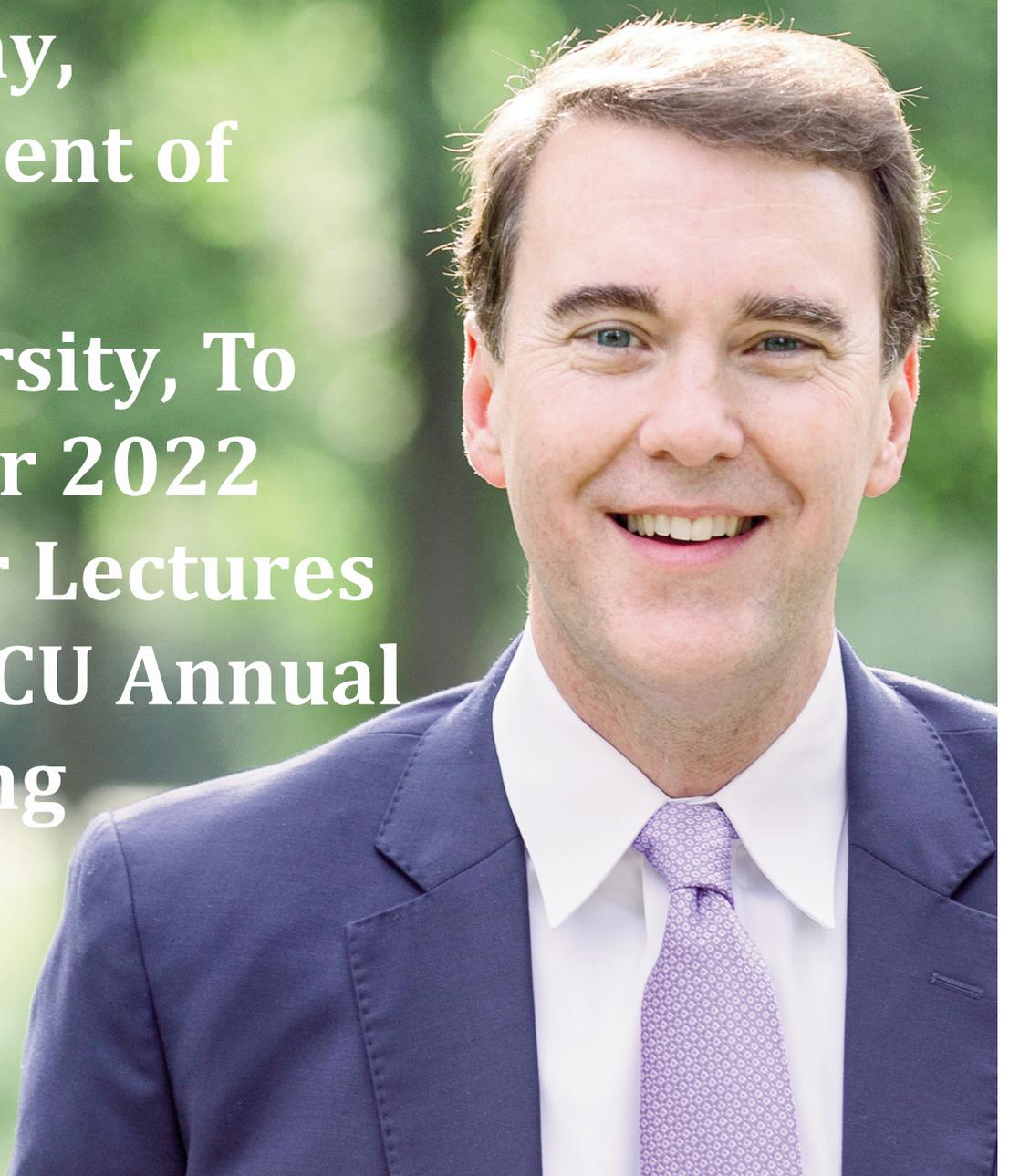


E THE BAPTIST **EDUCATOR**

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Lindsay,
President of
Taylor
University, To
Deliver 2022
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Union University to Offer Increased Scholarships for IMB, NAMB Missionary Students

JACKSON, Tenn. — Jan. 25, 2022

Beginning in fall 2022, Union will offer its highest financial merit scholarship to all students who are dependents of missionaries through the Southern Baptist Convention’s International Mission Board or North American Mission Board.

sionaries will receive a Union merit scholarship of \$17,750 and will be eligible to receive any additional Union scholarships, partnerships, and grants they are qualified for.

“These families are on the mission field, sacrificing, and many times, they don’t have the financial resources to afford an educational experience at Union,”

Griffin said. “So, we created additional scholarship opportunities to assist these families in achieving their educational dreams.”

As the Southern Baptist Convention’s oldest affiliated university, Union University has a life-long partnership with the IMB and NAMB, and Griffin said

Union is dedicated to

offering its best financial aid to Southern Baptist missionaries and their families.

“With this scholarship, we have deepened our commitment to Southern Baptist missionaries and want to do all we can to educate their students from a Christ-centered perspective,” Griffin said.



Dan Griffin, vice president for enrollment management, said giving children of missionaries more opportunities to attend Union is invaluable.

“Really, the benefits are endless with diversifying our undergraduate population and exposing our current students to other cultures and experiences,” Griffin said.

Children of IMB or NAMB mis-

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Balcony People

DR. GARY COOK, CHANCELLOR OF DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY AND IBCU BOARD CHAIR

Joyce Landorf wrote a book back in the 1980s that made a huge impact on me. After reading Landorf's *Balcony People*, I decided that I wanted to be a balcony person.

Imagine we are on a stage living out our lives, and there are many watching us from the audience. Most are on the main floor, but only a few are in the balcony. Those on the main floor applaud for us when we do well and jeer at us when we do badly. Most of the time, they just sit there watching us indifferently. However, there are a few individuals in the balcony. These people are the ones cheering us on. They are the ones yelling, "Bravo" when we do well. They are also the ones shouting words of encouragement like, "You can do it," and "Don't give up," when we need encouragement.

While those on the main floor remain seated just observing, those in the balcony stand up every time we do well on stage and cheer us on. They also stand up for us when we make mistakes and face difficulties. They love us with an unconditional love.

My grandmother was my balcony person as I was growing up – always praying for me, always encouraging me, always there to cheer me on. When I went away to college, 400 miles from home, she began writing me every week. She sent two letters every single week all through my four years of college, and she enclosed two \$1 bills. In the 1960s, that would buy a full meal at McDonald's or a trip to the ice cream parlor. The letters always included words of encouragement with the statement at the end, "I am praying for you every day." I found great comfort knowing that there was someone who loved me so much she would pray for me every single day.

Every one of us needs balcony people in our lives. Jesus had His mother and His best friend John with Him at the foot of the cross during the worst day of His life on earth. They were His balcony people.

Reflect for a moment about who has been in your balcony, and thank the Lord for them. These individuals have been gifts from the Lord to help us on our journey. When I was a young boy in Arkansas, we used to sing an old hymn entitled, "Count Your Many Blessings." Well, many years later, I still love that old hymn. "Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your many blessings, see what God hath done."

I try to be in the balcony for my sweet wife, my two sons, and my grandkids. I also have tried to be in the balcony for those who the Lord has placed in my path. I have fallen short many times, and sometimes find myself on the main floor just watching. I need to move to the balcony where I, too, will find more joy as I cheer, reassure, support, and encourage those in my family and those colleagues and students the Lord has placed in my path.

