

THE BAPTIST EDUCATOR



News Journal of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities

Volume LXXXII, No. 3 • 3rd Trimester 2018



Contents

- 2 Educational Funds
- 3 Better Together
- 4 New Opportunity School for Women
- 6 Pharmacy Building
- 7 Hester Lecture
- 14 Five Presidents Five Questions
- 19 BISR
- 20 Annual Meeting Schedule
- 21 Keith Ross
- 22 Eric Turner
- 23 Legal Notes
- 33 Charleston Southern University

Vol. LXXXII, No. 3

3rd Trimester 2018

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The Baptist Educator (ISSN 0038-3848) is a news magazine published three times a year for administrators, faculty, staff, trustees and friends of member schools by the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

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An annual subscription to *The Baptist Educator* is \$10.00 for one printed and two digital issues.

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Robertson/Farmer/Hester EDUCATIONAL FUNDS

Available to
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Robertson/Farmer/Hester Educational Loan funds designed to assist full-time faculty or administrators at qualifying Southern Baptist-related educational institutions to obtain their doctoral degrees and postdoctoral study/research are available from the Southern Baptist Foundation.

Applicants are required to be active members of a local Southern Baptist church and they must have been accepted in a program of doctoral or postdoctoral study. Professors and administrators can be awarded up to a maximum of \$10,000 over a five-year period with a maximum of \$2,000 per semester and \$1,500 per sum-

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The loans are to be paid back in service at a qualifying Southern Baptist school at the rate of \$2,000 per academic year. If a loan recipient ceases to be employed by a qualifying Southern Baptist educational institution for any reason or fails to complete the degree in five years the loan must be paid back in cash plus interest.

Applications and policies can be requested by calling Margaret Cammuse at the Southern Baptist Foundation, 615-254-8823 or 800-245-8183.

Deadline for applications is April 15 for consideration for the next academic year.

Comment From The President: BETTER TOGETHER

Dr. Barbara McMillin IABCU President and Board Chair and President, Blue Mountain College

One of the highlights of my fall was the opportunity to represent the IABCU and Blue Mountain College at the inauguration of Stan Norman as President of Williams Baptist University. The launch of a new presidency is a joyous and exciting time in the life of an institution—and WBU’s celebration was no exception. The charge to Dr. Norman was delivered by David S. Dockery, current president of Trinity International University and past president of Union University. Dr. Dockery’s charge included an admonition for each of us to be agents of encouragement. Though directed on this occasion to WBU faculty, staff, trustees, and students, this admonition challenged me to consider how I can be an agent of encouragement to my colleagues in Christian higher education and specifically to my colleagues who are leaders of Baptist institutions.

Certainly one of the best ways in which we can encourage one another is through prayer. With the goal of being an agent of encouragement in mind, I asked several of our newest presidents of IABCU colleges to share with me how we can pray for them as they launch their tenure at their respective institutions. Their responses range from requests that impact the lives of all of our leaders to petitions for very specific needs. I will share some of their responses with you.

Keith Ross of Missouri Baptist University expresses this need: “With the continued political polarization of our society, my prayer is that presidents of Christian colleges and universities would lead their institutions to be models for civility and winsome conversation.”

Tim Smith of the University of Mobile asks that we pray for the ability to clearly articulate a biblical worldview as the foundation for the University and as guidance for our students. He asks that we pray for faculty and staff to become stronger in the faith and the ability to articulate a biblical worldview as it relates to their discipline.

Eric Turner of Southwest Baptist, Dondi Costin of Charleston Southern, and Blake Thompson of Mississippi College all spoke of the need to pray for smooth transitions for “first families” as spouses and children adjust to new roles in new places.

Dr. Costin, a marathon runner himself, reminds us to pray for all new presidents to realize that they are indeed in a marathon not a sprint; that life in the goldfish bowl would not deter them from serving others but would instead motivate them to inspire others by godly living; and that God would give them His eyes and ears and heart for people so that His plans would become their plans for leading the university.

Scott Bullard, interim president at Judson, requests prayer for Judson’s presidential search committee, for the fourteen-year-old sister of a Judson student who is battling cancer, and for the salvation of a skeptical international student who is now pondering conversion to Christianity.

Stan Norman requests our prayers for wisdom to know how to cast winsome visions, for insight and discernment to learn the stories and institutional cultures of each of our institutions; for the capacity to nurture and enhance relationships with invested constituencies, especially the Baptist churches that support and pray for us, and for an unwavering commitment to keep Christ the center of all that we do as we seek to prepare graduates to impact our world in their respective fields of study.

Please join me in pledging to be an agent of encouragement by praying as requested for each of these new leaders and for all who serve in positions of leadership at our IABCU schools.



Bluefield College's New Opportunity School for Women: *Bringing Hope and Healing to Appalachian Women*

One day in 1987 Jane Stephenson received a phone call from a friend on behalf of an Appalachian woman in great need—an Appalachian woman with no employment experience and little knowledge of the world beyond her family. Jane's friend asked if she knew of a program that could help this woman learn to cope with her situation? While Jane knew of no existing program, she was struck by the need she knew was prevalent in her area of the country. Then a coincidence that seemed provi-



Jane Stephenson, founder of New Opportunity School for Women

dential occurred...

A foundation executive looking for innovative ideas called Jane's late husband, John Stephenson—president of Berea College at that time. The executive sought out new programs that met the needs of people within the scope of his foundation. When Jane found out about the call, the seed for the New Opportunity School for Women (NOSW) was planted.

Jane responded with a grant proposal that won startup funding for NOSW and made possible the implementation of her vision to improve the lives of Appalachian women in need. The first New Opportunity School for Women was established in Berea, with a second site to follow at Lees-McCrae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina in 2005. In 2013 NOSW expanded to Bluefield College, where it has become part of the fabric of the college.

David Olive, president of Bluefield College, says, "We had a lady from Bluefield that found herself in a hard time with drug addiction. She found out about NOSW and entered the program

at Lees-McCrae. When she graduated, her father came to me to tell me what a miraculous change he had seen in his daughter's life. He'd spoken to Jane Stephenson about the need for a program like this in our part of the state. After a time of prayer and discernment, it appeared that the program was well within our mission."

The New Opportunity School for Women is designed to improve the educational, financial, and personal circumstances of low-income, under-educated, middle-aged women in the Appalachian region. The program provides development opportunities for women in the areas of career, education, and personal and cultural growth. NOSW helps participants with areas like resume writing, interview skills, computer basics, self-defense, theater and arts activities, money-management skills, maintaining good health, and parenting skills. Dr. Olive says, "One of the major components of the program is having the participants read literature written by Appalachian women, because they identify so much with some of the hardships. There are self-esteem

courses. They bring in a counselor to help unpack some of the really heavy things women have been through. We help them with health needs, including medical services, eye exams and dentistry. We provide glasses or dentures if needed. We bring in local service providers who do this free of charge, so it is a wonderful ways for many members of our community to be involved.”

There is no cost for attending the New Opportunity School for Women. Rooms and meals are provided by the college at no cost to the participants. Grants for travel and childcare are available.

Bluefield College has now graduated its sixth class of 8-10 women. There are close to 1000 graduates among the locations at Bluefield, Berea, and Lees-McCrae. The cohort model allows graduates to have a network of women who remain in touch, supporting each other long after the three week program ends. This network is a vital part of the women’s successful life changes. Reports Olive, “I was a little skeptical at first that three weeks was enough time to make some of the life changes these women needed to make. But once I heard the powerful stories of the ladies who have graduated from the program I was sold. I’m a believer!”

For more information on the New Opportunity School for Women, please see their website at www.NOSW.org.



NOSW Facts at a Glance

Approximately 80% of participants have family incomes of less than \$10,000 per year and many have far less than that.

More than 15 million Americans, most of whom live in rural areas, lack broadband internet service and the access it provides to jobs, education, and opportunities.

49% of respondents are employed full-time, while 18% are employed part-time. 50% of these women are in benefited positions.

47% are enrolled in degree-seeking educational programs or non-degree vocational training programs, and sometimes they are doing both simultaneously. 23% have retired from productive careers at this point.

33% of our graduates now have Master’s, Bachelor’s, or Associate’s Degrees or have completed certificate programs.

More than 50% of respondents’ children have attended college or technical school and 25 % have attended graduate school.

William Carey University Dedicates New Pharmacy Building



On Oct. 19 William Carey University dedicated Sanderson Hall, the home of its new Doctor of Pharmacy degree. The program began in July at the school's Tradition campus with 58 students in its inaugural class and met in temporary facilities while the new pharmacy building was being completed. The WCU Pharm D. program is one of eleven accelerated programs in the country that allows students to graduate in three years. Dr. Tommy King, Carey President, commented, "This is another step in Carey's commitment to meet the health care needs of underserved areas in Mississippi and the Gulf South."

