

Mark Jobe to become president of Moody Bible Institute

Jobe comes to the school a year after all three top leaders resigned amid tensions around the school's theological standards, finances, and treatment of students of color.

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Mark Jobe. Photo courtesy of New Life Community Church.

A year after the three top leaders of Moody Bible Institute all stepped down on the same day, the school has a new president, Mark Jobe, 54, who will begin in January.

A graduate of Moody Bible Institute and Moody Theological Seminary, Jobe recalled being overwhelmed when he arrived in Chicago at age 17 from a small town in Spain where his parents were missionaries. He recalled advice he heard: “The nations have come to the cities. You reach the cities, you reach the nations.”

Jobe has been pastor of the New Life Community Church, which has 27 locations in Chicago and suburbs.

“We feel like we’re creating life-giving communities of faith that reflect the context and the culture of that neighborhood, the sounds and the music of that neighborhood,” he said. “The message is the same, but the context is different.”

Last January at Moody, tensions between faculty and staff rose around the school's theological standards, finances, and treatment of students of color. In announcing the resignation of the president and chief operating officer and the retirement of the provost, Moody's board of directors said there was no wrongdoing, but it cited "widespread concerns over the direction" of the school.

It was "time for a new season of leadership," said Randy Fairfax, chair of Moody's board of trustees, in a statement. Jobe's "clarity of vision, humble nature, passion, and strong track record of ministry growth will bring a palpable energy to the Moody family."

Embracing cultural diversity and richness is essential, Jobe said, and it's not a new challenge.

"The early church struggled with multi-ethnicity from the beginning," he said.

Jobe has helped restart historic congregations from several denominations. Part of that work was honoring the "older saints" in a congregation and expressing gratitude for its history, while also bringing in new leadership—an approach he carries to Moody.

"God has been at work at the Moody Bible Institute for 133 years," Jobe said. "But the way we reach this next generation will look different than it did 100 years ago. So we need to equip and empower students to be able to reach this next generation." —Religion News Service