We all need balcony people in our lives.

We all need to be balcony people for others.



Spears Named Campbellsville University's First Chancellor for University System Advancement

CAMPBELLSVILLE, Ky. – Dr. H. Keith Spears, 11th president at Campbellsville University since Jan. 1, 2021, has been appointed the university's first chancellor.

Spears was presented the title of chancellor for university system advancement by President Joseph Hopkins at the February Campbellsville University Board of Trustees meeting.

Spears served as the 11th president of the university following the retirement of Dr. Michael V. Carter in December 2020.

President Hopkins said, "As I step into the role of president for the university, I cannot imagine a better person to have at my side than Keith. His successes in the world of higher education speak for themselves. People with Keith's abilities are hard to find. Campbellsville University was fortunate to have him lead as president and is now in a strong position with him as chancellor for university system advancement."

In Spears' new role, he will explore new opportunities for the university and new program development. He will be the "chief innovator" for the university, Hopkins said.

Spears has served Campbellsville University since 2009. His leadership roles have changed over the years leading up to his extensive work in the president's office.

Spears was innovative in his work with graduate business degree pro-

grams that operate out of the Louisville Education Center, one of several centers Spears worked to establish throughout Kentucky, across the United States, and abroad.

The university was recently approved by the Ministry of Education in Ontario, Canada for yet another new center, which will operate in Windsor, Ontario.



"I love viewing higher education from different lenses," Spears said. "The opportunity to go out and find new horizons, to explore the unknown and challenge the university to excel in new ways is beyond exciting to me.

"I am honored that President Hopkins, who shares this same vision, and our Board of Trustees wants me to continue with Campbellsville University. There is

unity in our belief that this institution has a bright future."

Spears led the President's Cabinet, comprised of the vice presidents and other key administrators of the university. "I am indebted to this group of student-focused leaders, who provided daily support and helped steer CU during our transition," he said.

After developing the Louisville Education Center and other regional centers, Spears served as vice president for communication and assistant to the president at Campbellsville University from 2016 until the summer of 2019 when he was named senior vice president.

Spears has brought entrepreneurial ideas to the university with the creation and expansion of online programs in China, offices in India, and with preliminary results for new academic opportunities in Europe, Africa, and Central America.

Dr. Donna Hedgepath, provost and vice president for academic affairs said, "I have worked closely with Keith Spears over the past several years. He has a way of seeing opportunities that others can't. I am pleased to see what the future holds as he focuses on leading the university toward new, bold initiatives."

He and his wife, Rita Kay Spears, and their family have dedicated their careers to education and public service. Rita is a former adult student advisor at Marshall University.

OBU Launches Tom Elliff Center for Missions

OBU announced the launch of the Tom Elliff Center for Missions, Jan. 24, 2022. The university likewise announced the appointment of Dr. Elbert Smith as director of the center and assistant professor of missions; Dr. Mike Hand as special assistant to the president for great commission initiatives; and Dr. Tom Elliff as lecturer, mentor and facilitator in missions.

“It brings me no greater joy than to announce the creation of the Tom Elliff Center for Missions,” said OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas. “This center will enhance our missions education at OBU through forums and mentorship, facilitate growth through scholarships, recruit students and partners, and connect churches to OBU and the world. Tom is a passionate advocate for advancing the gospel and this center in his name carries that same passion for gospel advance in our day.”

Thomas is excited about the team who will direct the activities of the center, as each of the new appointments has significant experience in missions, equipping and training others, and in building relationships around the globe.

“The Tom Elliff Center for Missions is positioned to help OBU be the global leader in missions education in the world,” Thomas said. “Dr. Elbert Smith, who has trained more missionaries than anyone, Dr. Mike Hand, who will connect churches to OBU and the world, and Dr. Tom Elliff, who will be mentoring students and pouring his wisdom into their lives, all three complement a world-class faculty and enhance OBU missions education. If anyone desires to be equipped to serve Christ among the nations, OBU is the place to do it.”

Thomas expounded on the significance not only of naming the center for Tom Elliff but also of having him present mentoring, lecturing, and equipping

OBU students. “Dr. Elliff has spent his life reaching others with the gospel of Jesus Christ as a pastor, a denominational leader, and a missionary. OBU shares his desire to impact and equip the next generations of ministry leaders and missionaries for the call for the gospel to go to all the nations as we are told in Matthew 28:18-20.”

Students are equipped for their callings as missionaries through one of two OBU programs, the Bachelor of Arts in Global Marketplace Engagement and the Bachelor of Arts in Cross-Cultural Ministry. The center will enhance the education experience by introducing OBU students to key mission leaders on the field through missions forums and additional events to be held regularly on campus. Local churches will connect through the center as they send students to OBU and support their efforts to go into the world to advance the gospel. A generous ministry partner has funded the work of the center and provided resources to achieve its purpose.

“A unique feature of the partnership between local churches, OBU, and the mission field is that local churches have the opportunity to invest in the mission experience of students from their home churches,” Thomas said. “Local partner churches will help support their students at OBU through scholarships, prayer, and encouragement as students are equipped to go on mission to the world.”

The Elliff Center will also partner with OBU’s Avery T. Willis Center for Global Outreach to equip OBU students for missions through global outreach training and hands-on experience on the mission field.

After pastoring for 42 years, Elliff served as the International Mission Board’s president from 2011–2014, as senior vice president for spiritual nurture and

church relations from 2005–2009, and as a missionary in Zimbabwe from 1981–1983. He has pastored churches in Arkansas, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma including his service as pastor of First Southern, Del City, Oklahoma, from 1985 to 2005. He served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors’ Conference, and two terms as president of the SBC. Elliff earned a bachelor’s degree from Ouachita Baptist University, a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Smith began as a church planter in Mexico, before overseeing more than 150 missionaries from Mexico to Panama. He currently serves as an international trainer at the Global Training Centre in Redhill, United Kingdom. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in religion from OBU, a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Doctor of Ministry in church and mission from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in applied theology: missions from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Hand served as a pastor for 35 years before going to work for the International Mission Board. In 2016, he went to work for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma as the partnership mission strategist. He currently focuses on consulting. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in music from Tennessee Temple College, a Master of Ministry from Tennessee Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in leadership from Tennessee Temple University. He also received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from the Southern Baptist School for Biblical Studies.



Southwest Baptist University Inaugurates Rick Melson As Its 26th President

BOLIVAR, Mo. – Southwest Baptist University celebrated the inauguration of Richard J. Melson, Ph.D., as its 26th president in a ceremony Wednesday, March 2, on the Bolivar campus.

The inauguration formally commemorates the beginning of Dr. Melson's leadership at SBU, while celebrating the University's rich history and reaffirming the University's mission of being a Christ-centered, caring academic community preparing students to be servant leaders in a global society.

Perspectives were given by U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt; Dr. C. Pat Taylor, President Emeritus of SBU; Mayor of the City of Bolivar,

Christopher D. Warwick; Jon Nelson, President of the Missouri Baptist Convention; John L. Yeats, Executive Director of the MBC; Nathan Wright, SBU Faculty Senate President; Chance Bedell, Staff Council President; and Tyler Eads, Senior Ambassador of the President.

