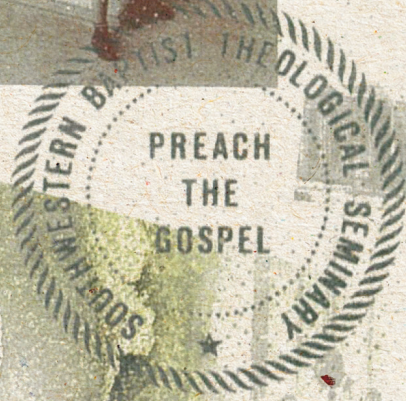




Southwestern

NEWS

ISSUE 01
A Vision for
Theological
Education



...the Holy Spirit is the author of your present
...for your future.
...field of
...I must have decision
...Feb. 1
...of your mind other than
...guidance of God's Holy Spirit.
...of their class. Your part
...it, but also can decide. The light, particularly the reference
...could do fairly well as field sacre-
...There are, and in me now, only two living men to whom I would
...first. The other I suppose is
...him if you decline. Telling both of
...of you, I will leave to Him who is never's frightened for means
...and ask Him to be your Chair of Fire.

SEMINARY HILL

Yours for the Lord's Kingdom on earth & in

Coach-in-Chief

President David S. Dockery ('81) leads Southwestern Seminary with the heart of a coach.

Teaching From the Heart

Dean Sieberhagen's love for Christ and people drive his ministry.

Life and Ministry Together

How Spencer ('07, '13) and Shelley ('08) Plumlee follow their ministry callings together.

Vol. 81
2023



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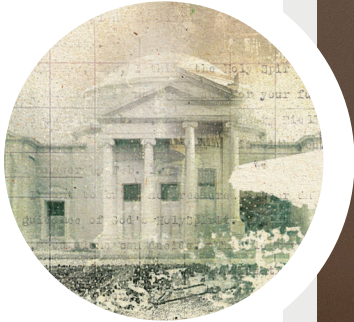
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BY ASHLEY ALLEN



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Southwestern

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A hope-filled fall semester

What an encouraging start to the fall semester on the Southwestern campus! A hopeful and prayerful spirit continues to be evident among students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Chapel services have been characterized by majestic praise and challenging messages from the Word of God. The fall semester has surpassed 15,800 credit hours taught, an increase of nearly 500 over the fall of 2022. Days devoted to prayer for Southwestern took place on October 14 and 17.

Implementing the institutional plan

Aspects of the Advance Southwestern: 2030 institutional plan have begun to be implemented as those who teach, learn, and serve at Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College seek to live out their commitments to being a grace-filled, Christ-centered, Scripturally-grounded, confessionally-guided, student-focused, and globally-engaged academic community. The globally-engaged commitments have been seen with special gatherings for international students, who now make up nearly 20% of the Southwestern student body. Moreover, almost half of the semester's chapel programs have focused on international missions, the work of the global church, and the importance of global evangelism.

Joyful, prayerful, and thankful

The Southwestern community has adopted 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 as the theme verse for this academic year, trusting the Lord to help us all become a joyful, prayerful, and thankful people. In the spring semester, the chapel services will be

devoted to preaching through the books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians as we look at the larger context for these important verses. Last spring, several faculty members led through the preaching of Philippians, modeling expositional preaching. We look forward to hearing from those who will be leading us in the days ahead as we seek to apply these inspired words from the Apostle Paul to our lives and ministries in the twenty-first century.

Seminary leadership team

We are pleased to announce members of the Seminary Leadership Team for the 2023-24 academic year: Madison Grace, provost, vice president for academic administration, and dean of the School of Theology; Travis Trawick, vice president for institutional effectiveness and strategy (and coordinator of the Advance Southwestern: 2030 plan); Chandler Snyder, vice president for enrollment and student services and dean of students; Adam Dodd, vice president for campus technology; Jack Terry, interim vice president for institutional advancement; and Dale Ford, interim vice president for financial services. They are joined by a devoted team of deans and other campus leaders, as well as dedicated faculty and staff members, who are leading Southwestern at this crucial time in the life of the institution. Southwestern continues to face multidirectional challenges, including financial, legal and governmental, accreditation, and space and property utilization, among other matters. We remain hopeful regarding the future of Southwestern when we

think about the gifted leadership of people like Madison Grace, Travis Trawick, Chandler Snyder, Adam Dodd, and others.

Ministerial advisors

On October 19, the first meeting of the Southwestern Board of Reference, a group of ministerial advisors, chaired by Jack Graham, took place on the Southwestern campus. More than 50 pastors, denominational leaders, and alums have agreed to join with this group to provide prayerful encouragement, support, counsel, and guidance for Southwestern, seeking to strengthen the Southwestern mission and extend the institution's influence.

Board of Trustees

The Southwestern Board of Trustees, meeting on October 16-18, adopted a revised budget for the 2023-24 academic year and put in place several decisions to help guide the seminary toward a more hopeful future. We are grateful for those who serve Southwestern by giving their time and wisdom to this vital work.

Preview Day

The entire Southwestern campus was greatly encouraged by those who attended Preview Day on October 20. We were thrilled with both the number and quality of prospective students, particularly among undergraduates. We are thankful for the efforts of the enrollment services team and hopeful that these who joined us on October 20 will be led to join with us in 2024 to prepare for God's calling on their lives at Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College.

We invite you to join with us

Unrestricted giving was particularly strong in the 2022-23 year. We are grateful to generous friends who invested in the kingdom work at Southwestern. Once again in 2023-24, we are trusting the Lord to prompt these institutional partners to help us with their gifts. We pledge to be good institutional stewards of the resources that the Lord provides for Southwestern.

We ask not only for your gifts and support, but also for your prayers and encouragement. While the fall semester has been quite hopeful, Southwestern continues to face many challenges. We trust you will want to join with us as you are able to participate in the work of renewal taking place on the Southwestern campus. We are grateful to God for each one of you and trust His blessings for you in the days ahead.

Faithfully,

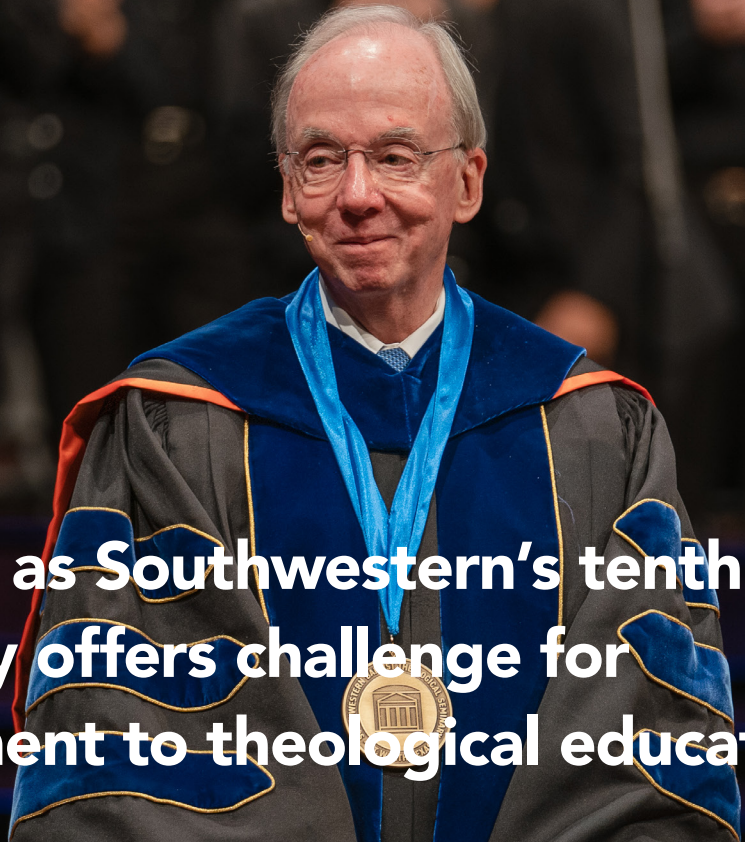
DAVID S. DOCKERY
President

O. S. HAWKINS
Chancellor





AT DAWN ON SEPT. 27, Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College students, faculty, staff, and families gathered around the flagpoles outside of the B.H. Carroll Memorial Building to pray for children, teenagers, and student ministry workers as part of the annual “See You At the Pole” day.



During installation as Southwestern's tenth president, Dockery offers challenge for renewed commitment to theological education

BEGINNING HIS 40TH YEAR OF SERVICE IN CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION, DAVID S. DOCKERY ('81) WAS OFFICIALLY INSTALLED AS THE TENTH PRESIDENT of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during an investiture ceremony that was part of the Aug. 22 convocation service at the Fort Worth institution.

In the presence of faculty, staff, students, trustee officers, new trustees, and guests, Board of Trustees Chairman Jonathan Richard exhorted Dockery to "continue the best of the Southwestern heritage to reflect the convictions of our founder, B.H. Carroll, regarding doctrinal fidelity, Gospel faithfulness, and a commitment to Christian unity and cooperation."

Richard said, "We charge you to live, serve, and lead in a way that honors the Triune God and helps this community to live out its commitments to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission." He asked Dockery to serve Southern Baptists and the evangelical community by "prioritizing the equipping of pastors, missionaries, worship leaders, teachers and educators, counselors and evangelists, as well as age group ministers."

Dockery, who was elected president by the seminary's board of trustees in April, committed to "serve faithfully in accordance" with the

charge presented by Richard on behalf of the board of trustees.

In his convocation address following the ceremony, Dockery spoke about "the basics of theological education with particular reference to our work here at Southwestern."

"I believe our focus today needs to be on the renewal of our understanding of and commitment to our primary mission of providing theological education, which encourages the Great Commandment and the fulfillment of the Great Commission," he said.