Provost Scott Hummel said the School of Pharmacy will not only help reduce the pharmacist shortage in Mississippi, but add to Carey's medical portfolio, which includes medical, nursing and physical therapy programs in Hattiesburg. The combination of these programs will be a benefit, he said, in a state like Mississippi, which is largely rural and has many low income areas.

"This certainly will be a huge factor in being able to address the shortage of pharmacists, but it is also about the overall role of pharmacy with medical, nursing and physical therapy that together will increase access to health care and the quality of health care in Mississippi," Hummel said.

King agreed, "Through the years, William Carey University has sought to identify needs of Mississippians and to meet those needs. We've had a school of nursing for decades. With the addition of a medical school, a physical therapy school and a health information management program at our Hattiesburg campus, we increasingly saw the need to help increase access to health care."

The dedication ceremony also honored Joe Frank Sanderson Jr. and his wife Kathy Sanderson, for whom the building is named. Mr. Sanderson is CEO and chairman of the board at Sanderson Farms in Laurel, Mississippi, the third-largest poultry producer in the United States. The Sandersons made a generous gift to William Carey University to support construction of the pharmacy school.

"We had no idea that this was going to happen. We made our gift and there was never any naming mentioned when we talked with Dr. King. But it's important to share, to give back, particularly to an institution that is a good steward and uses it well," Sanderson said.

"This is a beautiful building and I know the students who go to this school will serve this state very well."



WILLIAM
CAREY
UNIVERSITY



Preparing the Next Generation for Distinctive Christian Higher Education

The following is the transcript of the first Hester lecture of the 2018 IABCU Annual Meeting at Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Dabid Dockery, president of Trinity International University and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, served as the Hester lecturer.

A vision for preparing a new generation of educational leaders will require well-prepared and gifted men and women who will be ready to understand, guide, and implement

the distinctive work of Christian higher education. The modest proposal related to our calling to prepare the next generation forms the central theme for this year's Hester Lectures, which is informed by themes found in Psalm 78. We have the privilege to step into this biblical pattern and tell the next generation

the wonders and works of the Lord. Our three presentations will be informed by the deep realities of the Great Commandment (Matthew 22: 37-39) and grounded in the commission of the resurrected Christ, who calls us to disciple the nations by teaching them all that the Lord has commanded (Matthew 28:18-20). In Ephesians 4:11-16, the apostle Paul identifies the goals for this effort, which will involve building up these men and women, guiding them to

maturity in faith, and leading them to Christian unity. Following Paul's pattern with Timothy, Titus, and others, we are called to pass along what we have learned to faithful leaders who will be able to teach and lead others (2 Timothy 2:2).

Baptist educational leaders have been entrusted with the Christian faith, the body of truth once for all delivered to the saints (Titus 1:9, Jude 3). We recognize that the Christian faith is not

The vision for preparing these leaders must be holistic, preparing head, heart, and hands. What will be needed are educators who are Christianly formed and prepared for the incredible challenges currently facing Christian higher education. As we will try to note along the way, they, like we ourselves, will need partners in this work. Such an approach recognizes that Baptist higher education in particular is best done in, with, and for the church. With that brief introduction, let's explore together what is

involved in the work of distinctive Christian higher education.

In 1996, William Hull, who at that time served as provost at Samford University, noted in his Hester Lecture that, clearly this is a critical time to redefine the meaning and mission of Christian higher education, and to understand the distinctive

reason for our existence. What role does learning play in the Christian life? How does faith in God enhance an unfettered quest for truth? Our need now is not for a general philosophy of education, but for an explicit theology of education rooted in the imperatives of the Christian gospel. In a time of spiritual confusion and moral anarchy, Baptists have been driven back to the Bible and to their core confessions of faith, which is where the church always goes when



merely some personal, subjective, amorphous feeling, but is what H.E.W. Turner called "the pattern of Christian truth." One of the first responsibilities in the development of these future educational leaders will include instruction regarding the Trinitarian God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), Scripture, humanity, sin, salvation, the Christian life, the church, the Kingdom of God, eternal life, as well as Christian ethics.

under furious attack.

Today, I wish to extend my engagement with and response to Dr. Hull, who passed away in 2013. The challenges faced by Baptist higher education in 1996, when these words were spoken, have only multiplied. Still, Hull's words seem ever so timely for us today.

The former Samford provost went on to say in his 1996 Hester Lecture that the best time to advance is when our backs are against the wall. These commitments Hull claimed are based on the intuition that our cultural exhaustion may signal the beginning of a new humility, that our moral frustration may be the harbinger of a new seriousness – in other words that our desperate alienation from the roots of our humanity may itself provoke the advent of a new Kairos, that this explosive yet empty age may indeed become the incubator of a new era when the search for wholeness can begin again. (William Hull, "Southern Baptist Higher Education: Retrospect and Prospect," Hester Lectures, 1996). In the midst of this secular and empty age I want to attempt to offer a proposal that describes the heart of distinctive Christian higher education.

Challenges and Trends

Challenge and change characterize the world of Christian higher education in the early decades of the twenty-first century. Faculty and staff live with a new global awareness; students have never known a world without advancing technology, terrorism, and intercultural awareness. A look around the globe points to a shift among the nations that will influence the world for decades to come. Anyone interested in the future of Christian higher education will want to keep an eye on cultural and global trends, for our work never takes place in a vacuum, and this observation does not begin to address the changes in higher education itself in terms of focus, funding, philosophy, methodology, and delivery systems.

Christian higher education involves a distinctive way of thinking about teaching, learning, scholarship, subject matter, student life, administration, and governance that is grounded in the orthodox Christian faith. Our vision for Christian higher education is not just about an inward, subjective, and pious Christianity, as important as that is. Christian educators recognize that the Christian faith is more than a framework of warmhearted devotional practices, for the Christian faith influences not only how we act but also what we believe, how we think, how we teach, how we learn, how we write, how we lead, how we govern, and how we treat one another.

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It is our hope that a more full-orbed understanding of a theologically shaped vision for Christian higher education like the one called for by Bill Hull will help us to engage the culture and to prepare a generation of leaders who can effectively serve both church and society. Our approach begins with an understanding of the self-revealing God who has created humans in his image. We believe that students created in the image of God are designed to discover truth and that the exploration of truth is possible because the universe, as created by the Trinitarian God, is intelligible.

These beliefs are held together by our understanding that the unity of knowledge is grounded in Jesus Christ, in whom all things hold together (Col. 1:17). The Christian faith then provides the lens to see the world, recognizing that faith seeks to understand every dimension of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ. In doing so, we are building on those who have gone before us, those who have shaped the Christian intellectual tradition.

Christian Education through the Years

Beginning in the second century, important learning centers arose in Alexandria and Antioch as well as in Constantinople. These centers focused on catechetical and apologetic instruction for Christian converts. Alexandria's approach helps us to understand the shape of education in the early church as exemplified in one of the first great Christian scholars, Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–ca. 215).

Clement of Alexandria

Clement serves as an instructive guide for us in our context because of his wide range of learning, his love for philosophy and literature, his cultivation of an intellectually serious Christian faith, and his engagement and interaction with trends and issues of his day. Clement's overarching concern was to develop a view of the world and of life from the vantage point of wisdom in which he understood and interacted with the various strands of contemporary thought and culture.

Clement's impact, as a pioneer of serious Christian thinking, cannot be underestimated. Even though his writing was at times unsystematic, he nevertheless presented a coherent and consistent explication of the importance of Christian thinking and ethics for the challenges of his day.

Augustine and Aquinas

Augustine, the father of the Christian intellectual tradition, located the source of knowledge within the person, based on his understanding that truth was a gift of God's grace granted through faith. This knowledge, or potential knowledge, is developed by education that actively works in and through reason, memory, and will. Education takes place by engaging the Christian tradition, the wisdom of the ages that enabled the development of the liberal arts tradition. Augustine in the 4th and 5th centuries, encouraged personal discovery and active engagement of students in the disciplines of study. For Augustine, the love of learning reflects our desire for God, and the love of wisdom exemplifies loving God with our minds in fulfillment of the

Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37–39). Eight centuries later, Thomas Aquinas emphasized sense experience as the primary source of knowledge. While Augustine’s approach to education was influenced by Plato, Aquinas was partial to Aristotle. For Aquinas, reason reflects on the data of the senses, for nothing is ever in the mind that is not first in the senses. Reason enables understanding and discernment, informing the will and giving guidance for life. Aquinas favored a teacher-centered, didactic approach to education.

During the medieval period, Christian education flourished in the monastery. The monastic educational model emphasized a life of study, prayer, meditation, and work. The curriculum was largely built around the study of Holy Scripture, particularly the Psalms, and the rule of faith as articulated in the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed. Reading, writing, grammar, and music were also included, forming the trajectory for the trivium (grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy). The trivium and quadrivium, the core of the liberal arts curriculum, were significant for shaping the cathedral school and the medieval university. Philosophy, physics, ethics, and ultimately theology, the queen of the sciences, completed the expectations for students in the medieval universities.