Charlie Waldburger, business writer and strategist, presented a scripture reading, followed by the introduction of Dr. Melson by Dr. Rick Mann, professor of Leadership and Strategy and Director of MBA/DBA programs at Trevecca Nazarene University. Dr. Jerry L. Gillis Jr., lead pastor of The Chapel in Buffalo, N.Y., delivered the inaugural message.

"The prestigious role you're now inhabiting, Dr. Melson, is one filled with promise and hope for the future, while also carrying with it the heavy weight of responsibility," Gillis said. "The proverbial phrase is, in this moment, perfectly apt: 'With great power comes great responsibility.'"

"My appeal with that statement is to Christians because it makes me think of Christ. We think of Jesus here, not because he made this statement but because he answers the larger question that this statement begs: If great power comes with great responsibility, then what exactly is that power and responsibility for? I would suggest to you the great

power and responsibility are for the purpose of demonstrating the humble and sacrificial heart of God.”

Gillis pointed to Jesus’ last week on Earth when he was privately ministering to His disciples. They met and ate together for one last time in the upper room, after which Jesus humbled himself and washed the feet of the disciples.

“May the humble heart of God in you, Dr. Melson, surprise people,” Gillis said. “May your humility be unapologetic for King Jesus that breeds a culture of humility on this campus and beyond. And may your surprising humility, your power used for service be a model for every student and faculty member that will experience your life. In fact, may what they experience actually be the life of Jesus in you.

“So, Dr. Melson – Rick – may you lead this university with the strength and grace of Jesus. May your heart always be pure and may your feet be willingly dirty, so that others may be clean.”

During the presidential investiture, Dr. Melson was presented with the presidential medallion and chain of office by David Brown, vice-chairman of SBU’s Board of Trustees.

“It is my great pleasure, as vice chair of the Southwest Baptist University Board of Trustees, to install you in the office of President of SBU with all of its requisite rights, privileges and responsibilities,” Brown said. “By accepting the presidential medal-

lion, you accept the charge to serve the Lord in this position with diligence, dedication, vision, and integrity as you carry out the duties as president of Southwest Baptist University.”



In his inauguration speech, Dr. Melson emphasized that SBU stands unapologetically as a Christ-centered university.

“We’re not merely an academic institution comprised of Christian faculty, staff and students. Rather, we’re a Christ-centered institution, rooted in biblical orthodoxy and scholarly orthopraxy and committed to the holistic development of every student,” Dr. Melson said.

“SBU is uniquely positioned as a caring, academic community to support students in a partnership of transformational learning, growth in the context of biblical truth, intentional discipleship, committed to equipping graduates to become those biblical servant leaders who glorify God and make him known. They go out and make an impact in the world for Christ. As I like to say, ‘We are making world-changers at SBU.’”

Dr. Melson has had the opportunity to meet SBU alumni from

several decades and has enjoyed hearing their stories.

“Every alumni story has one common theme – the meaningful relationships with faculty, staff, and students who made a transformational impact on your life that created a lifelong bond to the SWBC/SBU Bearcat family,” Dr. Melson said. “This is the outcome of a Christ-centered, caring academic community. Each of those alumni have been pointed to Christ by fellow students, by faculty, and by staff.

“SBU alumni are leading and serving around the world, in every sphere of society, from healthcare to finance, from the pulpit to the halls of justice, from social work to the legislature, from the classroom to the boardroom, and everywhere in between – each one of them are on mission to know Christ and to make Him known.

“So, today, SBU family, let us rise to the challenges before us. Let us take hold of the opportunities that await us, and let us lead SBU to its greatest days ahead, all for God’s glory and our exceeding joy.”

Dr. Melson was elected as the 26th President of SBU on Aug. 19, 2021, and began his service on Sept. 7, 2021. He brings more than 25 years of transformational leadership to SBU. He joined SBU from Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio, where he served as vice president for advancement and associate professor of business administration since July 2016.

BAPTIST HIGHER EDUCATION AND A CALL TO KINGDOM VISION TO FLOURISH IN AN AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

Lecture 2: Embracing the Kingdom of God and the Pillars of Peace and Joy

The following lecture is the second of three Hester Lectures delivered By Dr. Elijah Brown, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

The Kingdom of God and the Pillar of Peace

In an age of globalization, Baptist Higher Education is called to embrace a vision of the Kingdom of God. According to Romans 14:17, this vision of the Kingdom of God is built upon three pillars: righteousness, peace, and joy. Is the Kingdom of God enough?

Several years ago, I was in Ukraine to visit the border of the temporarily occupied territories. It is an area they call the “Grey Zone” and is less than one mile from the conflict line in eastern Ukraine where for the last six

years war has ravaged. We had already met with the President of Ukraine, the Prime Minister of Ukraine, and the Speaker of the Parliament. We drove through villages impacted by violence even as the UN Security Council voted that very week to reject efforts to send peacekeepers. We stopped at bombed out apartment buildings and stared across fields laced with landmines. We heard the cry of the elderly woman who stood just steps away from a bomb shelter pleading, “This winter should I buy coal to heat my home or food to eat?”

We visited with Baptist pastors who briefly came out of the temporarily occupied territories to share their experience. They described being pulled into the woods and beaten, being robbed, church closures, and the confiscation of buildings. One of the older pastors noted that the persecution they were experiencing

was worse than anything they faced during the times of Soviet Communism.

In January 2020, the governments in the temporarily occupied territories banned the Baptist hymnal as well as some translations of the Gospel of John because they were “extremist material.” When did songs like Amazing Grace, How Great Thou Art, and Holy, Holy, Holy become radical material? When did the Gospel of John become extremist material? Or perhaps we should ask, when did they stop?

We passed through a small community filled with thousands of displaced persons whose Ukrainian community name translates as “peace.” The name was griping as we realized “peace” is under threat.

In an age of globalization, Baptist Higher Education is called to embrace a vision of the

Kingdom of God. God's flourishing Kingdom encompasses the restoration of a right relationship with God, or salvation, and a right relationship with people, or justice. Paul summarizes this teaching in Romans 14:17 to note that a Kingdom of God vision is built upon three pillars: righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The Greek word for "peace" in this passage is *eirene*, and almost half of its ninety instances in the New Testament are found in the writings of Paul. In Galatians 3, Paul writes that it is only in the transformation of Jesus Christ that peace is possible in the midst of structures and categories that so often divide, namely race, class, and gender. In 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Paul challenges followers of Christ to eschew the Roman vision of "peace and security" and instead to pursue peace in the midst of the turbulence of this world. Peace in the Holy Spirit is not self-centered, but a commitment to allow the Holy Spirit to flow through the believer as a positive attestation to Jesus' teaching, "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9).

As institutions of Baptist Higher Education, to support a flourishing vision of every student is to affirm a responsibility to help students pursue peace in a time when there is such yearning for true peace. In the midst of competing visions of peace, it is to help students develop a worldview that prioritizes flourishing in the Kingdom even if that runs counter to "peace and security" in

the world. It is to recognize that every institution has a context, neighborhood, and community into which they are called to live as models of peacemaking and to release their students to live as ambassadors of peace in the Holy Spirit in every corner of the world, especially in the midst of suffering. As Karen Kirlew states, "Jesus' mission was to enter into the spaces of the displaced, the rejected, the unloved and unwanted in order to share with them His redemptive and salvific nature." To be an agent of peace is to choose the path of suffering and to embrace the suffering of the world. It is to live a cruciform love. Jesus teaches us that only outstretched arms can embrace the pain of the suffering around the world. Only crucified love can turn the kiss of betrayal into the birth of hope.