Dockery noted theology is at the "heart of theological education" at Southwestern. While the statement might be "tautological" or "obvious," he explained some might think theology is "abstract" because it "has been the path down which some have traveled to open the door to liberalism, heterodoxy or other wrongheaded thinking or practice."

He contended, however, that "theology done correctly is essential for the transmission of the Christian faith from one generation to the next and is foundational, fundamental, and basic for the work of theological education." He added that "thinking rightly about God, which is the very essence of theology" is "vital" for everyone.

Dockery, who also serves as distinguished

professor of theology, noted "Southwestern exists to serve the churches and we carry out this work primarily as the church's teaching arm."

Dockery noted the historical relationship between the church and theological education. "The history of the church has been intertwined with this important work we call theological education, even though for many years it was carried out in informal settings – even as it continues to be in various contexts today," Dockery observed.

He added the church is the "primary focus" of theology at Southwestern Seminary as the practice of theology is implemented "primarily by ecclesial theologians" who are "helping others reflect biblically and historically" on the Triune God and His Word, work, will, and world as they "prepare for a life of walking with God,

“

Southwestern exists to serve the churches and we carry out this work primarily as the church's teaching arm.

and for worshiping and serving God, as well as for serving others.”

Noting “theology is certainly not the whole of church life nor does it by itself fulfill the expectations of the Great Commandment or the Great Commission,” Dockery said, “there must be a place to encourage faithful Christ followers to love God not only with heart, soul, strength, and our minds as well, and also to love one another” while simultaneously not allowing theology to “devolve into some kind of intellectual aloofness or uncommitted intellectual curiosity.” He explained “theology is grounded in holy Scripture” and is “shaped by serious biblical interpretation, careful historical reflection, and important philosophical considerations.”

Recognizing that theology is the “foundation” for “ministry inside and outside of the church,” Dockery said theology serves the church by helping followers of Christ to know God and Christ, to fulfill the teaching and apologetics ministries of the church, and to provide “reminders” of God’s greatness, goodness, and faithfulness. He said, “Theology connects everything that is taught here on this campus,” adding “in that sense we are all theologians.”

Tracing the “pattern of Christian truth” to include “key doctrines” such as the Bible as God’s written

Word, God as Trinity and “creator, revealer, and redeemer,” men and women created in God’s image, the fall of humans, Jesus Christ “alone” as “the way, the truth, and the life,” while Christ also accomplished the redemption of humankind as the lone way to God for sinners, Dockery said, “At Southwestern we affirm and confess not only the essentials found in the pattern of Christian truth but the affirmations of the Baptist Faith and Message.”

Dockery added the “vital and essential truths” give a “framework for shaping a Christian worldview and Christian ethics to help us interpret and understand our place in this world.”

“At Southwestern, we want to help individual Christians and churches produce deeper roots, and we do this by getting our own priorities right in what we are called to do as an institution, which includes emphasizing foundational beliefs that shape the life of the church and inform participation in the communion of the saints,” Dockery declared.

Theological educators, Dockery said, “must seek to reclaim the work of doing theology as an aspect of our overall purpose for the mission of the church, for the role of the pattern of Christian truth has served such a shaping role since the church’s earliest generations.”

Dockery said the “responsibility” to make “theology applicable for the church” lies with theological educators.

“Our calling to serve in the work of theological education is thus a call to develop mature believers, strengthening hearts, heads, and hands, which results in the praise and adoration of God,” said Dockery, adding that a “healthy theological education, founded on good theology, should always lead to doxology. Theology that does not lead to doxology may be intellectually stimulating, but it falls short of the biblical vision of the flourishing of God’s people for His eternal glory.”

He said the “calling” of theological educators includes helping God’s people express and determine “what they believe, practice, and proclaim” for the “good of believers” and their witness to the world.

“We believe that one of our chief responsibilities at Southwestern is the equipping of believers to both discern and live their calling,” Dockery observed. “This work of equipping, of building up of the people of God, includes pointing believers toward the unity and maturity of the faith that involves the full knowledge of God’s Son.” —A.A.

Faculty, administrators recognized, installed during convocation

TO MARK A HISTORIC DAY AS DAVID S. DOCKERY ('81) WAS INVESTED AS THE TENTH president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary the bells in the tower of MacGorman Chapel rang the seminary’s hymn *Lead on, O King Eternal* across the Fort Worth campus following the Aug. 22 convocation service.

Convocation, the first chapel service that marks the beginning of the academic semester, began with an opening prayer by O.S. Hawkins ('74, '20), who was installed as chancellor of Southwestern Seminary. In addition to installations of Dockery and Hawkins, a new provost and two academic chairs were also installed into their respective offices and chairs, three faculty signed the Book of Confessional Heritage, and three newly appointed faculty were recognized.

Dockery welcomed new students and followed in the tradition established by Robert E. Naylor, the seminary’s fifth president, by officially declaring the new students “Southwesterners.” He also welcomed new staff and four new members of the board of trustees.



Dockery, who was invested with the office of the president by Jonathan Richard, chairman of the board of trustees, presided over the installation of four individuals to serve in “key capacities.”

Hawkins was elected chancellor of Southwestern Seminary by the board of trustees at the April meeting. Hawkins previously served as president and CEO of Guidestone Financial Resources and as senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, and First Baptist Church of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Hawkins holds a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy from Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife Susie have two adult daughters and six grandchildren.

Dockery recognized W. Madison Grace II ('06, '12) as the institution's new provost and vice president for academic administration. Grace was also installed as dean of the School of Theology. Grace holds a Master of Divinity and Ph.D. from Southwestern and has been part of the Southwestern community for two decades. Grace and his wife Shareen ('01, '11), a two-time Southwestern graduate, have three sons.

Christopher Osborne ('74, '19), professor of preaching and pastoral ministry in the School of Theology, was installed as the James T. Draper Chair of Pastoral Ministry. Osborne has served at Southwestern since 2020 and was pastor at Central Baptist Church in Bryan, Texas, for more than 30 years. He holds a Master of Divinity and Ph.D. from Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife, Peggy, have two children.

Mark Taylor ('01), professor of New Testament in the School of Theology, was installed as the Wesley Harrison Chair of New Testament. Taylor has served Southwestern Seminary as a professor for 25 years. He also serves as associate dean for the School of Theology. Taylor holds a Master of Divinity from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from Southwestern Seminary.

Grace invited three professors to sign the seminary's Book of Confessional Heritage, which is the Baptist Faith and Message. Grace explained the act of signing the book comes after a professor has been elected by the seminary's board of trustees. The elected faculty included Adam Dodd ('08, '11, '19), Jeremiah Kim, and Lilly Park.

Dodd is assistant professor of Old Testament and biblical backgrounds in the School of Theology. Dodd holds a Master of Divinity, a Master of

Theology, and a Ph.D. in Old Testament and archaeology from Southwestern Seminary. He and his wife, Amy, have three children.

Kim is associate professor of systematic theology in the School of Theology. Kim holds a Master of Divinity from what is now known as Gateway Seminary, and a Ph.D. in systematic theology from Southwestern Seminary. Kim and his wife, Mi-Hee, have two children.

Park has served as associate professor of biblical counseling in the Jack D. Terry School of Educational Ministries since 2020. Park holds a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling from the Master's University and Master of Divinity and Ph.D. in family ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Grace also introduced three new faculty appointees of the Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College (TBC) faculty.

Brian Berry ('19) was appointed as instructor of biblical studies at TBC. Prior to his appointment, Berry was an adjunct instructor and biblical languages tutor at Southwestern. He holds a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Seminary and is currently a Ph.D. candidate. He and his wife, Stephanie, have two children together.

John Mann ('06, '11, '18) was appointed as associate professor of business and theology at TBC and introduced as assistant to the president for constituent relations. Prior to his role at TBC, Mann served as the executive vice president and interim vice president of academics at Jacksonville College in Jacksonville, Texas. He also served at Jacksonville College as interim president for the 2022-2023 academic year, as well in various pastorates. Mann holds a Master of Divinity and Ph.D. from Southwestern Seminary and a Master of Business Administration from Baylor University. He is married to Sandy, and they have two daughters.

Chandler Snyder, vice president for enrollment and student services and dean of students, was appointed instructor of missions in the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions. Snyder earned his Master of Divinity from Southern Seminary and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in missions at Southwestern Seminary. He previously served as a missionary with the International Mission Board. He and his wife, Kelly, have been married for 15 years and have three children. —J.D.

“
**Dockery welcomed new students
 and followed in the tradition
 established by Robert E. Naylor,
 the seminary's fifth president, by
 officially declaring the new students
 'Southwesterners.'**



David S. Dockery ('81) presents O.S. Hawkins ('74, '20) a certificate of installation into his role as chancellor of Southwestern Seminary.



Dockery reports hopeful ‘indicators’ of God’s work in enrollment, finances at Southwestern

PRESIDENT DAVID S. DOCKERY ('81) GAVE A POSITIVE REPORT of hopeful “indicators of what the Lord has been doing,” including in the areas of enrollment and finances, during the Oct. 18 regularly scheduled fall meeting of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary board of trustees.

Chairman Jonathan Richard told trustees he was “thankful for the unity that has existed in this place the last few days,” and he believed “we are moving forward in a unified way and in a unified direction.”

All votes of the board were unanimous.

Dockery told trustees that student headcount for the 2022-2023 academic year was 3,574, which reflected an increase of 171 students over the previous year. He also noted that full-time enrollment (FTE) was 2,317 students, which also showed an increase of 94 students.

“FTE is formed and shaped by the number of credit hours that are taught,” Dockery said, noting that credit hours taught in 2022-2023 were 34,835, an increase of 1,582 hours more than the previous academic year. He cautioned that while the numbers would have a “positive impact on the SBC FTE” the impact would be “small because the SBC FTE is not a one-year snapshot,” but rather is “built on a three-year rolling average.”