From Pre-Reformation to Post-Reformation

The contribution of Desiderius Erasmus to education can be characterized as the work of an innovative pioneer moving beyond tradition and supplying impetus for Reformation and post-Reformation studies. His brilliance paved the way for the direction of Christian education for the decades that followed. A prince among the Renaissance humanists, Erasmus was at the same time a conceptual and reforming theologian. A scholarly biblical critic and pious moralist, Erasmus offered multiple contributions to education worthy of appreciation. He was the premier Renaissance scholar of his day with

an emphasis on the original sources and the study of ancient texts.

Erasmus made an important break with the medieval scholastic approach to theology and the study of Scripture but not in a reactionary manner. The break came about through a combination of Christian commitment, Renaissance scholarship, and the implementation of John Colet’s educational model. The genius and ability of Erasmus as biblical scholar and moral theologian served as a model for Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon, John Calvin, and other Reformers.

Luther and Melancthon shaped education in Germany in the sixteenth century with their emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, which not only encouraged Bible reading for all but also stressed literacy and education for all. Melancthon, more than Luther, shaped educational theory as a leader at Wittenberg University. As the curriculum organizer and systematizer of theology, Melancthon was known as the praceptor Germaniae (“teacher of Germany”). His work brought about significant changes in the German educational system.

Post-Reformation educational models led to the rise of the modern university at the University of Halle (1694). Halle

reasons, among others, Christian higher education needs to reclaim and advance the Christian intellectual tradition. The University of Halle provided the first example, of many that followed, where piety alone was unable in and of itself to sustain the essence of Christian higher education and the great tradition of Christian thinking.

Building on the Best of the Christian Tradition

As we have seen from our brief survey, our efforts to advance authentic Christian higher education are greatly shaped by those who have gone before us. These influences and influencers have not only shaped us but also reflect who we are. We recognize significant variety in our heritage, but we must not think that there is unlimited variety without boundaries or without a core.

The richness of the Christian tradition can provide guidance for the complex challenges facing Christian higher education at this time. We believe not only that an appeal to tradition is timely but also that it meets an important need because the secular culture in which we find ourselves is at best indifferent to the Christian faith and because the Christian world—at least in its more popular forms—tends to be confused about beliefs, heritage, and the tradition associated with the Christian faith.

At the heart of this calling is the need to prepare a generation of Christians to think Christianly, to engage the academy and the culture, to serve society, and to renew the connection with the church and its mission. To do so, the breadth and

the depth of the Christian tradition will need to be reclaimed, renewed, revitalized, and revived for the good of Christian higher education.

Confessional Foundations

Reconnecting with the great confessional tradition of the church will help us to avoid fundamentalist reductionism on the one hand and liberal revisionism on the other. Fundamentalist reductionism fails to understand that there are priorities or differences in the Christian faith.

Reconnecting with the great confessional tradition of the church will help us to avoid fundamentalist reductionism on the one hand and liberal revisionism on the other.

began as an educational center focused on serious study coupled with warm-hearted piety, in reaction to the rationalistic scholasticism that characterized some aspects of the post-Reformation period. Soon, however, the educational agenda was dominated by Enlightenment priorities. Higher education for the past three hundred years has lived with the tensions of post-Enlightenment philosophies such as rationalism, empiricism, existentialism, phenomenology, Marxism, and more recent radical epistemologies. For these

Fundamentalism often fails to distinguish between saying no to an inadequate confession of the deity of Christ and saying no to the wrong kind of social activity. It fails to prioritize doctrines in a way consistent with the emphases of Scripture. Liberal revisionism, on the other hand, in its attempt to translate the Christian faith to connect with the culture, has often wound up revising the Christian faith instead of translating it. To borrow words from the apostle Paul, we are then left with “no gospel at all” (Gal. 1:7 NIV). So we learn from the apostle Paul, who was willing to address opponents coming from different directions in Galatia and Colossae, calling the churches back to the truth of the Christian faith.

As we reflect further on these important matters, let us take a brief look at the key commitments found in the Creed of Nicaea, a confessional statement shared by all Christian traditions. The Creed of Nicaea (325) was drafted to refute the claim that Jesus was the highest creation of God and thus different in essence from the Father. What we often refer to today as the Nicene Creed was most likely approved not at Nicaea in 325 but at Constantinople in 381. While articulating the importance of the unity of the Holy Trinity, it insisted that Christ was begotten from the Father before all time, declaring that Christ is of the same essence as the Father.

When we contend today that Christian higher education must be distinctively Christ-centered education, we are in effect confessing that Jesus Christ, who was eternally the second person of the Trinity, sharing all the divine attributes, became fully human. Thus to think of Christ centeredness only in terms of personal piety or activism resulting from following some aspects of the teachings of Jesus, while important, will be inadequate.

A healthy future for Christian higher education must return to the past with the full affirmation that when we point to Jesus, we see the whole man Jesus and say that he is God. This is the great

mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16). It is necessary that Christ should be both God and man. Only as a man could he be the Redeemer for humanity; only as a sinless man could he fittingly die for others; only as God could his life, ministry, and redeeming death have infinite value and satisfy the demands of God so as to deliver others from death.

High-quality teaching and scholarship will be recognized in the academy, and these educational efforts can be done without neglecting our connection with the church.

Any attempt to envision a faithful Christian higher education for the days ahead that is not tightly tethered to the great confessional tradition will most likely result in an educational model without a compass. The only way to counter the secular assumptions that shape so many sectors of higher education today is to confess that the exalted Christ, who spoke the world into being by his powerful word, is the providential Sustainer of all life (Col.1:15–17; Heb. 1:2).

As we seek to bring the Christian faith to bear on the teaching and learning process in the work of distinctive Christ-centered higher education, our strategy must involve bringing these truths about Jesus Christ to bear on the great ideas of history as well as on the cultural and educational issues of our day. In doing so, our aim will be to adjust the cultural assumptions of our post-Christian context in light of God’s eternal truth. We, therefore, want to call for the work of higher education in the days ahead to take place through the lenses of the Nicene tradition that recognizes not only the Holy Trinity but also the transcendent, creating, sustaining, and self-disclosing Trinitarian God who has made humans in his image.

A Connection to the Churches

A renewed vision for Baptist higher education must not only connect with the best of the Christian intellectual

tradition and our confessional heritage but must also seek a purposeful connection with Baptist and evangelical congregations. Baptist colleges and universities are decidedly not churches, but they remain connected with the churches. James Burtchaell in his massive study *The Dying of the Light* surveyed dozens of institutions across various traditions, focusing on nineteenth- and twentieth-century examples. His important work has revealed how many institutions from various traditions have seen the light of the Christian faith die out on their campuses. Burtchaell may well have been wrong about some of the particulars in his research, but his big-picture thesis holds consistently across the traditions and the decades. The moment an institution began to lose its connection with the churches was the day the light started to disappear on the campus. Christ-centered institutions, while not churches, are an extension of the churches, the academic arm of the kingdom of God.

High-quality teaching and scholarship will be recognized in the academy, and these educational efforts can be done without neglecting our connection with the church. Pope John Paul II, the leader of the Roman Catholic Church in the latter part of the twentieth century, called for Catholic universities to reconnect with the heart of the church in his 1990 statement *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. While some may think that John Paul II is an unusual model for Baptists, I believe that we can learn from our Roman Catholic friends and seek to connect Baptists institutions with the heart of the church. Our dream calls for Christian colleges and universities to be not only Christ centered but also church connected. In doing so, we also want to be connected with the great confessional tradition through the years, including the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian Confession (451), and the best of the Baptist confessional heritage. While none of these confessional statements are infallible, all are informative and helpful guides for us. Historical awareness will help us avoid confusing what is merely a momentary

expression from that which has enduring importance for the sake of the churches.

Academic Freedom, Church Connectedness, and Our Confessional Commitments

Let us emphasize that in essentials of the Christian faith there is no place for compromise. Faith and truth are primary issues, and we stand firm in those areas. Sometimes we confuse primary issues and secondary issues. In secondary issues, and tertiary issues, we need mostly love and grace as we learn to disagree agreeably. We want to learn to love one another in spite of differences and to learn from those with whom we differ.

We fail the church and the work of Christian higher education when we fail to distinguish essential matters from nonessential ones. In essentials, faith and truth are primary, and we may not appeal to love or grace as an excuse to deny any essential aspect of Christian teaching. When we center the work of Baptist higher education on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we will build on the ultimate foundation. We need also to connect with the great Christian intellectual tradition of the church, which can provide insight into who we are and guidance for our future.

The challenge for us is to preserve and pass on the Christian tradition while encouraging honest intellectual inquiry. We need to encourage intellectual curiosity and find ways to pass on the Christian intellectual tradition while promoting serious intellectual engagement in the areas of teaching, research, and scholarship. There is no place for anti-intellectualism on our campuses. Baptist higher education is called to be academically rigorous, grounded in the confessional tradition, seeking to understand the great ideas of history, and engaging with today's issues. Baptist higher education has been called to reflect on and think about how to advance these commitments and to engage the challenging issues of the

twenty-first century.