Without question there is much suffering around the world. At more than 70 million people, there are as many displaced people today as there has been in the previous seventy years. Scholars estimate that as a result of Covid-19, 240 million people could step back into poverty reversing a decade of progress. Even now there are 51 countries where less than 5% of the population has received a single dose of a Covid-19 vaccine, and 30 countries where 1%

or less have received a single dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. Hunger, war, genocide, racial injustice, domestic violence, human trafficking, entrenched poverty and many more injustices, all remain pressing burdens. In the near-term, violence and widespread social disruption often follow pandemics and peak by approximately 14 months after the onset of the pandemic. Change is accelerating and we may well be living through an epochal change in technology with implications of significant societal upheaval that, in an age of interconnectedness and globalization, will flow more fluidly between previous spheres of local, national, and international.

Engaging Reconciliation as an Integral Component to Peace

There is an urgency to living and leading with a flourishing vision of the Kingdom of God that



builds upon peace and peacemaking as an integral pillar.

In his book, *Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence*, Rabbi Johnathan Sacks uses Genesis to offer insightful typology in the degree to which humanity will seek brotherhood.

To put it simplistically, Genesis asks us to grapple with a fundamental question: to what extent will humanity pursue peace as brothers and sisters?

As Sacks writes, “The central question of Genesis is: are human beings friends or strangers, brothers or others?” Genesis begins with Cain killing his brother Abel and rejecting his responsibility as a brother. Genesis concludes with Joseph reconciling by forgiving and providing for his brothers even though they had sought his death. To Cain’s question, “Am I my brother’s keeper,” (Genesis 4:9) Joseph gives a final resounding answer forty-six chapters later to his brothers, “I will provide for you and your children” (Genesis 50:21). Joseph becomes an agent of peace that reconciles by accepting the necessity of suffering and embracing the responsibility of forgiveness even when costly wrong has been personally experienced.

Rabbi Sacks argues that between these two great narratives of death and reconciliation are a series of reflections on the nature of brotherhood. On one extreme is the brotherhood of Cain and Able that in the face of jealousy, questions over resources, and questions of religious practice

accept the reality of murder, permanent rejection, division and a lack of personal responsibility towards others. The next iteration in Genesis is that of Isaac and Ishmael who recognize there are moments of solemnity, such as both attending their father

Abraham’s funeral, that require recognition but otherwise leave relationships divided. The third typology is that of Esau and Jacob who do pursue a form of restoration but one that remains marked by suspicion and struggle. Genesis concludes with the reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers and the establishment of one community with shared responsibility.

To put it simplistically, Genesis asks us to grapple with a fundamental question: To what extent will humanity pursue peace as brothers and sisters? The four presented typologies are rejection, recognition, suspicion, and reconciliation. Even when it requires personal pain and sacrifice, the Scriptures urge the pursuit of reconciliation. For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of personal consumption and choice but of righteousness and salvation, peace, and justice.

Some years ago, I was in Ethiopia visiting with individuals persecuted for their Christian faith. During a church service, a community mob attacked the church in the middle of the worship ser-

vice. The choir was sitting down, and the pastor was rising to preach. The mob burst in, machetes raised, and the joy of worship was replaced with the wails of lament. Several were killed, and some were permanently injured.

One who was injured was Noru. He lost his left hand during that attack. He was taken to a hospital to recuperate and then eventually returned to his home village. However, because he had lost his hand, he was unable to work. He learned that a person who had helped organize this attack had a very sick son. Noru described that since he was unable to work, he could watch after this young boy so that his father would be able to work. Noru took the child into his own home and personally nurtured him back to health. After describing that experience, Noru said, “Whatever the cost I will stand for Jesus.”

Is the Kingdom of God enough? Will we give whatever the cost if to stand with Jesus requires pursuing peace and justice? The Kingdom of God calls believers to pursue a vision of flourishing societies around the common good that sacrificially cares by building bridges over antagonisms and divisions.

This vision of Kingdom peace should influence the recruitment, application, and scholar-

ship process employed by Baptist institutions of Higher Education. It should influence the character of the community being nurtured by Baptist institutions within their classrooms and campus. It should influence the relationship and investment between Baptist institutions and their immediate context and community. It should influence the ways in which Baptist institutions engage in the world at large.

Engaging with the Vulnerable as an Integral Component to Peace

In addition to reconciliation, a Kingdom vision of peace is to engage with the vulnerable.

As Baptists holding to a Kingdom vision of societal flourishing, concern for justice extends to all people in all places of all faiths or to those who hold no faith. At a worldwide level, many Baptists live out their faith in the midst of some of the most pressing challenges in the world today. While many challenges could be considered, four challenges that face a significant portion of the Baptist family at a global level can be highlighted.

The first is hunger. Hunger is a powerful force. It is a God-given characteristic common to all of humanity. Those who lose their chronic sense of hunger are often on the precipice of physical

sickness, significant depression, or the doorway to death.

Structures can enforce conditions that over-extend hunger. While, poverty does not discriminate, discrimination influences poverty. Non-livable wages, under-employment, and the structures of societies imbued with an ethos of comfort and security can create conditions where hunger festers and where entire segments of our brothers and sisters live in chronic hunger.

Hunger is neglected at a great price. Contexts of chronic hunger lead to higher infant mortality. At a global level, contexts of chronic hunger often correlate to a lack of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, both of which are necessary for societies to flourish. There are far too many children, especially those under the age of 5, who still die every year from diarrhea. In contexts of chronic hunger, children are the first victims. The very children whom Jesus said to remove hinderance and provide welcome (Luke 18:15-17).

Hunger stands behind war and conflict today. Evil forces continue to target food sources, burn down crops, destroy the harvest, and steal the livestock. They inflict starvation and famine as a

weapon of war and a tool for control.

Hunger relates to refugee flows and population migrations today. Hunger stalks failed states and failed neighborhoods. Hunger can be commodified and weaponized. The wealthy can overindulge while the cries of starvation and famine echo from the corners of our world.

Seventeen million BWA Baptists live in countries where hunger is most alarming and serious. 37% of all BWA Baptists face the most significant levels of hunger. This includes the countries of Zambia, Haiti, and Uganda. What does it mean to live as Baptists in pursuit of peace when 37% of BWA Baptists minister in the midst of the most significant levels of hunger?

The second significant challenge is livelihood challenges defined as life expectancy, education, and average income. For example, the average GDP among Baptists per region is in USD:

- Africa: \$1,482
- Asia Pacific: \$18,425
- Caribbean: \$9,267
- Europe and the Middle East: \$21,811
- Latin America: \$7,279

As Baptists holding to a Kingdom vision of societal flourishing, concern for justice extends to all people in all places of all faiths or to those who hold no faith.

- North America: \$49,683

Thirty-nine percent of all BWA churches have members where the average annual GDP is less than \$10,000. 26% have an average annual GDP less than \$2,000. Countries with significant challenges and a larger Baptist presence include South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Based on the UN Human Development Index, 22 million Baptists or 47% of all BWA Baptists face the most significant livelihood challenges.