Commending the “wonderful” work of Jack D. Terry ('62, '67), interim vice president for institutional advancement, and O.S. Hawkins ('74,

'20), chancellor, Dockery reported that unrestricted giving was “outstanding” as more than \$3 million was contributed to Southwestern Seminary during 2022-2023.

Dockery also highlighted the “improved morale across the campus” and the “evidence of collaboration,” which he said has been a “great source of encouragement.” He noted in particular the work and service of the seminary’s leadership team, including W. Madison Grace II ('06, '12), provost and vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology; Travis Trawick ('08, '21), vice president for institutional effectiveness and strategy; Chandler Snyder, vice president for enrollment and student services and dean of students; Adam Dodd ('08, '11, '19), vice president for campus technology; Dale Ford, interim vice president for financial services; and Terry.

Dockery said the Southwestern leadership has been “encouraged by the fact that our credit hours are again up 488 over last fall” to 15,824 credit hours taught in the fall 2023 semester. He added “even after last year’s improvement that means we continue to take steps forward.”

Dockery also observed the “hopeful spirit across the campus,” which has been “manifest in so many ways throughout the fall semester, particularly in prayer gatherings.” He highlighted the weekly times of prayer, the Oct. 14 Day of Prayer, and the Oct. 17 time of prayer during the seminary’s chapel service when students, faculty, and staff gathered to pray for the board’s decisions and unity. He added that God has “certainly answered those prayers yesterday and for that we give thanks to Him.”

Dockery also shared a report on the unaudited financial report for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, noting “the cash position has increased from \$1.7 million to \$2.8” and total assets increased while total liabilities decreased which has resulted in “a difference of about \$2.9 million increase in total net assets.” He noted that the Business Administration Committee has been encouraged by “financial controls” that are “being put in place and that expenses are being monitored carefully as we move into the year.”

Dockery highlighted that during the 2022-2023 academic year, revenue increased while operating expenses measurably decreased, resulting in a significant step forward. While the year-to-year improvement is quite significant, he cautioned that “it does not mean that we have reached what we desire for it to be. We still have a long way to go.”

Addressing the warning given to the seminary in June by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), Dockery announced the enlistment of two consultants, Ralph Enlow, past president of the Association for Higher Biblical Education, and Carla Sanderson, provost of Chamberlain University in Addison, Illinois, to assist in the areas of board governance and accreditation, respectively.

Additionally, the board approved a \$34.5 million revised budget for the academic year and that 50 percent of the remaining proceeds of the Carroll Park sale would go to a board-designated endowment while the remaining 50 percent would go to cash reserves. The board also authorized the administration to make revisions to the 2023-2024 capital needs budget with approval of the Business Administration Committee.

The board approved the appointment of Dean Sieberhagen, interim dean of the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, to the Charles F. Stanley Chair for the Advancement of Global Christianity; Andy Jennings ('12, '22) to the rank of assistant professor of philosophy of religion and apologetics; and renewed the presidential appointment of Dietmar Schulze as associate professor of missions. —A.A.

Dockery announces Grace as provost, other academic leadership appointments

NEW ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP OF SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY was named in July by President David S. Dockery ('81) beginning with the fall semester, including naming W. Madison Grace II ('06, '12) to the roles of provost and vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology.

Dockery also named Dean Sieberhagen, associate professor of Islamic Studies, as the interim dean of the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, and Carl J. Bradford ('11, '18), assistant professor of evangelism, as the interim associate dean of the Fish School.

Noting that Grace is "highly respected by both Southwestern faculty and students," Dockery said he is "incredibly grateful to Dr. Grace for his willingness to provide this level of leadership for Southwestern."

Grace, who has served as the interim dean of the School of Theology since January, began teaching at Southwestern in 2014 as assistant professor of Baptist history and theology. Additionally, he has previously served as the managing editor of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* and director of the seminary's Research Doctoral Studies Program. Grace, who is also associate professor of theology and director of the institution's Oxford Study Program, is co-editor of the 2021 Kregel publication *Making Disciples of All Nations: A History of Southern Baptist Missions*.

Grace earned both his Master of Divinity with biblical languages (2006) and Doctor of Philosophy in systematic theology (2012) degrees from Southwestern Seminary. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Christian studies degree from Mississippi College.

Sieberhagen, who served as an International Mission Board missionary in Central Asia from 1999 to 2012, has served at Southwestern since 2013.

A native of South Africa, Sieberhagen has served as associate professor of Islamic Studies, Vernon D. and Jeannette Davidson Chair of Missions, and director of the Islamic Studies Program at Southwestern. In October he was elected to the Charles F. Stanley Chair for the Advancement of Global Christianity by the seminary's Board of Trustees. He was the 2023 recipient of the David S. and Lanese Dockery Award for Teaching

Excellence, an annual award that honors the professor nominated by faculty colleagues for faithful teaching of students and personal care and concern for students' spiritual development inside and outside of the classroom.

Sieberhagen earned a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of South Africa (2013), a Master of Divinity from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (2001), and a Bachelor of Commerce from Rhodes University (1985). He also holds a post-graduate Diploma in Education.

Bradford, the inaugural occupant of the Malcolm R. and Melba L. McDow Chair of Evangelism, has served as assistant professor of evangelism at Southwestern since 2018.

Bradford teaches in the areas of contemporary evangelism and the theology of evangelism and missions, and he has served as the faculty leader of Southwestern's Crossover teams at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting for the last six years. Additionally, he leads groups of students in Everyday Evangelism, a weekly ministry opportunity that allows Southwestern and Texas Baptist College students to visit various places in the Fort Worth area to share the Gospel.

In addition to his Southwestern Seminary Master of Divinity (2011) and Ph.D. (2018) degrees, Bradford earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Xavier University located in his hometown of New Orleans.

All the new appointments are made with the "full support" of Southwestern Seminary Chancellor O.S. Hawkins ('74, '20) and Board of Trustee Chairman Jonathan Richard, he added.

Continuing in their current roles with expanded responsibilities are Mark Taylor ('01), associate dean of the School of Theology; Travis Trawick ('08, '21), associate provost for academic services; and Trey Moss, associate vice president for academic administration. Trawick, associate provost since June 2021, will focus on institutional effectiveness, and Moss, who came to Southwestern in 2019, will have an enhanced role related to academic strategy and programs. —A.A.



W. MADISON GRACE II
Provost and vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology



DEAN SIEBERHAGEN
Interim dean of the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Charles F. Stanley Chair for the Advancement of Global Christianity



CARL BRADFORD
Interim associate dean of the Fish School and assistant professor of evangelism

Newest Southwesterners welcomed during student orientation

LIKE GENERATIONS OF STUDENTS BEFORE THEM, NEW STUDENTS at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Texas Baptist College were welcomed Aug. 11 for new student orientation in Truett Auditorium in the B.H. Carroll Memorial Building to enjoy a full day of getting acclimated to the Fort Worth campus before classes for the fall semester.

"We are interested in the kingdom of God," said W. Madison Grace II ('06, '12), provost and vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology, in his opening remarks to the institution's newest class. "We're interested in how you are going to be doing future work for God's kingdom in whatever He is calling you to do."

Harkening to his own new student orientation at Southwestern 20 years ago, Grace told the newest Southwesterners to be "open" to what God will do during their time on Seminary Hill. Grace recounted that he thought he would be at the Fort Worth campus for three years to "be trained and equipped" for what he believed God was calling him to do, but he explained he remains at the seminary as he is "able to pour back into students with phenomenal faculty that we have here as well."

Grace said the faculty and staff serve at Southwestern and TBC to help fulfill the institution's mission which is to "glorify God by providing theological education for individuals engaged in Christian service, assisting the SBC, the Southern Baptist Convention, the churches of that convention by biblically educating, equipping Christian men and women for ministry, which encourages the priority of the Great Commandment and fulfillment of the Great Commission."

Grace explained the mission is not "just words on a page" but the Great Commandment and the Great Commission are "the heartbeat of who we are."

"Our job is to help equip you to go out into the darkness, to shine the light of Jesus Christ, calling people to salvation, discipling people to become more conformed to the image of the Son," Grace said. "And that's an exciting thing that you get to do and here at Southwestern we want to equip you to do that better and better."

Following Grace's remarks, members of the Office of Admissions led new students on a tour of campus to familiarize them with buildings, offices, and centers before lunch with President David S. Dockery ('81). Dockery highlighted the "continuity" of the faculty of Southwestern Seminary from 1910 when the campus relocated to its current location in Fort Worth from Waco to the present day.

In 1910 the seminary "hired a young theologian named W.T. Connor," Dockery explained. "W.T. Connor taught on this faculty for 39 years, and in 1949, his best student was named James Leo Garrett, who began teaching on this faculty in 1949. Now one of his best students, Malcolm Yarnell, teaches theology. So, we're only three generations from the very beginning of days here at Southwestern - that kind of continuity, that kind of wonderful tradition that has been passed on."

Dockery told the new students they are "part of a wonderful legacy." He said, "Not only do we have new faculty bringing fresh ideas and new energy to our work, but there is great continuity with the won-



derful heritage of this place that goes back 115 years that has prepared more people to serve globally or internationally than any other seminary in Christian history."

Calling Southwestern a "kind of a university of seminaries," due to the "thread of learning" among the various schools, Dockery noted, "People who have gone through the halls at Southwestern Seminary are pastors and counselors and church musicians and worship leaders and Christian educators and youth ministers." Highlighting the breadth of theological equipping available at Southwestern, Dockery said, "You think of an opportunity to serve and Southwestern has that opportunity to prepare someone in that particular world; in that way, Southwestern is very distinct."