Therefore, we recognize the place of academic freedom within a confessional context. We recognize that exploration across the disciplines is to be encouraged, but some things may not be advocated within confessional commitments that bind us together as educational communities. We want to encourage genuine exploration and serious research while recognizing that free inquiry, untethered from tradition or from the church, often results in the unbelieving skepticism that characterizes so much of higher education today. The directionless state that can be seen as we look across much of higher education is often found among many former church-related institutions that have become disconnected from the churches and their heritage. We need a renewed vision for Baptist higher education that will help us develop unifying principles for Christian thinking, founded on the tenet that all truth has its source in God, our Creator and Redeemer.

We thus dream of Baptist campuses that are faithful to the lordship of Jesus Christ, that exemplify the Great Commandment, that seek justice, mercy, and love, that demonstrate responsible freedom, that prioritize worship and service as central to all pursuits in life.

As we do so, we will likely struggle with many issues because there are numerous matters that remain ambiguous, matters for which we still see through a glass darkly. Some questions will have to remain unanswered as we continue to struggle and wrestle together. Yet we envision a distinctive approach to higher education, different from the large majority of higher education institutions in the United States.

A Distinctive Vision for Baptist Higher Education

We must not be naïve to the challenges that will be encountered along the way. Unfortunately, some in the churches will be satisfied with a minimal commit-

ment to warmhearted piety that encourages campus Bible studies, kind relationships, and occasional mission trips. Certainly, we want to encourage and applaud such things but not as an encompassing vision for Christian higher education. Some of these things can be carried out on public university campuses among parachurch organizations. We want to see these things take place, but more importantly, we want to see Baptist institutions that are primarily concerned with Christian thinking and thinking Christianly, learning to think carefully, creatively, and critically, seeking to engage the academy and the culture. And as we do so, we need to be aware that some in both the academy and the culture as well as the church, will question the legitimacy of this project.

We thus dream of Baptist campuses that are faithful to the lordship of Jesus Christ, that exemplify the Great Commandment, that seek justice, mercy, and love, that demonstrate

responsible freedom, that prioritize worship and service as central to all pursuits in life. These institutions must seek to build grace-filled communities that emphasize love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control as the virtues needed to create a caring Christian context where undergraduate and graduate education grounded in the conviction that all truth has its

source in God can be offered. In sum, we hope to provide quality Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to church and society.

A Focus on Students

We must constantly remind ourselves that we do what we do as Christian educators for the sake of the students. We want to encourage student concentration in at least one field of learning, which will include the ability to express and articulate their own thoughts clearly while learning to appreciate, respect, understand, and evaluate the thoughts of others, resulting in the lifelong habit of learning that will prepare students for

careers as well as for graduate and professional studies. Our goal is to prepare students for living a Christian life in contemporary society, to enable them to be kingdom citizens in our twenty-first-century world.

Student-life teams must seek to guide students in the development of priorities and practices that will contribute to their overall well-being and effectiveness intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually. Faculty have as their aim to stimulate students to think about issues of truth, values, and worldview, along with the questions of how subject matter bears on people's lives, so that they are equipped for God-called vocation and service. Simultaneously, in our rapidly changing world we will need to continue exploring new educational delivery systems, given the economic challenges and the developing understandings of technology in the times in which we live.

Community and Christian Scholarship

We recognize that a commitment to rigorous and quality academics is best demonstrated by God-called faculty. Research should be encouraged in all fields. Still, classroom teaching, must be prioritized and emphasized. Faculty in all disciplines, including librarians, should be encouraged to explore how the truth of the Christian faith bears on all disciplines. This means that Christian higher-education institutions in the Baptist tradition cannot be content to display their Christian commitments merely with chapel services and required Bible classes. We desire to see students move toward a mature reflection of what the Christian faith means for every field of study. In doing so, we can help develop a grace-filled, convictional community of learning.

Because we can think, relate, and communicate in understandable ways, since we are created in the image of God, we can creatively teach, learn, explore, and carry on research. We want to maintain that there is a complementary, and even necessary, place for teaching and

scholarship. A Baptist institution, in common with other institutions of higher learning, must surely subordinate all other endeavors to the improvement of the mind in pursuit of truth. Yet a focus on the mind and the mastery of content, though primary, is not enough. We believe that character and faith development, in addition to guidance in professional competencies, are equally important. Furthermore, we maintain that the pursuit of truth is best undertaken within a community of learning that includes colleagues of the present and voices from the past, the communion of saints, which also attends to the moral, spiritual, physical, and social development of its students following the pattern of Jesus, who himself increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and humankind (Luke 2:52).

One of the things for which we dream as we envision faithful Christian academic communities involves the promoting of genuine Christian community and unity on our campuses. We appeal for a oneness that is founded on the person and work of Jesus Christ and the common salvation we share in him. One of the ways that we authenticate the message of the gospel and our shared and collaborative work in Christian higher education is the way Christians love each other and live and serve together in harmony. It is this witness that our Lord wants and expects from us in the world so that the world may believe that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

We are calling for a vision for Christian higher education that is unapologetically Christian and rigorously academic.

Conclusion

As we envision a blessed future for the shared work of Christian higher education, we are in no way naïve to the multifaceted challenges and multilevel changes all around us: economic, technological, denominational, educational,

and cultural. The challenges facing Christian colleges and universities cannot be neutralized simply by adding newer facilities, better campus-ministry opportunities, and improved student-life programs, as important as these things may be.

Our twenty-first-century context must once again recognize the importance of serious Christian thinking as necessary and appropriate for the well-being of Christian academic communities. We offer the Christian intellectual tradition to twenty-first-century Christ followers as a guide to truth, to that which is imaginatively compelling, emotionally engaging, aesthetically enhancing, and personally liberating.

We believe that the Christian faith, informed by scriptural interpretation, theology, philosophy, and history, has bearing on every subject and academic discipline. While at times the Christian's research in any field might follow similar paths and methods as the secularists, doxology at both the beginning and ending of one's teaching and research marks the works of believers from that of secularists. As George Marsden has observed, we recognize that some might consider our proposal "outrageous."

The pursuit of the greater glory of God remains rooted in a Christian worldview in which God can be encountered in the search for truth in every discipline. The application of the great Christian tradition will encourage members of Christian college and university communities to see their teaching, research, study, student formation, administrative service, and trustee guidance within the framework of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In these contexts, faithful Christian scholars will see their teaching and their scholarship as contributing to the unity of knowledge. Faculty, staff, and students will work together to enhance a love for learning that encourages a life of worship and service. The great tradition of Christian thinking helps all of us better see the relationship between the Christian faith and the role of reason, while encouraging Christ followers to seek truth and

engage the culture, with a view toward strengthening the church and extending the kingdom of God.

We are calling for a vision for Christian higher education that is unapologetically Christian and rigorously academic. It involves developing resources for serious Christian thinking and scholarship in all disciplines, not just theology, biblical studies, and philosophy. We believe the time is right to reconsider afresh this vision because of the challenges and disorder across the academic spectrum. The reality of the fallen world in which we live is magnified for us in day-to-day life through broken families, sexual confusion, conflicts between nations, and the racial and ethnic prejudice we observe all around us.

This vision helps us understand that there is a place for music and the arts because God is the God of creation and beauty. We recognize that the social sciences can make observations to strengthen society, families, and religious structures by recognizing the presence of the image of God in all men and women. Those who study economics can help address problems facing communities and society at large, as well as expand our awareness of how wealth is produced and good stewardship calls for it to be used. Political-philosophy scholars can strategize about ways to address issues of government, public policy, war, justice, and peace. Ethical challenges in business, education, and healthcare can be illuminated by reflection on the great tradition. Exploring every discipline from a confessional perspective—which affirms that “we believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth”—will both shape and sharpen our focus. The more we emphasize the pattern of Christian truth, the more important will its role become for teaching, learning, research, and scholarship. This proposal is rooted in the conviction that God, the source of all truth, has revealed himself fully in Jesus Christ (John 1:14,18), and it is in our belief in the union of the divine and human in Jesus Christ that the unity of truth will ultimately be seen. What is needed is a renewed understanding and appreciation of the depth and breadth of the Christian intel-

lectual tradition, with its commitments to the church’s historic confession of the Trinitarian God, and a recognition of the world and all subject matter as fully understandable only in relation to this Trinitarian God. While our approach to higher education values and prioritizes the life of the mind, it is also a holistic call for the engagement of head, heart, and hands.

It is our hope that the ideals and commitments called for in this first lecture will not be culturally confined, for we believe that these are things that cannot be easily expunged without great peril to ourselves personally and to Christian institutions of higher education corporately, both in the present and in the future. In the midst of a confused culture and the cultural ethos of our day, we need commitments that are firm but loving, clear but gracious, encouraging the people of God to be ready to respond to the numerous issues and challenges that will come our way, without getting drawn into every intramural squabble in the church or in the culture.

