Price of the HMB's program research department. Price analyzed data from 1989 Uniform Church Letters to compare the influence of churches constituted in the 1980s with that of churches started in other decades.

Southern Baptists added an estimated 3,300 new churches during the 1980s, Price says. That number is second only to the 1950s, when more than 4,800 churches were added.

Statistics for the 1980s still include some projections because there is often a lag between the time a church constitutes and begins reporting on the Uniform Church Letter.

For the purpose of this study, new churches are defined as those started in the 1980s.

New churches are more efficient than older churches in reaching people through baptisms, the study says. New churches baptize 7.5 people for every 100 people enrolled in Sunday school. The national SBC average is 4.5 baptisms per 100 enrolled in Sunday school.

The ratio of baptisms to Sunday school enrollment declines as churches grow older. The convention's oldest churches, those organized before 1940, average 3.8 baptisms per 100 enrolled in Sunday school.

New churches are also more efficient in adding members by letter, the study reveals. The SBC average is 6.2 additions per 100 Sunday school members, but new churches average 13 additions per 100 Sunday school members.

New churches report the highest per capita giving, but older churches pass more of their money on to associational, state and national causes, the study shows.

In 1989, new churches reported receipts of \$510 per person. The SBC average was \$310 per person.

However, new churches require more money for local expenses than older churches.

The study found new churches giving an average of 5.1 percent of total receipts to the SBC Cooperative Program, 11.7 percent to mission expenditures, 1.7 percent to associational missions and 0.4 percent to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

In comparison, the national SBC average was 7.6 percent to the Cooperative Program, 15.6 percent to mission expenditures, 1.7 percent to associational missions and 0.7 percent to Annie Armstrong.

Price concludes the overall contribution of these new churches to the SBC will increase as they age. "If churches started in the 1980s follow the growth trends of their older sister churches, they will add another 100 members during their second decade," he says. "In 40 years, much of the strength of Southern Baptists will come from the churches started in the 1980s."