The third significant challenge relates to ongoing restrictions on religion and social violence based on religion. Religious freedom for people of all faiths or of no faith is a core value of Baptist identity rooted into the reality that the Baptist movement began with religious refugees choosing the conviction of conscience. The first document written in English arguing for religious freedom for all was penned by the Baptist, Thomas Helwys. The First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees religious freedom and owes its inclusion to a significant extent to Baptist advocacy and leaders such as John Leland. In 1945, BWA General Secretary Walter Lewis traveled to San Francisco alongside other BWA leaders to the conference that gave rise to the establishment of the United Nations. Together these Baptist leaders spent three weeks pressing on all sides for the new UN Charter to include a

guarantee of full religious freedom for every person of every faith perspective. Lewis brought with him a petition signed by 100,000 BWA Baptists from around the world supporting this initiative. There are those who believe that this petition signed by 100,000 Baptists in the midst of World War II, and the work of the BWA in collaboration with other people of faith led specifically to Article 18 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and a commitment by the

Religious freedom for people of all faiths or of no faith is a core value of Baptist identity rooted into the reality that the Baptist movement began with religious refugees choosing the conviction of conscience.

United Nations to embrace religious freedom.

Issues of religious freedom continue to emerge. On the one hand, especially in areas of higher education, are new definitions within various governmental and accrediting agencies that threaten to undermine the ability of Baptist institutions to fully live out their faith. One of the largest Baptist seminaries in Europe is actively preparing for a situation in which they cannot continue to receive accreditation either because of their convictions around certain issues or because of expense. On the other hand, especially within churches and at the grassroots level, the greatest threat to religious freedom at

present is not the incursion of the state into the church but of the church embracing the state. As Baptist institutions of Higher Education let us hold to our four-hundred-year legacy of pressing for separation of church and state and religious freedom for all.

In many countries around the world, religious freedom is absent or social violence on the basis of religion is present. For example, last year in Kaduna State, Nigeria, 105 Baptists were killed by terrorist actions. In April 2021, an attack on a Baptist church left several dead and four women kidnapped. In a southeast Asian country last year, a pastor posted a prayer to social media along the lines of, “Jesus, would you heal

any in our country who have been infected by Covid-19.” For posting that prayer, the pastor was put in prison.

Eleven million BWA Baptists, 24% of all BWA Baptists, face both the most significant government restrictions and the most significant social violence based on religion. This includes countries such as Syria, Bangladesh, and Russia.

The fourth significant challenge is that of war and violent conflict. Ten million BWA Baptists, or 22% of all BWA Baptists, face the most significant levels of war and violent conflict. This includes countries such as Turkey, Ukraine, and Lebanon.

As Baptist institutions of Higher Education there is a calling to live out a vision of the Kingdom of God with a mandate to pursue peace by embracing the “extremist material” of the Gospels, fostering reconciliation, and prioritizing standing together with those facing great vulnerability.

Other challenges could be readily identified such as climate change, refugee migrations, xenophobic nationalism, restrictions on democracy, artificial intelligence, the rise of automated weapons, and the ongoing ethics and regulations on issues related to the intersection of technology, humanity, and human rights. However, at present the BWA is focusing on these four primary challenges: hunger, livelihood, persecution, and war and violence. As the BWA engages in these areas, our concern, advocacy, and aid is for all individuals of all faiths who face these realities.

In 2020, the BWA published the BWA Vulnerability Index. All 126 countries with a BWA Baptist body were scored along a metric that intersected annually updated BWA membership data with other global indexes and direct BWA regional leadership input. The end result was a unique BWA Baptist Vulnerability Index with nine countries simultaneously facing challenges across all four categories:

- 1 Central African Republic
- 2 Nigeria
- 3 Sudan
- 4 Syria
- 5 Ethiopia

- 6 India
- 7 Chad
- 8 Democratic Republic of Congo
- 9 South Sudan

Thirteen million Baptists, 27% of all BWA Baptists, face the most significant levels of vulnerability. Each of these conventions are partners with their own giftedness and some are themselves strong and healthy. But each Baptist convention or union in these nine countries are ministering in the midst of the highest levels of hunger, livelihood, violent conflict, and religious freedom vulnerabilities. The BWA is asking Baptists around the world to identify ways and opportunities to prioritize partnership with Baptists in the most vulnerable situations.

As Baptist institutions of higher education there is a calling to live out a vision of the Kingdom of God with a mandate to pursue peace by embracing the “extremist material” of the Gospels, fostering reconciliation, and prioritizing standing together with those facing great vulnerability.

The Kingdom of God and the Pillar of Joy

Crucially, Romans 14:17 adds one final pillar necessary to liv-

ing out the Kingdom of God: joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17 reads, “For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Joy, in the Greek *chara*, is found fifty-nine times in the New Testament and with twenty utilizations, most often in the writings of Paul. In 2 Corinthians 7:4, Paul admonishes, “I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.” In 1 Thessalonians 1:6, Paul writes, “You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.”

We are to pursue a vision of the Kingdom of God in joy in the Holy Spirit. We are to pursue righteousness and proclamation of salvation in joy in the Holy Spirit. We are to pursue peace and justice in joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17 indicates that the Kingdom of God involves righteousness, that is a right relationship with God; peace, that is a right relationship between people; and joy, an internal transformation of right character. Joy is a marker of the Kingdom, and it is joy in the Holy Spirit.

When I was in Somalia one of the underground believers was a leader named Abdullahi. He and his wife Hani had four children and adopted five additional children who had no family of their own. In 2016, Hani's family clan realized that they were Christians. The clan noted they would not interfere with Abdullahi's personal beliefs but that it would be unacceptable to allow their daughter and her children to follow the false religion of Christianity. One night they came and stole away Abdullahi's wife and nine children leaving him "heartbroken." For Abdullahi this situation was more difficult than what he had experienced when he was incarcerated for his faith in Jesus as a teenager. Yet after describing this depressing situation, Abdullahi looked up and said with resolve:

This is my prayer, "Lord will you give me joy? I am trying to be the light and the salt." When those who know what has happened to me and how my family has been stolen see me, they will ask, "how can he have joy?" Then I will be able to share with them about Jesus.

Joy in the Holy Spirit. In the framework of Romans 14:17, the everyday blessings that fill our lives such as children, health, successful undertakings, nature, a good meal and so much more, can strengthen our sense of joy. However, they are not the source of our joy. Joy must be defined and rooted into a vision of the Kingdom of God and the glory of Jesus. Joy that accepts that the Kingdom of God is enough. As

the author of Hebrews writes in Hebrews 10:34, "You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions." Joy is in the Holy Spirit and in the Kingdom of God.

Joy in the Kingdom of God enables contentment without jealousy. As leaders of Baptist institutions of higher education, you are called to a particular place with particular strengths and challenges. It is easy to live and lead in doubt, fear, and suspicion. It is expected for leaders to live and lead with tremendous external and internal pressures to perform and outperform. It is human nature to idealize the circumstances of those in other leadership positions. We must let go of leadership identities based in fear, performance, people pleasing, relevance, and comparison, and embrace joy in the Holy

Joy in the Holy Spirit allows us to live and lead with a vision of God's Kingdom.

Spirit.

Joy in the Holy Spirit allows us to live and lead with a vision of God's Kingdom. It allows us to accept the giftedness of others serving alongside us. It allows us to hear, when necessary, correction and redirection. Joy in the Holy Spirit allows us to resist the temptation to live as celebrities.