Let us pray that we can relate to one another in love and humility, bringing new life to our shared efforts in Christian higher education. We pray not only for renewed confessional convictions but also for a genuine orthopraxy that can be seen before a watching world, a world particularly in the Western Hemisphere that seemingly stands on the verge of giving up on the Christian faith. We trust that our collaborative efforts to advance distinctive Christian higher education in the days to come will bring forth fruit, will strengthen partnerships, alliances, and networks, and will extend the kingdom of God.

Let us ask God to renew our shared commitments to academic excellence in our teaching, our learning, our research, our scholarship, and our service, as well as in our personal discipleship and churchmanship. We gladly join hands together with those who desire to walk with us on this journey, seeking the good of all concerned as we serve together for the glory of our great God.

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5 PRESIDENTS 5 QUESTIONS

How did you come to faith in Jesus?

My dad is a pastor; when I was very young, he heard me drop the F-Bomb in a hallway at church; our family rule was that if you used foul language, you had to get your mouth washed out with soap, accomplished by lathering up your toothbrush. On this occasion, my dad used his toothbrush to wash out his own mouth and told me that this is what Christ did for us all, taking upon Himself our sins and accepting the punishment so we could become sinless in the sight of God. It made quite the impression on me, and I prayed the Sinner's Prayer in that bathroom.

How long have you been president at North Greenville University, and what did your path to the presidency look like?

I've been president at NGU since 2017. I had a pretty traditional academic path to the role, serving as chief academic officer at two universities, Union in Tennessee and Palm Beach Atlantic in Florida. I had three incredible mentors: David

Dockery (UU) in presidential leadership, Carla Sanderson (UU) in academic leadership, and William Fleming (PBA) in fundraising & community engagement.



Dr. Gene Fant, President of North Greenville University

What is the best advice you've received about leadership or Christian service?

Always surround yourself with the best possible people and never be afraid for the people who serve alongside of you to outshine you. If you all are serving Christ and the institution, then He gets the glory anyway, so

hire slowly, hire well, and fire

What is one change, addition, or event you instituted at your school that has made a big impact?

This is our second year of reading the Bible cover to cover aloud in front of our prayer chapel. Students, staff, and faculty sign up for times to read, they sign the Bible where they start and where they finish, and when we are done, we deposit the copy in the university archives in the library; this both reflects and documents our commitment to being biblically faithful, which is one of our core values.

What is your favorite way to engage with students?

My media team set me up with an Instagram account that I use pretty often, posting selfies, profiles of people on campus, and my attendance at events. The students have already set up a spoof account (my last name, "Fant," is widely punable) and we also post me engaging in the "Fant Frenzy," which is where I run through the stands at sports events on campus, high-fiving the students.

5 PRESIDENTS 5 QUESTIONS

How long have you been president at Cal Baptist, and what did your path to the presidency look like?

I will begin my 25th year as president of California Baptist University Nov. 1, 2018. At the age of 25, while pursuing my master's degree at Baylor University, I completed an internship in higher education whereby I shadowed leaders of various departments such as admissions, financial aid, physical plant, fundraising, etc. During that experience, I felt a calling to be a president of a Baptist college and particularly wanted to turn around a struggling college.

Dr. Wilson Manning, dean of students, who directed my Baylor internship, guided me to pursue a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration, which I subsequently did at Texas A&M University. My first full-time non-internship position in higher education was as registrar and coordinator of church and associational relations at Louisiana College. The next steps were: assistant director of institutional research and testing at Baylor University; executive assistant to the president at Lee College in Baytown, Texas; executive vice president at Campbellsville College (now University) in Campbellsville, Ky.; and then president of California Baptist College (now University).

What do you see as the biggest challenge to Christian higher education today?

Rapidity of change in the many areas in which Christian higher education functions: accreditation, technology, politics, societal issues, regulatory environment, globalization, etc. In order to prosper, colleges and universities balance being nimble while seeking to remain true to core principles.

Who are/were some of your mentors in Christian higher education and what did you learn from them?

Dr. Grady Hogue, president of Bee County College in Beeville, Texas, where I completed a full-time one-year internship as part of my Ph.D. program. Grady had been a chemistry professor, representative in the Texas legislature, and president of Cisco Community College, and was asked to be the founding presi-



Dr. Ronald Ellis, President of California Baptist University

dent of Bee County College shortly after the County passed a bond to begin a community college. As founding president, he was involved in designing every academic program, building the campus, hiring every employee, as well as creating policies. The depth and breadth of his knowledge as well as his passion for the institution inspired me.

Dr. Vivian Blevins, one of the first female college presidents in Texas in the 1980's, whom I served as executive assistant at

Lee College in Baytown, Texas. Her boundless energy and ability to turn multiple ideas into reality were valuable lessons for me.

Dr. Ken Winters, president of Campbellsville University, modeled professionalism, quiet strength and problem solving. As executive vice president I was able to play a key role in helping transform the institution.

How did you come to faith in Jesus?

I was born in Louisiana and grew up in a strong Southern Baptist family where my father was a deacon and both of my parents taught Sunday school. We moved to Las Vegas, Nev., where my father taught at Las Vegas High School, when I was five years old and lived there until I was 13. At seven years old, I accepted Christ as my savior at the First Southern Baptist Church of Las Vegas, which was the mother church for Southern Baptist church plants in the rapidly growing Las Vegas area. At nine years old, during Vacation Bible School, one of our activities was to make a poster with our favorite Bible verse on it. I chose Matthew 28:19-20, the Great Commission, which has remained my life verse ever since. Since arriving at California Baptist University our vision has been to be a premier, comprehensive Christian university committed to the Great Commission.

What aspect of your school are you most proud of?

Our ability to be nimble, effective, and grow in an environment that sometimes appears to be moving from secular to hostile toward traditional Christian values.

5 PRESIDENTS 5 QUESTIONS

How did you come to faith in Jesus?

I was blessed to have been raised in a Christian home where Christ was exemplified by my father and mother. In addition, I was exposed to stories from the Bible in worship, Sunday School, Training Union, Royal Ambassadors, and Wednesday night prayer meetings each week that helped shape my understanding of God as Creator and Redeemer. At age 9, I recognized my sinful nature and need for a Savior and committed my life to follow Christ.

What is the best advice you have received about leadership/Christian service?

My father shared at my ordination to “let God be God.” At points throughout my leadership when things weren’t going the way I wanted or thought they should, or perhaps when encountering a difficult person or situa-

tion, I have often reflected upon my father’s advice not to attempt to control or fix things beyond my control; rather, I have turned my challenges over to God and trusted God to work all things together for good.



Dr. David Olive, President of Bluefield College

What event in your presidency has been most memorable?

Certainly, an inauguration has institutional significance for the campus community that symbolizes a transition in leadership and new beginnings, as well as tremendous personal significance and meaning as one takes up the mantle of leadership for an insti-

tution of higher learning. However, it’s hard not to describe an all-time record enrollment that occurred this fall as the most memorable moment to date!

What is your favorite way to engage with students?

Kathryn and I enjoy having students in our home from time to time, but my favorite way of engaging with students is simply sitting with them in the dining hall and talking with them over a meal.

Besides your Bible, what is the best book you've read lately?

I enjoy history, and, being a Tennessean, I found the book, Andrew Jackson and the Miracle of New Orleans by Brian Kilmeade, fascinating. I continue to be amazed by the dramatic acts of a few that have had such a profound impact on who we are today as a nation.

5 PRESIDENTS 5 QUESTIONS

How long have you been president at Baylor, and what did your path to the presidency look like?

I have served as President of Baylor University since June 2017. From 1991 to 2002, I served on the faculty at Baylor's Hankamer School of Business. I was awarded tenure in the Department of Management before serving four years as associate dean of graduate programs for the Hankamer School of Business. From 2002 to 2014, I served as dean of Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management, and from 2014 to 2017, I served as dean and professor of management at The George Washington University School of Business.

What is one initiative you instituted at your school that has made a big impact?

We've recently developed and rolled out an academic strategic plan for the university called Illuminate. It's rooted in Matthew 5:14-16—that we as Christians are the light of the world and are called to let our light shine before others. We believe that Baylor's growing academic enterprise is illuminated by our Christian faith and the love of truth.

I believe higher education continues to need Christian universities that offer high-quality, impactful research and scholarship. There are immense challenges facing our world, and it is imperative that there are Christian universities that take the lead on finding solutions to these challenges

How did you come to faith in Jesus?

I was raised in a Christian home, attending a small, Methodist church in Perkins. When I was in sixth grade, I attended a lay witness mission that our church hosted. It was there that I heard the gospel shared in a way that made sense to me for the first time, and that's when I accepted Christ as my savior. I was baptized shortly after that experience. When I enrolled at Oklahoma State University, I began attending Baptist churches, starting with University Heights Baptist Church near the Stillwater campus. In college, I also was very active in Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Another important part of my spiritual development in college was working during the summers at Camp Soaring Hawk and Kanakuk, both located in southwest Missouri.