Joshua Okoye, a native of Houston, Texas, said he decided to pursue his Master of Divinity with a concentration in pastoral ministry, not only after researching and learning about Southwestern from the institution's website, but also after a campus visit. He explained during his campus visit hearing what Dockery said about the seminary, as well as meeting the faculty and staff and "the convictions that they had and the things that they're focused on in how to prepare us for ministry" made him want to prepare for pastoral ministry at Southwestern.

A native of Crowley, Texas, Lexi Turner said she chose to study at TBC because the worship program is "the best of what I've seen" which "drew me here mostly." Following graduation with a Bachelor of Music in worship studies, Turner said she hopes to work in a church or help lead worship at ministry events such as Disciple Now.

The day concluded with a church fair and block party that included representation from more than 40 area local churches. Due to an excessive heat warning in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex on orientation day, where the temperature topped 100 degrees for the 19th consecutive day, the event was moved indoors to the Riley Center located on campus.

—A.A.

Southwestern students learn missionary lessons of 'flexibility,' 'servant heart' in Cambodia

WHILE SERVING IN CAMBODIA SEPT. 30-OCT. 8 DURING A MISSION TRIP with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Master of Divinity student Haylee Grace* learned "that missions will be more of a sacrifice than I thought it would be."

Grace, a Fort Worth native who is called to overseas missions, was one of five students who served on the mission team led by Michael Copeland ('18), assistant professor of missions and associate director of the World Missions Center at Southwestern.

For Grace, it was her first mission trip overseas after trying for three years to serve on an international mission trip. She said the trip "showed me that not every situation will be comfortable for me, but I still need to trust God and lean on Him."

The team of students learned the missionary lessons of "flexibility" and a "servant heart" when their original agenda changed "because the workers faced different kinds of emergencies leaving because one family" could not extend their visa, explained Chris Choi*, a Master of Divinity student from East Asia.

Despite the adjustment in schedule, Copeland said among the team of students he saw "encouragement to local church planters and their missionary partners as we arrived ready to serve their varying ministries."

Cambodia is a nation "still recovering from drastic depopulation due to events of the last half of the 20th century" that has also seen an increase in children born over the last two decades, Copeland explained. He said due to the economic hardships the country faces, it "means that most youth do not have adequate opportunities for education." The result is that outside of Phnom Penh, the nation's capital and most populous city, children "might go to school until grade six and only half days for whatever time they are able to attend," Copeland said.

"Many church planters and churches try to fill the gap by offering to board and care for the many children who are abandoned by parents who cannot afford to feed them," Copeland added. "They have done this by opening schools, which fulfill the basic governmental education required and add supplemental education - including teaching English or Chinese - languages often sought after as giving more economic opportunities. These schools add to the education opportunities of children enrolled - whether those needing boarding or those whose families can pay."

This allows local churches and church planters "opportunities to provide a living for themselves, a way to bless and serve their communities, and opportunities to share Christ," Copeland explained.

The Southwestern students taught "impromptu lessons, taking the opportunities to share the Gospel through varying biblical stories," Copeland said. "In doing so, because the lessons were in English, our students were able to aid the schools' reputations in the communities and engage the children - ages anywhere from 6 to 13 - with the Gospel."

Choi noted the needs of the schools as the team served.

"We went to several schools which are in big need for good language teachers," he said. "There are hundreds of kids who need to be reached in the villages. The parents and kids are looking [to learn] languages such as English and Chinese."



The Southwestern Seminary team was used by God to "support the missionaries who work in Cambodia," Grace said. She said one of the days the team rode three hours north of the city to work at a children's shelter. While at the shelter, the mission team played games with the children while the missionaries were able "to make connections with 17 churches and 30 pastors" as the student team helped by keeping "the kids occupied while they talked," Grace added.

"Cambodia is a current hub area for both missionaries engaging church planting in Southeast Asia and an area where many global mission partners come in order to train for mission work," Copeland said. "I wanted our students to both engage local and international church planters, as well as see how mission works with those being trained to engage missions from places around the world many Westerners would not expect."

Grace said through the trip she learned that "God can use us in ways that we weren't expecting." She said on one car ride she sat in the back of the car talking with a daughter of one of the missionaries for a long time. While Grace "didn't think anything about it," she said the "missionaries told me later that it was a blessing to them and their daughter that I listened to her for so long, since she had just recently lost two close friends due to them moving away." The experience reminded Grace that she "must trust God in every circumstance."

"Missionaries don't move to third-world countries just for fun," she said. "They stay because they trust that God's plan is the best for their life and others' lives."

Grace encourages others to join international mission teams "because it opens your eyes to how more of the world lives. It shows you that God is working in more of the world than just the bubble we live in." — A.A.

**Names changed for security reasons.*



Students, faculty share the Gospel to marginalized groups in Boston

DURING THE WEEK OF SEPT. 30-OCT. 6, A GROUP OF SIX STUDENTS AND ONE FACULTY MEMBER from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary traveled to Boston, Massachusetts, to share the Gospel with people in the city and learn from the SEND Relief staff at the Boston Ministry Center about how they can mobilize different congregations to share the Gospel.

The group of students, led by Ashley Allen ('03, '09), assistant professor of women's ministries at Southwestern Seminary, helped support ongoing ministries in the city of Boston. Throughout the trip, they were able to meet the physical needs of part of the population experiencing homelessness as well as share the Gospel with them. Additionally, the team was able to spend time ministering to immigrants.

"The demographics of people are definitely different," said Alexis Smith*, a Master of Divinity student from Malaysia. "There is a large population of internationals who study in Boston. So, there's absolutely a need for Christians who speak different languages to be there."

During the trip, the students were able to assist with the three key initiatives of the Boston Ministry Center, including outreach to those experiencing homelessness, those who have been rescued from human trafficking, and immigrants.

"It's cool to see how ministries come together under one roof," said Smith. "Different ministries focused on biblical counseling, people experiencing homelessness or substance abuse, human trafficking, ESL, GenSend, and refugees share the same office space."

Another student, Cristina Aguilera ('19, '21), a Doctor of Education student from Colombia, said that if she had to sum the trip up in one word, that word would be "collaboration."

"No single congregation can reach the city for the Lord," Aguilera said. "It takes the whole body of Christ to do it, and it looks like this is what is happening in Boston."

With several ministries working together, the team engaged in ministry to homeless and worked with an ESL class.

"We went out to the streets and started conversations with people experiencing homelessness," Aguilera said. "We prepared and gave out sandwiches and wellness bags."

Aguilera added that "there is hope" for Boston "because the church is being mobilized to reach the city."

Stephen Thomas*, a Doctor of Philosophy student from South Korea, said that he realized that ministry could look different in different settings.

"I thought listening to their story or being a friend with them was not a ministry because I did not share the Gospel to them," said Thomas. "However, I realized that this is a ministry. Homeless people need a friend."

He added that doing this type of ministry reflected the way Jesus interacted with those who were marginalized in His day.

Some of the things the group was able to do with the homeless community in Boston was provide wellness bags and food for the people. After providing the people with essential needs, the mission team worked alongside the staff of the Boston Ministry Center to follow up by offering prayer and sharing the Gospel with them.

One of the difficulties of the homeless in Boston is that many are drug abusers.

"We visited what is known as the 'Methadone Mile' where many people trapped in substance abuse live or spend their time," Aguilera explained. "Almost all the people we interacted with were actively using drugs, but we could talk to some of them and pray for some of them."

Aguilera said that the churches are hopeful for an awakening in the lives of those affected by drug use.

"The good news is that different congregations are visiting this street and calling it the 'Miracle Mile' because they are praying and hoping for a miracle," Aguilera added.

One day, the team worked with the Geneva Initiative, a leg of the Boston ministry center that works with refugees. Carlee Evans, a compassion ministry catalyst with the North American Mission Board, teaches ESL classes for two hours a day, three days a week.

Allen walked with a man from Central Asia named Abdul during the ESL class's field trip to see the Paul Revere statue in Boston's historic North End. Allen was able to share the Gospel with Abdul and "tell him what a Bible is. I was able to tell him about how the Bible is the entire redemptive story about how God sent Jesus to the earth."

Allen added that it was "great to see how God was at work in Boston" and that she enjoyed being able to continue the work "that is already being done in Boston." —J.D.

**Names changed for security reasons.*

'Global Missions Week' challenges, encourages students to love people, take the Gospel to the nations

DURING GLOBAL MISSIONS WEEK, held Sept. 5-8 and organized by the World Missions Center at Southwestern, students were challenged through chapel messages to go the nations with the Gospel and educated by International Mission Board missionaries about the need for more workers during various events.

IMB President Emeritus Jerry Rankin ('69) challenged the Southwestern community in his Sept. 7 chapel sermon from 1 John 3:16-18 with four questions from the text, including: What do you have, what do you see, what do you give, and how much do you love? Before giving an altar call to respond to a call to missions that resulted in more than a dozen students coming to the altar, Rankin said it has been said that the Great Commandment and the Great Commission are inextricably linked because "we'll never be motivated to fulfill that commission of our Lord to disciple the nations until we love them."

Representing all eight affinity groups, IMB missionaries, including a number of Southwestern Seminary graduates, came from across the globe to

participate in the weeklong events. Through "Taste of the Nations," more than 200 students enjoyed international cuisine prepared and provided by international student groups on campus and had the opportunity to learn from missionaries who serve in Sub-Saharan Africa and Germany. During "Breakfast with a Missionary," students were able to sit down with missionaries one-on-one in a come-and-go setting that allowed them to ask questions and learn from experiences missionaries have had while serving. The week culminated in the "Difficult Places" dinner, where attendees learned what missionaries find "difficult" in their context, including hardness of heart, oppression, country politics, and team member conflict.