Joy allows us to walk alongside our brothers and sisters as whole people with a desire to see Kingdom flourishing. Joy gives the freedom to walk in suffering and with those who are suffering. Joy allows for witness without resentment, defense, or domination.

Joy in the Holy Spirit with a vision of the Kingdom of God enables what James Davidson Hunter describes as "faithful presence within" culture and society and "represents an alternative to the 'defensive against,' 'relevance to,' and 'purity from' paradigms." In our plural society that too often produces over-indulgence, domination, nihilism, and meaninglessness, living in joy rooted in God allows us as individuals and institutions to live as a faithful presence within that calls for joyful flourishing for all of society.

For the follower of Christ, joy in the Holy Spirit allows for the nurturing of healthy perseverance, resilience, and adaptation, all of which are necessary for organizational leadership today. The burden of organizational leadership today is heavy, especially in the crucible of crisis. At a personal level you will have to bear more than any will know, and you will know more than you can ever share. The last fifteen months of the pandemic have been a shock to our personal and organizational systems. The implications of those shocks are likely to reverberate for an extended period requiring additional resilience and adaptation. Joy in the Holy Spirit allows us

to listen to our own bodies in order to maintain long-term perseverance. Joy in the Holy Spirit allows us to listen to what the Lord is doing within the community body and to respond to that quiet voice.

As leaders, every one of us finds value and encouragement in student enrollment, graduations, program additions, endowment, and all of the other markers of success in the world of education as well as positive daily interactions with faculty, staff, and students. There are seasons when these are known naturally and that is to be celebrated but every marker of success and relational interaction fluctuates. By locating our joy and contentment in a personal relationship with Jesus, we can build perseverance.

A Kingdom vision of joyful flour-

ishing for our communities recognizes that there are different seasons. There are seasons to plant deep roots that do not yield quick fruit; seasons for toiling, pruning, and breaking up the soil; seasons of rest; and seasons of harvest and growth.

In an age of anxiety and ongoing leadership pressure, as leaders we are called to model joy in the Holy Spirit. Part of the reason why this is difficult is because so many leaders are tired. We have lost the sense of joy ourselves. We can become proficient in responding to the next crisis and living reactively. We can become so proficient in the mechanics of daily leadership that our vision tunnels and our joy at a personal level recedes.

Can I encourage each of us to find space in our lives? After this

season of sustained challenge, can I encourage us to pause, rest, and each in our own way to pursue joy in the Holy Spirit?

Conclusion

In Romans 14:17, Paul offers a summative statement of a holistic vision. As followers of Christ, we are called to pursue a flourishing vision of the Kingdom of God built around three interconnected pillars. To embrace this vision is to welcome an upward movement towards God, an outward movement towards people, and an inner movement in the Holy Spirit. Called to flourish as individuals, institutions, and as missional communities throughout the world in an age of globalization, we affirm again that the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Yellowstone Christian College Moves From Billings to Kalispell, Montana

Dr. Marvin Jones, president of YCC, said “I am beyond elated that we have taken this step toward more effective ministry as we plan for the future...This decision reflects a unified effort of the Board of Directors as we all truly sensed God’s leading to the Kalispell property.”

Formerly owned by Summit Preparatory

School, the mountain top campus sits on 563 tree-studded, semi-secluded acres. The main building wraps around an outdoor courtyard and consists of two large halls with a massive stone fireplace, a commercial kitchen with walk-in coolers and freezers, an indoor pool, weightroom, game room, gymnasium,

weightroom, and numerous classrooms and offices.

Two residence halls include their own kitchen facilities, open area TV rooms with a fireplace, large bathrooms, and laundry rooms. The nearby soccer field is flanked by several small cabins.





Photo courtesy of Samford University.

Please join us for the 2022 IABCU Annual Meeting June 5-7, 2022 at Samford University. Registration is open now at www.BaptistSchools.org. We welcome *Dr. Michael Lindsay* as our Hester Lecturer.

D. Michael Lindsay, Ph.D., serves as the president of Taylor University. As president, Lindsay is committed to furthering the university's distinctive mission of providing excellent, Christ-centered higher education and strengthening its prospects for future growth and development. Lindsay previously served as president of Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts. His decade-long tenure as the eighth president of Gordon coincided with record years of fundraising, campus diversity, sponsored research, athletic success, and faith expression on campus. Prior to arriving at Gordon, Lindsay was a member of the sociology faculty at Rice University, where he won multiple awards both for his teaching and academic research. He is the author of two dozen scholarly publications and numerous books, including, *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite*, which was nominated for the nonfiction Pulitzer Prize in 2007, and his award-winning *View from the Top*, which has been translated into Chinese and Japanese. His most recent book, *Hinge Moments*, was launched globally on the Taylor campus in 2021 and is published with InterVarsity Press.



Lindsay earned his Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton University and graduate theological degrees from Wycliffe Hall at Oxford University and Princeton Theological Seminary. He is a summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Baylor University where he has been named Outstanding Young Alumnus.

Lindsay has been married for over 25 years to his wife Rebecca, an accomplished teacher and speaker who serves as Taylor's Ambassador for the University. They are the proud parents of three daughters, Elizabeth, Caroline, and Emily.

BCU Scholars Report

The Baptist College and University (BCU) Scholars program is one of the most unique and valued partnerships the Baylor University Graduate School maintains with IABCU schools. As you well know, in addition to providing Christian formation, it also prepares Ph.D. students for faculty and administrative jobs in Baptist higher education. This year, an active cohort of fifteen students have met regularly together, reading through essays on Baptist education, discussing faith statements, and talking with Don Schmeltekopf. Our 2022-2023 scholars represent eight different Ph.D. programs, and several are approaching the final years of their Ph.D.'s--including Scott Alexander (Department of Higher Education Studies and Leadership), Jonathan Stanfill (Mathematics), Sean Strehlow (Department of Higher Education Studies and Leadership), and Jacob Randolph (Religion). You may find the complete list of our active BCU scholars at our online directory, and we look forward to bringing several of our scholars to the 2022 IABCU meeting at Samford.

We are pleased to announce Jacob Randolph as the new Schmeltekopf Fellow for 2021-2022. The Schmeltekopf Fellowship for Educational leadership was founded by Donald and Judy



Schmeltekopf to provide additional mentorship for exceptional BCU scholars. Former Provost at Baylor University, Don Schmeltekopf remains one of Christian education's greatest advocates and continues to support the BCU Scholars program. A Ph.D. candidate in Religion currently finishing his dissertation, Jake is interested in both teaching at a Baptist university as well as participation in administration. Jake is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University. When asked to apply to the BCU program, he wrote, "Oklahoma Baptist provided me with professors who were experts in their field and pastoral in their approach. At OBU I learned to think critically and care deeply, because my professors embodied the highest ideals of Christian education—that the Christian life is the never-ending pursuit of God's truth, a life of 'faith seeking understanding'. OBU gave me a vision for my vocation and showed me firsthand the kind of professor I want to be for future students. It is the same vision that animates my current research and teaching as a BCU scholar at Baylor, and the OBU vision will continue to enliven me in the future points of my academic journey." In addition to being a full-time graduate student, Jake and his wife are the adoptive parents of two children and remain very active in their church community.