The owner of Camp Soaring Hawk, a man named Heno Head, was a significant mentor to me. Heno was probably the most godly person I have ever met. Christ seemed to ooze from him, and everything he did reflected Christ and his desire to serve God. When campers arrived by bus at the camp, Heno knew every single child by name the minute they stepped off the bus. He loved every one of the campers with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength—what a wonderful example to all of us who worked at the camp! The love and joy of Christ was reflected in his face, demeanor, and actions every single day. He led Bible studies with the counselors that were deeply influential in my Christian walk and development as a college student. I will be forever grateful for his example of a selfless life of service to Christ and to others.



Dr. Linda Livingstone, President of Baylor University

Tell us about a mentor you've had and why they were influential to you.

What is the best advice you have received about leadership/Christian service?

One weekend at Camp Soaring Hawk, my then-boyfriend (now husband) Brad came to visit me. Heno stopped us in the camp parking lot as Brad was leaving camp and asked if he could pray with us. As we prepared to pray, Heno commented that we should be willing to pray for anyone, anytime, anywhere. This put a whole new light on prayer for us when we were in college. It was also a great reminder that we are to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17) and “pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests [...] and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people” (Ephesians 6:18). From a leadership perspective, is a great reminder that we should be continually in prayer as leaders for anyone, anytime, anywhere.

5 PRESIDENTS 5 QUESTIONS

Give us a brief history of your school.

Blue Mountain College was founded in 1873 by General Mark Perrin Lowrey as a school for women. In 1920 BMC became one of three Mississippi institutions of higher learning affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. In 1956 men called into church-related vocations were admitted to the College. BMC became fully coeducational in 2005. A liberal-arts based institution, BMC currently has an enrollment of over 630 students.

How long have you served at Blue Mountain, and what did your path to the presidency look like?

I have served as president of Blue Mountain College since August 1, 2012. Prior to my role at BMC, I served at Union University for twenty years (1992-2012). At Union I wore a variety of hats, including English faculty member, department chair, dean, and ultimately associate provost and dean of instruction.

What keeps you excited about Christian higher education?

Christian higher education is a ministry with the potential to impact every facet of our culture for Christ and for His Kingdom. Our institu-

tions are producing graduates who are prepared to be salt and light as educators, health-care professionals, entrepreneurs, public servants, entertainers, artists, scientists—and the list goes on. Such breadth and depth of influence should inspire us to pursue our calling with great energy and great enthusiasm. Seeing lives changed daily and knowing that those lives will impact countless others keeps me going.



Dr. Barbara McMillin, President of Blue Mountain College

What is the best book you've read in the last few years and why?

In the personal growth area I could provide a fairly long list, but I will summarize by referencing pretty much anything by Mark Batterson. His *Draw the Circle: The 40-Day Prayer Challenge* has been a great source of encouragement and inspiration. It has challenged me to embrace and practice a high view of who God is and to live in pursuit of

what only God can do. As Batterson notes, when we live this way, God gets all the glory.

In the profession growth category, I have been very influenced by Jeff Docking's *Crisis in Higher Education*. Docking relates the story of how Adrian College, where he is president, has been transformed by a strategic growth initiative built around a high accountability model. Docking's insights and strategies

have given me much food for thought, serving as a model for our growth plan at BMC.

Who is/are your leadership mentors and what advice have they given you?

I am grateful for the leadership and mentorship of two individuals, both from my tenure at Union University.

David Dockery taught me the importance of casting a clear, God-inspired vision, articulating that vision with sincerity and truth, and staying focused on the vision despite the inevitable challenges and distractions. Carla Sanderson, my Provost at UU, taught me through her actions that the simple act of listening can go a long way toward solving a host of problems. From both of them I have learned the critical nature of fostering a grace-filled and excellence-driven environment.



BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS ROUNDTABLE

The Baptist International Scholars Roundtable (BSIR), formerly known as the Young Scholars in the Baptist Academy (YSBA), promotes scholarship from Baptist perspectives across time and space by facilitating a scholarly forum for exchanging ideas. Emeritus Director and BSIR Fellow, Dr. Roger Ward of Georgetown College, Kentucky, established and led the program from 2004 to July 2018. Each year BSIR meets at the Baptist-affiliated Regent's Park College in the University of Oxford.

In August 2018, the BSIR took a new name and transferred leadership. Dr. Laine Scales and Dr. Beth Allison Barr direct the BSIR from its administrative hub, Baylor University Graduate School, Waco, Texas. During this transition time, BSIR will be emphasizing three goals. We are working to:

Make the program more diverse and international by drawing diverse scholars from disciplines and from outside the United States.

Engage with visiting senior scholars from Britain, Europe, and other parts of the globe during the annual gathering.

Develop a sustainable model of funding for the BSIR to provide travel stipends to Fellows and Scholars.

We are deeply grateful that the IACU has shown its support by committing four travel stipends of up to \$1000 for full time faculty from IACU member schools whose papers are accepted. We will be reporting at the IACU annual meeting in June. Meanwhile, please pass the call for proposals to your faculty and doctoral students for our annual gathering in Oxford, July 1–4, 2019.

Call for Proposals

The Baptist Scholars International Roundtable (BSIR) invites proposals for its 15th annual meeting, to be convened at Regent's Park College in the University of Oxford, on July 1–4, 2019. This year's conference theme is the kingdom of God. We encourage scholars from a broad array of disciplines to consider how Baptist perspectives on the kingdom of God inform and shape the life of the academy and the life of the church. Topics may range widely, but might consider themes such as the following:

The kingdom of God in the history of Christianity

God as King in literary, philosophical, and theological studies

God's reign and culture

The kingdom of God in music and the visual arts

Political or scientific ethics concerning a world under God's kingship

Social patterns and behaviors associated with kingdom living

Poverty, wealth, and the economics of the rule of Christ

The relation of the kingdom of God to the Church

We encourage participation by scholars from all career stages, especially junior scholars and doctoral candidates. While papers should pertain to the Baptist expression of Christianity, scholars from all faiths are welcome.

Format: Seven BSIR Scholars are selected to present their original papers of 15-25 pages. BSIR Fellows offer responses, followed by group discussion. To promote a vibrant conversation, all participants agree to prepare in advance for engagement with each paper. Occasionally, BSIR offers publication opportunities in journals or edited volumes.

Proposals should be submitted at: BSIR 2019 Proposal Submission Form. The submission deadline is January 4, 2019. Because submissions must be completed in one sitting, applicants are advised to have the following information ready:

Name, Affiliation, and Contact Information

Paper Title and Abstract (500–750 words)

Bio (150 words, including degrees and selected publications)

Proposals will be selected based on quality and clarity of proposal content, relationship of paper to conference theme, and contribution to the Baptist academy. Limited financial assistance will be available in special cases by applying at: BSIR Financial Assistance Application.

For more about BSIR please visit our website at <https://www.baylor.edu/graduate/currentstudents/index.php?id=9554%2052>



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Missouri Baptist UNIVERSITY

ST LOUIS, MO.— Missouri Baptist installed Dr. Keith L. Ross as the University’s seventh president on Friday Oct. 19, during an official inauguration ceremony.

Dr. Keith L. Ross assumed the presidency of Missouri Baptist University on January 10, 2018. He is the 7th president in the institution’s history and the first alumni to serve in this role.

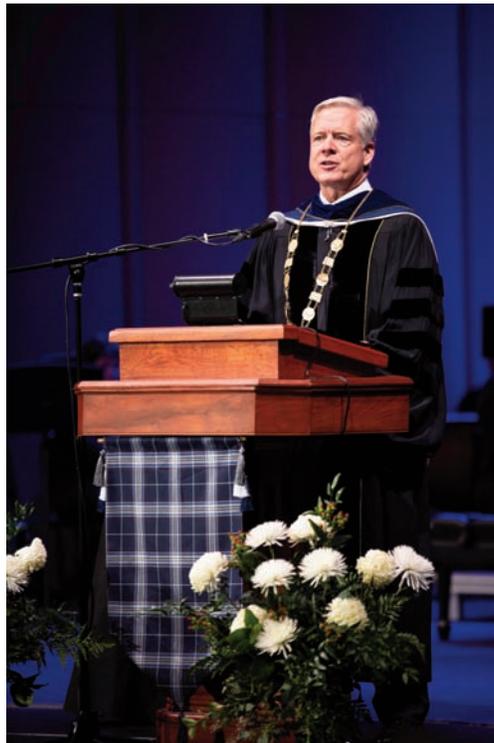
Previously, Dr. Ross served as MBU’s senior vice president for university advancement. During his time at MBU, he successfully led three major fundraising campaigns that provided resources to further the University’s mission.