The week also included a focused time of prayer for all eight affinity groups, an ice cream social, and a special gathering for women who desire to serve on the mission field. — *Staff*

Southwestern A Cappella performs at Getty SING! Conference for second year

FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, SOUTHWESTERN A CAPPELLA, a 17-member vocal ensemble comprised of graduate students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, traveled from Fort Worth, Texas, to Nashville, Tennessee, to perform during SING!, a worship conference hosted by Keith and Kristyn Getty from September 4-6.

"I was so encouraged to watch the Lord use our students in so many special ways to point to Jesus, to declare the greatness of our holy God who beacons us to call Him Father, and to be a testimony of the exceptional ministry training opportunities that are here at Texas Baptist College and Southwestern Seminary," said Charles Lewis ('93), associate dean of the School of Church Music and Worship and professor of church music and worship. Lewis leads the ensemble, which is made up of students from



all across the globe representing six different countries and seven states in the US.

Joseph Crider, dean of the SCMW, also traveled with the choir and introduced the ensemble to the crowd of more than 6,000 attendees.

During the trip, Southwestern A Cappella performed eight times as a choir at different locations, including Forest Hills Baptist Church in Nashville, and Covenant Baptist Church in Brentwood, Tennessee, on the Sunday before the conference began.

Outside of performing as a group, the members of the choir also participated in a 300-voice mass choir during the conference.

Southwestern A Cappella performed six times at the conference including singing “Yet Not I, But Through Christ in Me” by the group CityAlight with that very band at the end of their concert. The choir also performed “Only a Holy God” for the opening of the Wednesday plenary session.

During the conference, attendees heard different speakers address the topic of Great Commission application to worship, including John Piper, Keith and Kristyn Getty, Matt Papa, and Matt Boswell. — *J.D.*

Day of Prayer covers ‘tapestry’ of Seminary Hill in prayer



IN AN “ANSWER TO PRAYER” SEVERAL MONTHS IN THE MAKING, students, faculty, staff, alumni, and donors gathered Oct. 14 on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary for the Day of Prayer.

In opening remarks before attendees scattered to prayer stations across the Fort Worth campus, Melana Hunt Monroe, director of prayer ministries, explained the “heart” of the day was to “pray for absolutely every thread of Southwestern’s tapestry.”

Before leading in a prayer of dedication of the new prayer room in the Naylor Student Center, President David S. Dockery (’81) described the interior of the room, explaining the prayer room included prayer kneelers, Bibles, chairs, and a wall that allows people to place prayer requests. Dockery added the room also includes “a map of the world for us to remember our commitment to take the Gospel to the nations, for those who are serving around the world representing Southwestern - to remember to pray for them.”

Following the opening prayer, attendees dispersed to spend almost two hours on a prayer walk focused on the various facets of the Southwestern community. Using a campus map marked with 17 stops, attendees moved from location to location to meet representatives from the seminary’s four graduate schools and undergraduate college, various centers, campus housing, student life, and administrative offices, among others. As attendees moved between the prayer stops, they were provided with specific prayer requests for the school or department the stop represented.

At each location, attendees prayed for the requests and the seminary faculty and staff who manned each station. Some departments distributed prayer requests directly from students, including the International Student Services Office which had a list of prayer requests from the seminary’s international students that were divided by countries represented among the student body. Many of the locations included ways children could pray as they stopped at each location with their families.

Chet Taylor (’86, ’96) and his wife, Jeanie, attended the day of prayer because he believes “that everything that God chooses to do among us is really in response to our prayers.”

“He can do anything, obviously,” added Taylor. “But He needs willing vessels, and so we have to present to Him willing hearts. We have to listen and walk out what He speaks. We do that through prayer.”

Taylor, retired pastor of Lakeview Fellowship Church in Fort Worth, Texas, said he and his wife “love this place” as Southwestern has “meant the world to us” and “it means the world to the world.”

“I don’t know of any greater thing for us to do than to just join with those who have a heart to hear and walk out when He speaks [and] ask God to provide for this place, ask God to give a brand-new birth of His vision and empowerment - blessing - to this place to continue to bless the world,” Taylor concluded.

While many attendees were from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, some drove hours to join in the Day of Prayer, including Bill Bonar, a Master of Divinity student considering missions, who drove more than two hours from Round Rock, Texas, just north of Austin, to participate in person.

Bonar said he has known “hundreds” of people who have “been through this school and have gone on to change lives.” He explained Southwestern graduates have also helped him “in my growth with Christ.”

“I want to see revival come to this campus,” Bonar said. As an undergraduate student studying at East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas, Bonar said he would drive to the Fort Worth institution on the weekends “just to sit in the library and read.”

Bonar said while he knows “God still calls people” to ministry, it “doesn’t seem as though it is as thriving as it used to be.”

“I want to see that, and I want to pray for it,” Bonar added. “There’s a two-hour drive between me and being with other people to agree in prayer - no problem.”

The day culminated in corporate worship and prayer led by Jerry Rankin (’69), president emeritus of the International Mission Board.

Rankin prayed, “Lord, this institution belongs to You, and we renewed our commitment of placing it in Your hands and acknowledging Your lordship and Your power. And Lord, I pray that we would go forth from having been here and participated in the privilege of being exposed to all that’s being done and happening here with the new resolve to continue to pray for Southwestern.” — *A.A.*

Williams, Wilkinson named to doctoral leadership roles



JOSHUA E. WILLIAMS
Director of the Research
Doctoral Studies programs



MICHAEL D. WILKINSON
Director of Professional
Doctoral Studies programs

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT JOSHUA E. WILLIAMS AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY MICHAEL D. WILKINSON ('90, '11) HAVE BEEN APPOINTED DIRECTORS of the Research Doctoral Studies (RDS) and Professional Doctoral Studies programs, respectively, announced in June by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary academic leadership.

Williams, who has served at Southwestern Seminary since 2006, holds Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Divinity degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina. During his tenure at Southwestern, Williams has twice held the chair of the biblical studies division (2010-2011 and 2014-2015) and the Old Testament department (2009-2010 and 2016-2020).

Before serving at Southwestern, Williams served two years as an invited lecturer at the Biblical Theological Seminary in Pelhrimov, Czech Republic, teaching in the area of the theology of the Pentateuch. He has additional teaching experience at North Raleigh Christian Academy in Raleigh, North Carolina, and was a teaching assistant in 2001 at Southeastern Seminary.

In addition to his classroom experience, Williams brings both editorial and research experience to his new role. He was the assistant editor of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* from 2007 to 2016 before he assumed the role of book review editor of the *SWJT* for four years.

Williams has contributed articles to the *SWJT*, the *Southeastern Theological Review*, the Association of Biblical Counselors eJournal, and the *Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Additionally, Williams

A two-time graduate of Southwestern Seminary, Wilkinson began serving at the institution as assistant professor of Bible in 2012, the year after he earned his Ph.D. From 2013 to 2020, Wilkinson served as the dean of what is now known as Texas Baptist College and transitioned to associate professor of theology in 2018.

Before serving at Southwestern, Wilkinson served for more than two decades on church staffs in Arkansas and Texas, including 14 years as the minister to single adults and missions at Central Baptist Church in Bryan, Texas, and almost five years as the minister to young and median adults at the First Baptist Church of Rockwall, Texas. Prior to serving local churches, Wilkinson was a mathematics instructor at the Northwest Campus of Tarrant County Junior College.

Wilkinson has been published in the *SWJT* and in *The Anabaptists and Contemporary Baptists*. His dissertation, *A Necessary Smelting: Leonhard Schiemer's Theology of Suffering*, was published under the same title by Lambert Academic Publishing in 2015. Additionally, Wilkinson has made presentations at the academic conferences Anabaptists and Contemporary Baptists Conference (2012) and the Anabaptist Convictions After Pilgrim Marpeck Conference (2009).
—A.A.

has published essays in *Texts and Canon: Essays in Honor of John Sailhamer and Reverberations of Exodus in Scripture*.



Before serving at Southwestern, Williams served two years as an invited lecturer at the Biblical Theological Seminary in Pelhrimov, Czech Republic, teaching in the area of the theology of the Pentateuch.



LACHUNÉ BOYD, A MASTER OF MUSIC STUDENT with a concentration in voice in the School of Church Music and Worship, performed live before the nation on Sept. 19 during the fifth qualifying round of the hit show America's Got Talent. Boyd sang a rearrangement of the late Tina Turner's song, "The Best," which highlighted her vocal range and skills. Boyd initially auditioned earlier in the summer with a rearrangement of the 2000 hit song "Yellow," by British rock band Coldplay. While Boyd did not advance, she was commended by the judges for her musicianship.

Prospective students learn Southwestern's past, look to the future during Preview Day

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE met on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Texas Baptist College (TBC) on Oct. 20 for fall Preview Day. The total number of attendees exceeded the previous fall Preview Day, including setting record numbers for TBC prospective students, said Chandler Snyder, vice president for enrollment and student services. Snyder said that he was thrilled about the turnout for Preview Day.

"We are very excited because the number of Preview Day attendees this fall exceeds the number of attendees from Preview Day last fall," Snyder said. "We're particularly excited because TBC has the most recorded attendees that we've had in recent history. So, it's great news."

Throughout Preview Day prospective students shadowed current students, ate with professors, toured the campus, and heard from students and staff about opportunities that are offered for the Southwestern community. Attendees were also able to listen to a panel of current students during lunch together. —*J.D.*



Russell H. Dilday Jr., sixth president of Southwestern Seminary, dies

RUSSELL HOOPER DILDAY JR. ('55, '60), THE SIXTH PRESIDENT of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, died on June 21 in Dallas. He was 92 years old.

"Russell Dilday had just come to serve as president of Southwestern Seminary when I came to Southwestern as a student," recalled David S. Dockery ('81), current president of Southwestern Seminary. "As a student, I always appreciated his leadership for the seminary and his care for students. He worked tirelessly to strengthen the faculty, enhance the facilities, and to grow the endowment during these early years of his presidency."