—Jonathan Stanfill, BCU Scholar

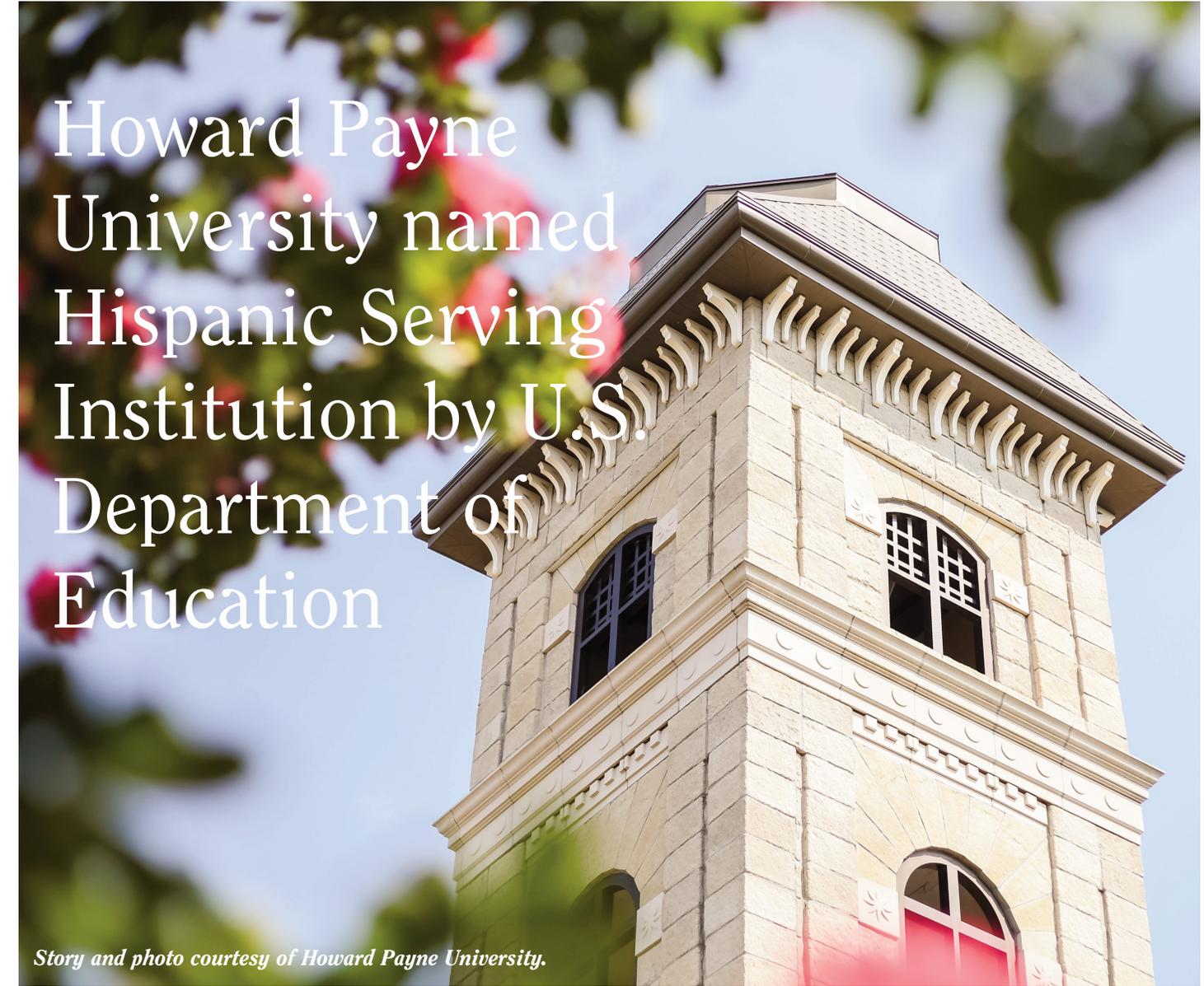
BCU SCHOLAR

Jacob Randolph

*Previously studied at
Oklahoma Baptist University*

*Currently seeking a PhD in
Religion at Baylor University*





Howard Payne University named Hispanic Serving Institution by U.S. Department of Education

Story and photo courtesy of Howard Payne University.

Howard Payne University was recently named a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) by the U.S. Department of Education. The designation will allow HPU to expand financial aid options and support for Hispanic students.

Dr. Cory Hines '97, HPU President, said that the designation highlights the importance of Hispanic students to the growth and continued success of the university.

“We are honored to be named a Hispanic Serving Institution,” said Dr. Hines. “Through this designation, we are gaining additional tools to better serve students at our university. I look forward to HPU continuing to serve Hispanic students and fostering advancement for all of our constituencies.”

According to the Department of Education’s web-

site, HSIs are eligible institutions of higher education that have an enrollment of undergraduate full-time students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students. The HSI designation and associated grants are intended to expand and enhance institutions’ academic offerings, program quality and institutional stability.

Karen LaQuey, director of student financial aid at HPU, said that the additional financial aid options will be a vital part of the university’s continuing efforts to serve Hispanic students.

“We are excited to begin utilizing the additional opportunities that are being made available to HPU and students here,” she said. “These resources offer an excellent opportunity to serve Hispanic students, who are a central part of our university’s mission.”

A philanthropic gift was recently made to Campbell University to support Dr. Tom Motyka's research on musculoskeletal dysfunction and pain.

Dr. Motyka is an associate professor and Chair of Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine and will administer several projects on musculoskeletal pain and dysfunction including osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) as well as prolotherapy.

The anonymous gift was also designated for the creation of an Osteopathic Research Fellowship for medical students and provided funding and support for other projects related to musculoskeletal dysfunction and pain research. The research fellowship will serve as a gap year program and is intended to further training and experience in research specific to osteopathic medicine.

The first fellow, Cailee Dean, started July 5th and will continue for the entirety of the academic year. Dr. Motyka expressed his thanks for Student Doctor Dean's willingness to embark on this project as the inaugural fellow.

"As a rising 3rd year student, she com-

pleted Sim Month and passed her boards, then she totally changed her life in a matter of a few weeks. She was set to start rotations, but once we were able to offer her the fellowship, she quickly moved back and changed her plans." The inaugural fellow will participate in several research projects funded by the gift, teach in the OMM labs for first and second year medical students, and shadow Dr. Motyka in clinic to receive more OMT training and practice.

While Motyka is the head of the fellowship, other members of the Campbell Medicine faculty – currently, Drs. Gish, Foster, Petrovic, and Hinkelman – are also serving as principle investigators for bench research and the basic science research specific to osteopathic principles and treatments.

"All of the projects relate to musculoskeletal dysfunction and pain; we're planning projects to examine the mechanisms of prolotherapy and dextrose injections in an animal model along with a variety of other projects including motion capture in human subjects."

"Some work has previously been done in humans, but nobody understands

the mechanism by which this works, so we're seeking to understand the mechanism," Motyka shared.

Drs. Petrovic and Motyka are looking at the metabolomic characteristics of responders to bicarb supplementations. In regard to physical function, they are studying the effects of acid residue and diets on physical function and disability.

In rodent models, Dr. Adam Foster is looking at the basic mechanisms of osteoarthritis entry and treatments. Specifically, the mechanism and effects of intra-articular dextrose injections. Also, from the biomechanics perspective – does prolotherapy treatment improve load distribution in affected limbs?

The researchers are also using the gift for a collaborative project with Penn State looking at it in a mouse model.