During his inaugural speech, Dr. Ross demonstrated a vision for the University in tandem with the University’s five core values, and letting MBU be a “city on the hill.” The five core values of the university are:

1. We are serious and intentional about our Christian faith.
2. We will freely and responsibly search for truth.
3. We strive for excellence.
4. We believe in the importance and cultivation of character.
5. We believe in social change through service and leadership.

Stated Ross, “First and foremost, no core value is more important to us than our seriousness and intention-

ality about our Christian faith. It is this unique mission that distinguishes us from other outstanding higher education institutions in the region.”



He further challenged, “Millions in this world are hungry and many more long for healing, still others who live in a repressive society seek justice. These great needs are met by leaders who possess a servant’s heart and skills that a Christian liberal arts education offers.”

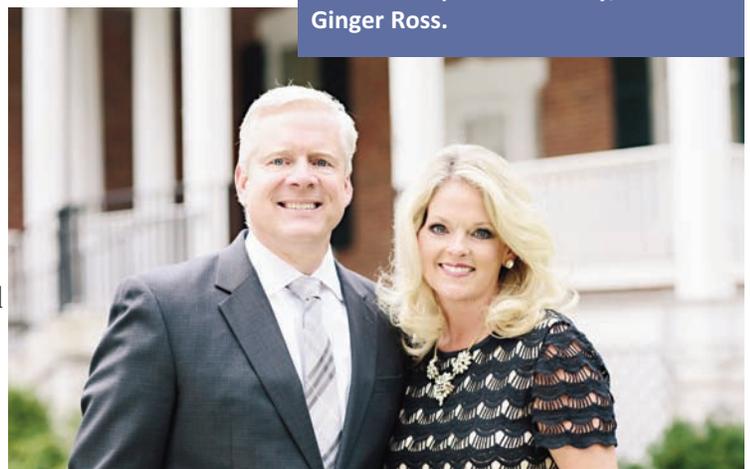
As the chief

enrollment officer, Dr. Ross led the enrollment management team to execute a student recruitment plan that enrolled a balanced and diverse student body. Undergraduate enrollment on MBU’s main campus increased 30 percent over the past decade culminating in the largest freshman class in University history in 2017. Recently, Dr. Ross was instrumental in launching both the undergraduate online programs and the University’s new School of Nursing.

In 1987, Dr. Ross earned a bachelor of arts from MBU. He later received his master of arts from Regent University and his doctorate of education from Maryville University. In addition, Dr. Ross has completed post-graduate work at Harvard University’s Institute for Educational Management.

Ross and his wife, Ginger Montgomery Ross, have one daughter, Madaline, who is in college.

Keith Ross, seventh president of Missouri Baptist University, and wife Ginger Ross.



Southwest Baptist University Appoints Dr. Eric Turner as 25th President

BOLIVAR, MO. -- Dr. Eric A. Turner of Pocahontas, Ark., was unanimously selected as the 25th president of Southwest Baptist University.

Dr. Turner, 46, is a current college president with a wide range of experiences and a strong calling for Christian higher education. He worked in fundraising, academics and accreditation at Williams Baptist University in Walnut Ridge, Ark., for 17 years before becoming president of Black River Technical College (BRTC) in Pocahontas, Ark., in 2014.

“Dr. Turner has demonstrated success in higher education leadership,” said Dr. Don Fahrni, chairman of the SBU Board of Trustees. “We are excited for his family to join the SBU family.”

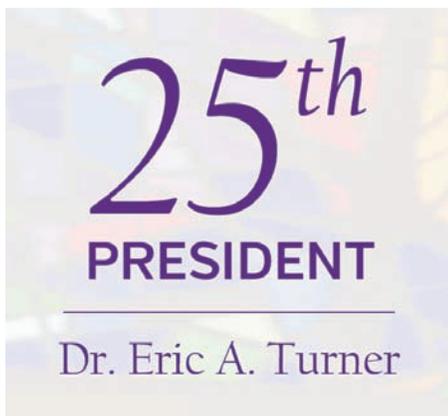
At BRTC, Dr. Turner provided leadership and oversight for all areas of the college system. His leadership included rectifying long-standing issues related to finance, accreditation and academics. He led the college to develop its first comprehensive strategic plan, as well as a comprehensive outcomes assessment plan.

“I was excited for both Eric and SBU to learn of his appointment to the presidency,” said Dr. Jerol Swaim, President Emeritus of Williams Baptist. “I have observed and interacted with him for nearly 30 years in a variety of settings as a church member, deacon, Williams student and a member of the administrative team at Williams. The 15 years we served together at Williams is a particularly meaningful and cherished time in my time as president. He is a classic example of the type of individual our Baptist colleges and universities strive to produce — individuals who live out their faith every day.”

Turner has an Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from Vanderbilt University, an M.A. in History from Arkansas State University and a B.A. in History and English from Williams Baptist University.

He is active within Southern Baptist life as a member of First Baptist Church in Pocahontas and a board member for the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

“Eric has proven to be a principled leader within our board, denomination, and state,” said Bobby G. Thomas, president and CEO of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. “His leadership has been thoughtful and thorough in moving toward our established vision and mission. Along with natural gifts and talents, Eric has always shown commitment to the task at hand. He has been a true team player and has managed to foster positive discussions, which have led to the best possible outcomes.”



He and his wife, Barbara, have been married for 23 years. They have a 15-year-old daughter, Emma, who will be a sophomore at Bolivar High School.

“We are humbled, honored and excited to be joining the Southwest Baptist University family,” Dr. Turner said.

He desires to build on the legacy and foundation of a committed board of trustees and the 22 years of service by retiring SBU President Dr. C. Pat Taylor.

Dr. Turner succeeds Dr. C. Pat Taylor, who has been given the honorary title of President Emeritus.

Chowan University Announces Dr. Kirk E. Peterson as 23rd President

The Board of Trustees of Chowan University has announced the selection of Dr. Kirk E. Peterson as the 23rd president of Chowan University. Dr. Peterson took office on June 1, 2018.

“My family and I are thrilled to return to Murfreesboro and Chowan University,” stated Dr. Peterson. “We are eager to become reacquainted with members of the Chowan community, faculty, and staff and to become acquainted with those members we have yet to meet. Our family is blessed beyond measure to serve a remarkable university, its talented faculty, its dedicated staff, and its most important constituents: the students.”

“Dr. Peterson’s academic credentials are impeccable,” stated Frank Rose, Chair of the Board of Trustees. “Dr. Peterson is no stranger to Chowan University, for he served as a faculty and staff member from 2004-2010. During these years, he served as the Chair of the Department of Health and Physical Education, as the founding Dean of the Graduate school, and as Associate Provost.”

Dr. Peterson earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Tennessee in 2000, along with a Master of Science degree in education with a major in mental health counseling, and holds a second Master of Science degree in education with a major in sports psychology earned in 1996. In 1994, he received the Bachelor of Science degree in

Psychology from University of Wisconsin-La-Crosse.

Dr. Peterson also has experience as Senior Vice President and Interim President followed by President at Urbana University in Ohio. After facilitating a successful merger of Urbana, saving the university from absolute closure, Dr. Peterson became superintendent of two private schools in Ohio. His breadth of experience as both faculty and administrator in higher, secondary, and elementary education uniquely prepares him to lead Chowan University.

Dr. M. Christopher White, the Chowan University past president, announced last fall he would transition to the role of Chancellor after thirty-two years as a university president. This transition was coordinated with Dr. Peterson’s arrival in June. This cooperative succession will allow Dr. White to assist Dr.

Peterson, raise funds for important projects, and help raise the profile of the University.

“I commend the trustees on their wisdom in the selection process,” said Dr. White. “I highly commend the new president. If the past is the prologue to the future, he will lead Chowan to unprecedented heights. I believe he is God’s chosen leader for this time in Chowan’s history.”

“Dr. Peterson is a man of faith and integrity,” Rose concluded. “He knows Chowan and her students. He believes in Chowan’s mission and values. He is a proven leader. In summary, the trustees believe that Dr. Kirk E. Peterson is the leader that Chowan University needs at this time.”

Dr. Peterson is accompanied in his service to Chowan by his wife Rachel, and their sons, Caleb, Cody, and Justin.



WANTED: The Truth, but Gently



“John Doe and Jane Roe were students at the University of Michigan. Halfway through Roe's freshman and Doe's junior year, the two crossed paths at a “Risky Business” themed fraternity party. While there, they had a drink, danced, and eventually had sex.”

So begins the Sixth Circuit's recent opinion (September 7, 2018) in *Doe v. Baum*. Two days after the party, Roe filed a sexual misconduct complaint with the university claiming she had been too drunk to consent. Doe claimed that Roe did not appear drunk and that she was an active participant in their sexual encounter. After interviewing some twenty-three witnesses (almost all of the male witnesses corroborated Doe's story, and all of the female witnesses corroborated Roe's), the investigator concluded that the evidence supporting a finding of sexual misconduct was not more convincing than the evidence offered in opposition to it. Accordingly, applying the preponderance of the evidence standard, the investigator recommended that the administration rule in Doe's favor and close the case.