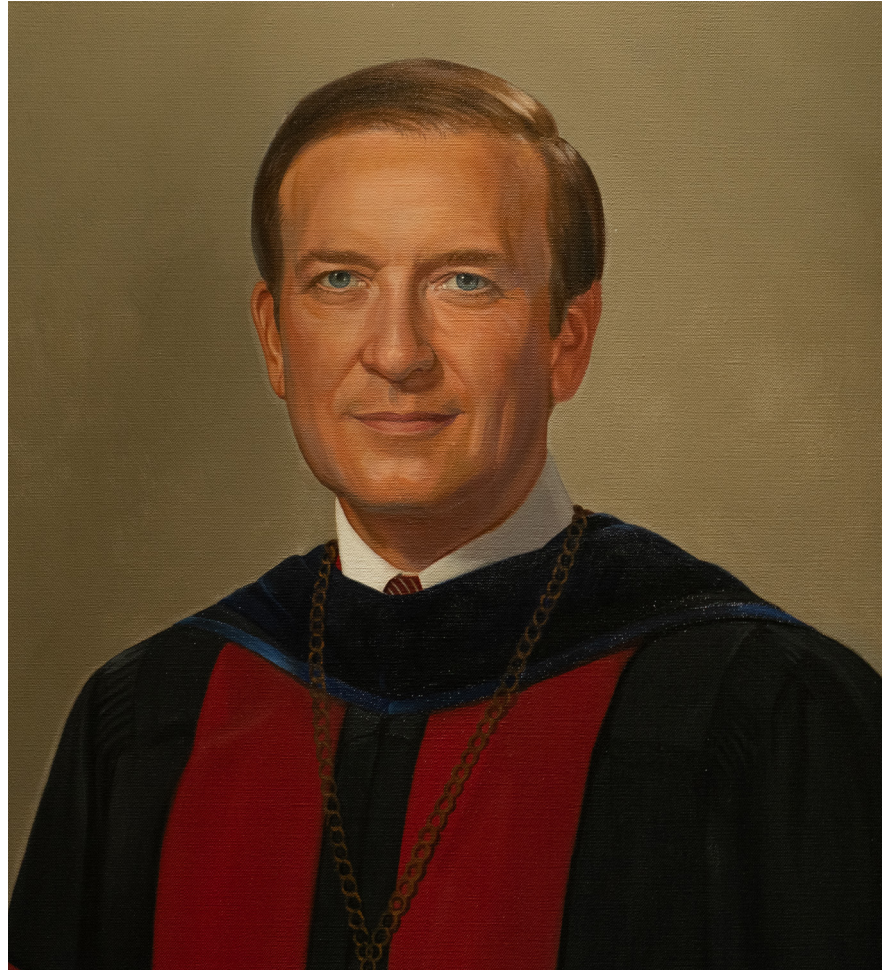
Dockery added that "Southwestern continues to be blessed by these faithful efforts. We join with many across Baptist life in offering our prayers for and expressing our Christian sympathy to the Dilday family at this time."

Chancellor O.S. Hawkins ('74, '20) said, "I thank God for Russell Dilday. Although we were on different sides of the Southern Baptist Convention divide, I never lost my love and respect for him. Southwestern Seminary saw some of its greatest days during his presidency. He loved the Lord and left a legacy."

Dilday was born in Amarillo, Texas, on Sept. 30, 1930, to Hooper and Opal Dilday. He accepted Christ as his personal Savior and Lord at the age of 9, and one year later, he led his first soul to Christ.

Sensing a call to full-time vocational ministry during his senior year of high school, Dilday enrolled in Baylor University in Waco, graduating in 1952 with a Bachelor of Arts in religion and English. At Baylor, Dilday met Betty Doyen, and they married the summer after graduation before moving to Fort Worth, where Dilday began his Master of Divinity studies at Southwestern Seminary.

Three weeks after beginning his first semester, Dilday accepted a pastorate at Antelope Baptist Church in Jack County, Texas. For the next eight years, he attended classes, served as pastor, worked in secular jobs, and, eventually, taught adjunctively at Southwestern Seminary. He completed his Master of Divinity in 1955 and then



earned his Doctor of Philosophy in philosophy of religion in 1960.

Despite having a strong desire to teach, Dilday discerned that the Lord intended him to remain in the pastorate—at least for a season—and so he continued to pastor churches in Texas and Georgia until 1978.

Dilday was elected Southwestern Seminary's sixth president during the trustees' fall meeting in 1977. He later reflected that he "was overwhelmed with the privilege and challenge of helping equip ministers of the Gospel in the school I had always cherished."

Though Southwestern Seminary had already become the world's largest seminary during Robert E. Naylor's presidency, it continued to grow during Dilday's tenure, reaching its highest-ever enrollment of more than 5,000 students in the 1980s. Thus, under Dilday's leadership, Southwestern Seminary trained the largest number of theological students in history and came to be recognized as not only

the biggest seminary in the world, but also one of the best.

Dilday's presidency ended in 1994 when trustees relieved him of office to seek new leadership. Following his dismissal, Dilday reminded students that "the work of the Kingdom is bigger than any of us—bigger than trustees or presidents or even students." He said their noblest response would be "to get back into class and continue their studies; to apply themselves more diligently than ever to the work God had called them to do."

After leaving Southwestern Seminary, Dilday remained committed to equipping ministers of the Gospel, serving as distinguished professor of homiletics at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary; interim pastor of multiple churches in Texas; interim president of Howard Payne University; and, most recently, as chancellor of the B.H. Carroll Theological Institute, which he helped launch in 2003. — *Staff*

Newly established Board of Reference has inaugural meeting, hears about 'really bright' Southwestern future

NEARLY 40 PASTORS AND DENOMINATIONAL LEADERS MET ON THE CAMPUS of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, as well as online, on Oct. 19 for the inaugural meeting of a newly established Board of Reference. Through their partnership with the seminary, these leaders will represent Southwestern to prospective students and donors while also providing advice on how the seminary can best reach students and set them up for success in ministry, according to board leadership.

"One of the dreams for the Board of Reference is that you help us connect with all the constituencies and then bring them together toward a hopeful future for this place," said David S. Dockery ('81), president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dockery added that his goal is to provide members with information about the seminary so that they can have answers as they are representing the school to people. He also said that he intends to listen to the counsel and advice from the board members on how to build a better Southwestern.

The Board of Reference is chaired by Jack Graham ('76, '80), pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, who will help gather information and utilize the influence of the members of the board. Graham was appointed as the chairman of the board and will serve in that capacity to help gather information and utilize the influence of the members of the board.

"When Dr. Dockery and O.S. Hawkins first approached me about leading this group, I couldn't say yes fast enough," Graham said. "For no other reason than that we need some fellowship and to get to know one another, and I know we all have a mutual love for our seminary."

Graham said that the Board of Reference exists to provide the Office of the President with ideas for how to help the seminary. He said that the board members are all part of what he called the "comeback of Southwestern" by being a part of the group.

"With everything that has happened in recent days at the seminary, it led to us getting our hearts and heads together to be on the same page with what's going on," Graham said. "We need your positive reference and influence to your churches and other pastors."

Graham said he is encouraged by seminary leadership in both the administration and in the faculty. He also said that he will work hard to serve the pastors and leaders on the board in their relationship with the seminary and the growth of the institution.

Representing Southwestern's senior leadership, O.S. Hawkins ('74, '20), chancellor, is also helping lead the Board of Reference as part of his role. He said he will use his experience from both Guidestone Financial Resources and work as a pastor for many years to guide the board members in a helpful way.

Hawkins provided four pieces of good news to the board members to help them understand that even though the seminary has had difficulties, there is reason to be hopeful: his confidence in Dockery, the faculty, the students, and the commitment of those who want to see Southwestern succeed.

"We are not out of the woods yet, but we know where we are going," Hawkins said. "We know who we are, and we know what our brand is. The future is really bright here at Southwestern, and I'm very encouraged by that." —*J.D.*

THE BOARD OF REFERENCE MEMBERS ARE:

Dr. Jack Graham ('76, '80), Chair – Prestonwood Baptist Church, Plano, Texas
Dr. O. S. Hawkins ('74, '20), Chancellor, Southwestern Seminary/President Emeritus, GuideStone
Dr. John Mann ('06, '18) – Assistant to the President for Church/Constituent Relations, Southwestern
Dr. John Avant ('86, '90) – President, Life Action Ministries
Dr. Wesley Baldwin ('06, '15) – Aloma Church, Winter Park, Florida
Dr. Bart Barber ('96, '06) – First Baptist Church, Farmersville, Texas
Dr. Greg Belser ('83, '01) – Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton, Mississippi
Dr. Kie Bowman ('85, '90) – Hyde Park Baptist Church, Austin, Texas/SBC Prayer Ministry
Dr. David Bowman ('89, '95) – Tarrant Baptist Association, Fort Worth, Texas
Dr. Mac Brunson ('85, '91) – Valleydale Church, Hoover, Alabama
Rev. Ryan Buck ('15) – Immanuel Baptist Church, San Angelo, Texas
Rev. Gilberto Corredera ('23) – Prestonwood en Espanol, Plano, Texas
Dr. Daniel Dickard ('14, '17) – Shandon Baptist Church, Columbia, South Carolina
Dr. Hance Dilbeck ('92, '02) – President, Guidestone Financial Resources
Dr. Jimmy Draper ('61, '73) – Lifeway (President Emeritus)
Rev. Todd Fisher ('96) – Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma
Dr. Steve Gaines ('84, '91) – Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tennessee
Dr. Michael Gossett – Green Acres Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas
Dr. Buddy Gray ('83) – Hunter Street Baptist Church, Hoover, Alabama
Dr. Eric Hankins ('07) – First Baptist Church Fairhope, Alabama
Dr. Robert Jeffress ('83) – First Baptist Church Dallas, Texas
Dr. Ryan Jespersen ('04) – Dallas Baptist Association, Dallas, Texas
Dr. James Kang ('91, '98) – Council of Korean Southern Baptist Churches, Denton, Texas
Dr. Matt Kendrick ('11, '14) – Redemption City Church, Fort Worth, Texas
Dr. Richard Land – President Emeritus, Southern Evangelical Seminary