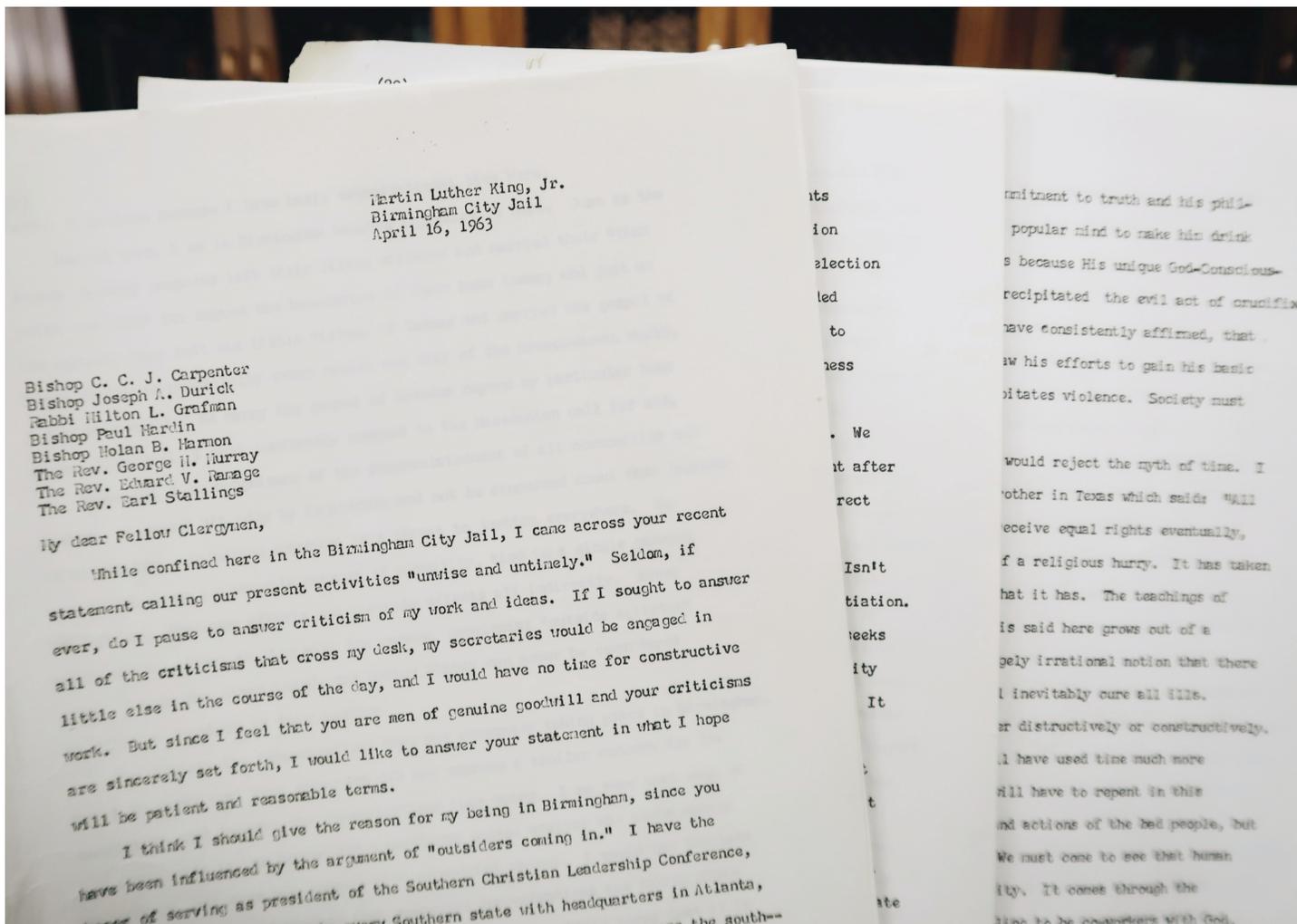
Dr. Amy Hinkleman, is doing inflammatory marker cellular work with fibroblasts.

Additionally, there are two clinical trials on pain pending approval related to pain interventions that the team hopes to announce soon.



Campbell University Receives \$1.1 Million for Osteopathic Research

Story and photo courtesy of Campbell University.



Samford Displays “Letter from Birmingham Jail” in Recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

In recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Samford University’s Davis Library has displayed one of the most influential pieces of text from the civil rights movement, an original copy of King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” dated April 16, 1963.

Photo and story courtesy of Samford University

King's letter, which powerfully stated a case for racial equality and the immediate need for social justice, still has an impact on history. On April 12, 1963, King defied a court injunction and marched through the streets of Birmingham. King and a small group of protestors were arrested and transported to the Birmingham jail where 40 years earlier, a prisoner had penned a mournful folk ballad about the place that included the line "write me a letter; save it for mail; send it in care of Birmingham jail."

Early in his eight-day imprisonment, King read a white clergymen's statement criticizing the timing of the protests and began composing a response. He gave bits and pieces of the letter to his lawyers to take back to movement headquarters, where the Reverend Wyatt Walker began compiling and editing the literary jigsaw puzzle. The 21-page, typed, double-spaced essay appears as though it is a personal correspondence, addressed to the eight white ministers. It opens with a salutation reading "My dear fellow clergymen" and concludes with "Yours for the cause of peace and brotherhood." The document, however, was never sent to the eight ministers and instead was used by the movement for public relations purposes as a response to broader criticisms from around the country. In the aftermath of the Birmingham campaign, the "Letter" became part of American folklore. It now appears in hundreds of anthologies and is studied in secondary schools and

colleges all over the world.

As one of the original typed carbon copies, this significant artifact is one of the prized possessions of the library's Special Collection. Donated to the university by George Bagley, the executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist Convention at the time of its publishing, the copy is used frequently by Samford students, and those outside of the university.

Jennifer Taylor, assistant librarian and Special Collection chair said, "It's a very great honor to have these early pieces from Dr. Martin Luther King as he was working on that letter, it's an honor for us to have them here at Samford. And they get used very often by our students and by other museums and collections around the world. We're very grateful to have them and make them available."

A second copy of the letter in the library's collection was donated by Professor Jonathan Bass, who obtained it from Bishop Joseph Durick, one of the eight clergymen addressed in the letter. Bass, an expert in civil rights history, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his book *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail."*

Bass said, "To have something in writing like this is extremely important. Dr. King spends a lot of time justifying why he's in Birmingham, the timing of the movement, which was so criticized, justifying his tactics, justifying

why he's breaking laws, and at the same time, he admonishes white moderates and white ministers for standing on the sidelines and doing very little."

It's especially important for the Samford community, particularly its students, to have this artifact nearby not only as an educational resource, but as a reminder of the history that happened in our city which affected the world.

Denise Gregory, associate provost for student success and diversity and inclusion said, "For our students it's such a great reminder of them just to see the work. It also gives them a tangible piece of material to look at to give them a visual display of the great work that he's done. We're excited to share this display with our students, to remind them of the great work Dr. Martin Luther King did, and the importance of civility with one another."

Bass noted that there is no original, first draft copy of the letter, including King's original notes. "For Special Collection to have two typed carbon copies of the letter in their collection is a real goldmine," he said. The letter was mass produced locally on mimeograph machines and through typed and retyped carbon copies.

The letter is on display in the Davis Library through the end of February 2022, but is available in Special Collection as a resource for faculty, staff, students and the community, at any time.