Roe appealed this decision. The

three-member appeal panel reviewed the investigator's report and, without considering new evidence or interviewing any students, reversed. The panel found Roe's description of events “more credible” than Doe's, and Roe's witnesses more persuasive. Facing the possibility of expulsion, Doe withdrew from the university. He was 13.5 credits short of graduating.

Doe then filed a lawsuit claiming that the university's disciplinary proceedings violated the Due Process Clause and Title IX. He argued that because the university's decision turned on the credibility of Roe and the adverse witnesses, the school was required to give him an opportunity to question (that is, to cross-examine) them.

John Henry Wigmore, who literally wrote the book on evidence in legal proceedings, said “Cross examination is beyond any doubt the greatest legal engine ever invented for the discovery of truth.” John Paul Stevens, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1975 to 2010, called cross examination “the principal means of undermining the credibility of a witness whose testimo-

ny is false or inaccurate.”

But cross examination has been strongly criticized when applied to a university's Title IX proceedings arising from a claim of sexual assault. The U.S. Department of Education issued guidance letters in 2011 and again in 2014 which “strongly discouraged” schools from allowing the parties personally to question or cross-examine each other during the course of a Title IX hearing on a sexual assault charge: “Allowing an alleged perpetrator to question an alleged victim directly may be traumatic or intimidating, thereby possibly escalating or perpetuating a hostile environment.”

While those guidance letters were officially withdrawn by the Department under the leadership of Betsy DeVos in September, 2017, victim advocacy groups continue to speak out against any process which may result in a complainant being “re-victimized” by harsh questioning by an accused student or his/her lawyer.

Courts (especially the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals which hears federal appeals in Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee) have become increasingly critical of university processes which do

not allow some form of cross examination. In *Doe v. Baum*, the Court finally reached the conclusion that cross-examination is constitutionally required in public university disciplinary proceedings in which the credibility of the witnesses is at issue.

Not only does cross-examination allow the accused to identify inconsistencies in the other side's story, but it also gives the fact-finder an opportunity to assess a witness's demeanor and determine who can be trusted. So if a university is faced with competing narratives about potential misconduct, the administration must facilitate some form of cross-examination in order to satisfy due process.

In my experience, universities are almost always faced with competing narratives in sexual assault cases. In fact, there is a widely used short-hand description of such cases: "he said/she said." Does this mean your university's disciplinary process is fatally flawed in all disciplinary hearings where credibility is at issue, particularly Title IX proceedings arising out of a sexual assault?

"Aha!" you cry. "I have you now! Private universities are not subject to constitutional requirements of due process. *Doe v. Baum* does not change anything for private schools." Maybe you are right; but before you dismiss this warning and the need to re-examine your Title IX procedures, carefully consider the following:

Many courts have held that pri-

ate schools have a contractual obligation to treat their students with fundamental fairness. How will the fair process courts require of private schools differ from due process in public schools on the issue of cross examination?

The Baum court held that *Doe* succeeded in casting doubt on the accuracy of the university's disciplinary decision because the university did not provide an opportunity for cross-examination even though credibility was at stake. Do you want to hand students a tool they can use to question your school's disciplinary outcomes in court?

Secretary DeVos said in a speech on September 7, 2017, "Due process is the foundation of any system of justice that seeks a fair outcome. Due process either protects everyone, or it protects no one." The Department of Education is currently drafting new regulations expected to provide greater protection for students accused of sexual assault. Those safeguards will apply to both public and private schools.

While *Baum* is a binding precedent only in the Sixth Circuit, courts in other circuits are likely to be influenced by *Baum's* core ruling: if credibility is in dispute and material to the outcome, due process requires cross-examination (and so may fundamental fairness).

Many schools use the more efficient "single investigator" model to investigate and adjudicate Title IX claims rather than holding a true hearing before a panel.

How can cross examination be used in the single investigator model?

The Baum court recognized that "Universities have a legitimate interest in avoiding procedures that may subject an alleged victim to further harm or harassment. [A]llowing the accused to cross-examine the accuser may do just that." How can universities reconcile the need and desire to protect a sexual assault victim from "the emotional trauma of directly confronting her alleged attacker" with the accused's right of cross-examination? The Baum court suggested letting the student's representative/advisor (who may be a lawyer) conduct the cross examination. However, many schools have adopted policies which carefully (and, in my opinion, correctly) limit the right of the representative to participate actively in a university's non-judicial interview or hearing.

I recommend that all schools review their Title IX procedures through the lens of the Baum decision. Perhaps the regulations promised by the Department of Education will help answer the questions posed in this column and guide us through the ever-changing paths in this thicket of Title IX compliance.

- Jaime Jordan

Tax Issues with Political Candidate Appearances

Advice from Capin Crouse

ISSUE

The “repeal” of the “Johnson Amendment” has not happened (yet). In this election year, institutions should be aware of the rules regarding political campaign intervention.

SITUATION

Marathon Bible College (MBC) is a private college exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and 170(b)(1)(A)(ii). They are required to file Form 990 annually.

MBC is building a new dorm.

Their President invites Congresswoman Mary P. Kneus, the representative for the district containing MBC, to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the new dorm. Congresswoman Kneus is running for reelection at the time. MBC’s President makes no reference in her introduction to Congresswoman Kneus’s candidacy or the election. Congressman Kneus also makes no reference to her candidacy or the election and does not do any political campaign fundraising while at MBC. Per the IRS, MBC has not intervened in a political campaign.

RULES

From Revenue Ruling 2007-41:

Candidate Appearances Where Speaking or Participating as a Non-Candidate

Candidates may also appear or speak at organization events in a non-candidate capacity. For instance, a political candidate may be a public figure who is invited to speak because he or she: (a) currently holds, or formerly held, public office; (b) is considered an expert in a non political field; or (c) is a celebrity or has led a distinguished mili-

tary, legal, or public service career. A candidate may choose to attend an event that is open to the public, such as a lecture, concert or worship service. The candidate's presence at an organization-sponsored event does not, by itself, cause the organization to be engaged in political campaign intervention. However, if the candidate is publicly recognized by the organization, or if the candidate is invited to speak, factors in determining whether the candidate's appearance results in political campaign intervention include the following:

Whether the individual is chosen to speak solely for reasons other than candidacy for public office;

Whether the individual speaks only in a non-candidate capacity;

Whether either the individual or any representative of the organization makes any mention of his or her candidacy or the election;

Whether any campaign activity occurs in connection with the candidate's attendance;

Whether the organization maintains a nonpartisan atmosphere on the premises or at the event where the candidate is present; and

Whether the organization clearly indicates the capacity in which the candidate is appearing and does not mention the individual's political candidacy or the upcoming election in the communications announcing the candidate's attendance at the event.

Situation 11. Chairman H is the chairman of the Board of

Hospital Q, a section 501(c)(3) organization. Hospital Q is building a new wing. Chairman H invites Congressman Z, the representative for the district containing Hospital Q, to attend the groundbreaking ceremony for the new wing. Congressman Z is running for reelection at the time. Chairman H makes no reference in her introduction to Congressman Z's candidacy or the election. Congressman Z also makes no reference to his candidacy or the election and does not do any political campaign fundraising while at Hospital Q. Hospital Q has not intervened in a political campaign.

BOTTOM LINE

Revenue Ruling 2007-41 is a great source of information – what your institution can and cannot do – in an election year.

Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) still states, "...and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office."

It is possible for candidates to speak at your school without it being considered "political campaign intervention."

Your school can mention "what's going on" with alumni who are political candidates – but within

guidelines.

Specific questions? Email Dave Moja

The information provided herein presents general information and should not be relied on as accounting, tax, or legal advice when analyzing and resolving a specific tax issue. If you have specific questions regarding a particular fact situation, please consult with competent accounting, tax, and/or legal counsel about the facts and laws that apply.



Dave Moja is dedicated to meeting client needs in the exempt organization tax arena through review of client returns, consulting engagements, training, and the compilation of the annual CapinCrouse Higher Education Tax Reporting Trends Project. He has 29 years of accounting experience and serves several industry committees, including the AICPA Not For Profit Advisory Council. Dave has also served on the IRS Advisory Committee on Tax Exempt and Government Entities (ACT).

Presidential Search

The Carson-Newman University Presidential Search Committee is accepting nominations and expressions of interest for the position of President in response to Dr. J. Randall O'Brien's announcement of retirement after 10 years of distinguished service.

Founded in 1851, Carson-Newman remains committed to its mission by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment to help students reach their full potential as educated citizens and worldwide servant-leaders.

The University seeks a President with a passion for Christian higher education and one who provides visionary, collaborative and strategic leadership in order to continue to advance the University in fulfilling her mission.

For information on the presidential search or to submit a nomination or express interest in the position, please visit www.cn.edu/presidentialsearch or contact:

Mrs. Sheryl Gray, Secretary
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