Rev. Lyle Larson ('01) – First Baptist Goodlettsville, Tennessee
Dr. Ryan Lee ('19) – Semihan Church, Carrollton, Texas
Dr. Nathan Lorick – Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Grapevine, Texas
Dr. Tony Mathews ('96, '00) – Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Grapevine, Texas
Dr. Scott Maze ('98, '06) – Cross Church, North Richland Hills, Texas
Rev. Bruce McCoy – Baptist General Convention of Texas
Dr. Byron McWilliams ('00) – First Baptist Church, Odessa, Texas
Rev. John Meador ('84) – Cross City Church (First Baptist Church) Euless, Texas
Dr. Stan Norman ('90, '97) – President, Williams Baptist University, Walnut Ridge, Arkansas
Dr. Spencer Plumlee ('07, '13) – First Baptist Church Mansfield, Texas
Dr. Todd Pylant ('93) – First Baptist Church Benbrook, Texas
Dr. Wyman Richardson ('98) – Central Baptist Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas
Dr. Stephen Rummage – Quail Springs Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Dr. Daniel Sanchez ('66, '71) – Southwestern Seminary (emeritus)
Dr. Juan Sanchez – High Point Baptist Church, Austin, Texas
Rev. Clay Smith ('05) – Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta, Georgia
Dr. Steven Smith – Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas
Dr. James Spivey ('80) – Gambrell Street Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas
Dr. Jarrett Stephens ('06) – Champion Forest Baptist Church, Houston, Texas
Dr. Eric Thomas ('94, '02) – First Baptist Church Norfolk, Virginia
Dr. Heath Thomas ('01) – President, Oklahoma Baptist University
Dr. Ted Traylor ('81, '86) – Olive Baptist Church, Pensacola, Florida
Dr. Bruce Webb – First Baptist Church, The Woodlands, Texas
Dr. Brad Whitt ('22) – Abilene Baptist Church, Augusta, Georgia
Dr. Darin Wood ('93, '06) – First Baptist Church Midland, Texas
Dr. Ed Young Sr. – Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas

Pastors, alumni, and students gather for annual preaching workshop

OVER 40 PASTORS, ALUMNI, AND STUDENTS GATHERED TOGETHER on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's campus on Oct. 2 for the annual preaching workshop. Meeting in the Riley Center, those in attendance heard from five speakers on how to preach through the book of 1 Samuel.

"We are always delighted to have you on Southwestern's campus, and we are very happy to have you here today," said David S. Dockery ('81), president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "I couldn't be happier to have Dr. McKellar and Dr. Osborne leading our preaching workshop. We're blessed to have them, and you're blessed to have been a part of the workshop."

During the workshop, each speaker covered five-to-six chapters of 1 Samuel and walked the gathering through how they would handle the text. Matthew McKellar ('85, '91), professor of preaching and George W. Truett Chair of Ministry at Southwestern Seminary, led the workshop and provided insight into the decision to choose 1 Samuel.

"When we do these one-day preaching conferences, we typically alternate between an Old Testament book and a New Testament book each year," McKellar said. "We did Ephesians last year, so we decided on 1 Samuel because it is rich in what we call Old Testament narrative, Old Testament stories."

As McKellar's goal for the workshop was to "provide 10 different outlines for sermons through 1 Samuel," he worked through the section of Scripture he was assigned before providing a basic preaching outline.

He emphasized that Southwestern Seminary teaches text-driven preaching as a form of expository preaching. "The substance of the text governs the

substance of the sermon, and the structure of the text governs the structure of the sermon," McKellar said.

Following McKellar, Chris Osborne ('77, '19), professor of preaching and pastoral ministry and James T. Draper Chair of Pastoral Ministry at Southwestern Seminary, worked through 1 Samuel 7-12.

Osborne provided pastoral insight to the chapters he was given as he emphasized preaching without notes. He provided the attendees with an overview of the chapters he covered as well as eight sermon ideas that they could use.

Deron Biles ('92, '97), pastor of Sunnyvale First Baptist Church in Sunnyvale, Texas, presented on chapters 13-19 of 1 Samuel, and he provided detailed notes for the workshop. He emphasized that what is on the inside of a person is what matters, not what is on the outside.

Stephen Rummage, pastor of Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, spoke on 1 Samuel 20-25, which he titled, "David the fugitive: Trusting God under pressure."

To conclude the preaching workshop, Joshua Williams, associate professor of Old Testament and director of research doctoral studies at Southwestern Seminary, offered an overview and exegesis of 1 Samuel 26-31.

Williams took a slightly different approach to presenting his chapters as he provided the historical and hermeneutical background of the book as a whole to show the importance of handling Old Testament narrative well.

—*J.D.*

'Seniors of Southwestern' meet on campus for food and fellowship

GATHERING TOGETHER IN THE RILEY CENTER LANE, over 40 members of Seniors of Southwestern, a group of senior adults who are current and former faculty and staff who have served the seminary for 10 years or longer, met for their quarterly lunch and fellowship on Sept. 7, on the campus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"When you are here for this meeting, and we're all together, it makes for a very special gathering and reminds us of what a special heritage we have here at Southwestern," said David S. Dockery ('81), president of Southwestern Seminary.

Dockery welcomed the gathering with words of encouragement and a big-picture overview of what is happening on the campus.

"I think the difference between this fall and last fall is hard to describe," said Dockery. "We are so thankful to God for the good work that He is doing. We still have a long way to go and much work to do."

Attendees also heard from Gary Waller ('72, '79), who previously served as professor of administration and dean of distance learning at South-

western for more than two decades. Waller is the chairman of Seniors of Southwestern and currently serves as minister of education at First Baptist Church of Benbrook in Benbrook, Texas.

"We're always glad to see more of our people here," said Waller. "Not just because of fellowship time, but it allows us to make connections with them. We were excited for the increase in numbers to our time of fellowship."

Waller noted that while the group is composed of educators and theologians, the bylaws are clear in that the meetings are intended to be fellowships.

Waller provided updates about who to contact in the Office of Institutional Advancement and when the next meeting of Seniors of Southwestern would be. He then went from table to table asking for updates from the luncheon attendees.

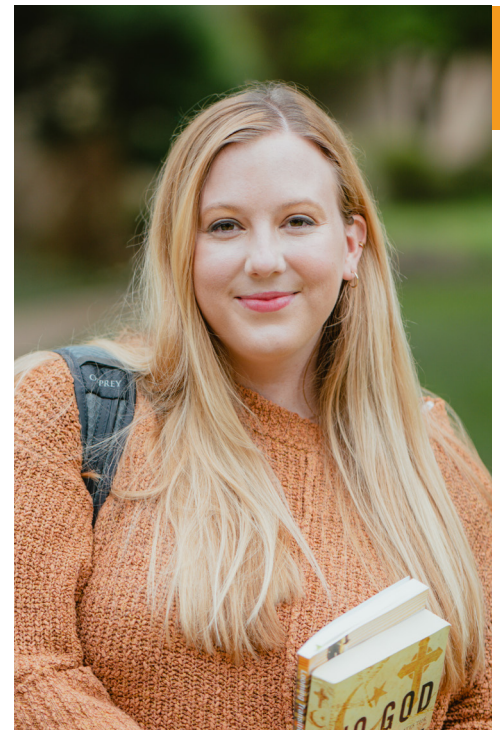
Waller also provided updates from members who were not able to attend the meeting and their prayer requests as well. —*J.D.*

Southwestern Seminary exists to train people for the work of ministry. And it's the people who make Seminary Hill a special place. It's easy to see why.

Kirsten Burns

Master of Divinity in evangelism and missions student

"AFTER A VERY LONG ROAD TRIP FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO TEXAS, I MOVED INTO MY CAMPUS APARTMENT to begin my studies at Southwestern. The first few months felt like a whirlwind: 'Was I smart enough to be in seminary?' or 'Did I pick the right degree program?' continued to swirl around my mind, but the Lord was faithful. After meeting classmates and creating sweet friendships I started to get a hang of the academia of Southwestern. I've taken Greek, Hebrew, and all of the theologies and I could recite it all back to you until I was blue in the face, but the best part of seminary is that wasn't where I saw the Lord's faithfulness and guidance. The Lord showed me what it was like to be a partner in ministry through group projects and friendships. Through mission trips I learned about ministries in different contexts, and more about my strengths and weaknesses as far as serving goes. In campus women's Bible studies, I saw what it looked like to lead women well and how to diligently study His Word. In summary, the studying was rigorous, and I learned more Greek than I ever thought I'd care to. Theology is incredibly important and I am so thankful Southwestern leadership takes its academia seriously. However, when I graduate I'm excited to bring the lessons of leadership practices, problem-solving, and collaboration into new contexts. The professors at Southwestern taught me that my learning doesn't end when I walk across the stage, but that as a follower of Jesus, I can and ought to be a lifelong learner, living in humility."



STUDENT

1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8



FACULTY

1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

JOSEPH R. CRIDER

Dean of the School of Church Music and Worship

"THE SOUTHWESTERN SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC AND WORSHIP HOLDS A UNIQUE PLACE in seminary education in North America. Today, our SCMW stands on the shoulders of venerated faculty and thousands of alumni who've been trailblazers throughout our 102-year history. I pray that the intentionality of our faculty and student relationships, and the music and worship training programs we offer at every level continue to impact churches all over the world for the glory of God and the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."



1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

Boyd and Jennie Hatchel

Master of Divinity with Biblical Languages, 1999; Director of Sending at Redeemer Church, Lubbock, Texas; Ex-Master of Arts in Religious Education, Instructional Design Manager, Training, International Mission Board

“SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY HAS A SIGNIFICANT FOOTPRINT IN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS. The school’s emphasis upon confidence in God’s Word, practical and pragmatic leadership development, and a priority upon the local church were key points that attracted us to Southwestern for advanced biblical studies. During our time ‘on the Hill,’ professors demonstrated high standards, provided opportunities for learning, growth, and exploration, and also cared for our family. We are grateful for the way Southwestern equipped and encouraged us for a lifetime of Christian ministry.”

“Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has a significant footprint in international missions.”

SUFNAT WASTI

Master of Arts in Christian Apologetics, 2018, and Current Doctor of Philosophy in systematic theology student

“WHEN I APPLIED TO SOUTHWESTERN for my master’s, I had never heard about it. A journeyman friend serving in Pakistan told me about it and encouraged me to apply. I believe God used my missionary friend to bring me here. I was delighted to find a diverse body of professors and students devoted to the Word of God and reaching nations with the Gospel. I decided to stay at Southwestern for my doctoral studies because of the very same emphasis. The professors here are devoted to training students with the highest academic rigor with an aim to serve the church and to reach the lost around the world.”



1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

Sandy Vandiver

Donor

SANDY VANDIVER BEGAN GIVING TO SOUTHWESTERN SEMINARY after her Sunday School teacher, Jack D. Terry, interim vice president for institutional advancement “explained the need the students have.” Vandiver began giving to Southwestern “because of the people that go to seminary there that need financial support. And just the very idea that you helped in some small way. They’re called by God, and for them to do that calling, they need education. And so if I can help, that’s pretty neat.”



1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8



ALUM

1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

Clay Smith

Master of Divinity, 2005; Current Doctor of Philosophy in preaching student; Senior Pastor, Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta, Georgia

"I CHOSE SOUTHWESTERN TWICE. I was first introduced to the school after sensing a call to full-time ministry shortly after college. My pastor, along with several other influences, were alumni from Seminary Hill. I had little idea then what I wanted to do, but I knew I loved Jesus and wanted to serve His church. God used my master's degree experience to build two foundational pillars into my life; a commitment to preach the Word of God and a commitment to share the Gospel throughout the world. Fifteen years later I enrolled and was accepted as a Ph.D. student (preaching). I am a better pastor as a result of the care and attention I have received from the faculty and administration. I cannot imagine a more important time than now than to invest in theological education and I believe Southwestern's greatest days lie ahead of her. I am proud to be a part of Southwestern's legacy."



FACULTY

1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

CHRIS SHIRLEY

Dean of the Jack D. Terry School of Educational Ministries; Professor of Educational Ministries; Jack and Barbara Terry Chair of Religious Education; Master of Arts in Religious Education, 1994; Doctor of Philosophy, 2002

"WHY DO I TEACH AT SOUTHWESTERN? At Southwestern, I have found a community of scholars and students who are focused on one essential goal: faithfulness to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. I have a passion for equipping men and women to make authentic disciples of Jesus Christ in the local church and to prepare those disciples to make disciples at home, in the church, and throughout the world. Here at Southwestern, we accomplish this task with deep theological education and practical ministry training that will produce vibrant leaders who KNOW and DO the Word of God, and lead others to follow their example."



DONOR

1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8

GLEN KINNEY

Donor

"THE GREAT COMMISSION COMMANDS US TO GO and to tell, and the Scripture says, 'How can they hear without a preacher?' The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is the premier seminary in the world for training young men and young women to go and tell the story of Jesus Christ. It is an absolute joy and pleasure to support the work of Southwestern. I believe it's the best use of your funds that you have to give away can be spent at the seminary. They do good work."

"At Southwestern, I have found a community of scholars and students who are focused on one essential goal: faithfulness to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment."



APRIL 12, 2024

PREVIEW DAY

Preview Day is the perfect opportunity to see everything Southwestern Seminary has to offer. Students will be able to meet their professors, chat with students, and experience campus life on Seminary Hill. If you know a student seeking to take their next steps in ministry, then refer them to Preview Day.

[SWBTS.EDU/PREVIEW](https://www.swbts.edu/preview)





How to help someone who is grieving



OFTEN, WE GRIEVE BECAUSE WE LOVED SOMEONE VERY MUCH. Grieving isn't a logical process. We can't control the length of grieving by what we do or don't do. Hence, grieving forces us to realize our helplessness as human beings and dependence on God for comfort. Here are some ways to help someone who is grieving.


Know that people grieve in different ways. Some people want to visit the cemetery regularly and others do not. Some people will express grief visibly and loudly, but others will try to hide their emotions. Upbringings and culture shape how people grieve. "Cry softly." "Cry loudly." "Hide your tears." "Men don't cry."

Give permission to grieve. It is normal to grieve. It is not sinful to grieve. "Jesus wept" (John 11:35). Ask, "Have you allowed yourself to grieve?" This could be a turning point for individuals who haven't grieved yet, even though a loved one died months or years ago. The book of Psalms is full of laments, crying out to God because He cares for us and is in control (e.g., Ps. 13, 42). It could be used to remember God's presence at all times.

Good intentions do not necessarily give comfort. Often, we can be quick to speak because of a desire to comfort. "You have other children." "At least you had time to prepare for this death." We might even share theology. Think of Job's friends. They stayed with Job silently for seven days, demonstrating their care for him, but then they were unhelpful in explaining why Job was suffering (Job 2-31). Sometimes, silence is more powerful.

- Be careful of trying to preach when this person is overwhelmed.
- Be simple. "I am praying for you." "I love you." "I'm here for you."
- Be there. Attend the funeral. Send a card periodically with brief messages and Scripture. Ask about practical help, such as organizing meals or errands.
- Be sensitive. Ask this person what has been helpful or not.

Christians can grieve with hope. We should grieve with hope for believers who died. Remember the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection

of believers (1 Thess. 4:13-18). We can remind others of this eternal reality, thanking God for this person's salvation and faithful ministry to others. We have hope when we remember God as the "Father of mercies and God of all comfort" (2 Cor. 1:3). 



LILLY PARK is
associate professor of
biblical counseling.



TEXAS
BAPTIST
COLLEGE

TEXAS BAPTIST COLLEGE
WORSHIP CAMP

JUNE 7-10, 2024

Students will learn from TBC and Southwestern Seminary faculty and students how to fine-tune their musical skills, study the theology of worship, and interact in a band setting.

[TEXASBAPTISTCOLLEGE.COM/WORSHIPCAMP](https://www.texasbaptistcollege.com/worshipcamp)



How to lead your church to pray

A JULY 2023 PEW RESEARCH STUDY SHOWED AMONG EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTS, 79 percent claim to pray at least daily, 14 percent weekly, and seven percent only monthly, seldom, or never. Let's do better! How can you lead your church to prioritize prayer, making it a first step rather than a last resort?

Start with Prayer

Ask God to lead your church to become a praying church. Pray for each member by name monthly. If the church is large, have the church staff help.

Model a Life of Prayer

Demonstrate an example in prayer. As the pastor and staff lead, the people usually follow. They typically do not progress beyond the spiritual level of their leaders, including in their prayer lives. Notice Jesus's habit of prayer in Mark 1:35; 6:41, 46; and 14:34-39. Paul practiced prayer in Romans 1:8-10; 2 Corinthians 13:7, 9; Ephesians 1:16-18; Philippians 1:3-5; Colossians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:3; and Philemon 1:4-6.

The pastor can share in his sermons about his commitment to prayer, recent answers to prayer, methods of organizing prayer (such as a prayer journal), and desire for the church to become a praying church. Also, rather than just a once-a-year emphasis, prayer should be a recurring topic in sermons and a regular occurrence in worship services. Church staff members can do the same in their teaching.

Equip for Prayer

Have a Bible study series on prayer along with practical guidelines in your Sunday School or small groups. Encourage specificity in prayer. Our church started an annual six-week Spring Training course with a daily devotional guide. Prayer is an integral part of that course.

Organize Prayer Groups

Give organized opportunities for prayer. Robert Jeffress ('83), pastor of First Baptist Church Dallas, attributes prayer to God's blessing the church during his tenure. A group of men and a separate group of women pray weekly in design-

nated prayer rooms during the worship services. They are divided into four teams who pray together once a month, and all are committed to individually praying daily.

Share Answers to Prayer

Communicate God's answers to prayer with each other on a weekly basis. This can occur corporately in Sunday School, small groups, and prayer meetings. It can happen individually by telephone, text, e-mail, and social media.

As you inspire, train, and organize your church to pray and encourage them to share answers to prayer, your church can become a praying church.



JAMES R. WICKER ('80, '85) is professor of New Testament at Southwestern Seminary.

COACH-IN-CHIEF

Distinguished Baptist theologian David S. Dockery leads Southwestern Seminary with the heart of a coach

BY ASHLEY ALLEN

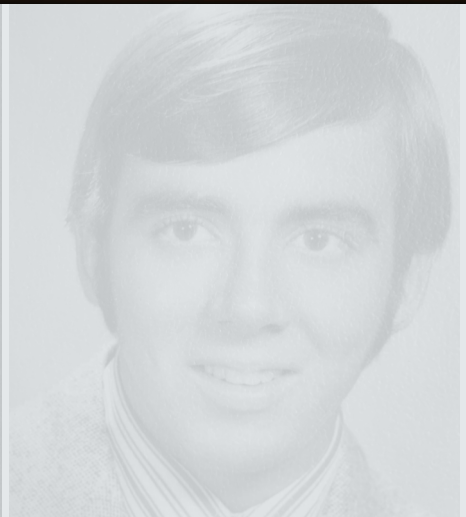
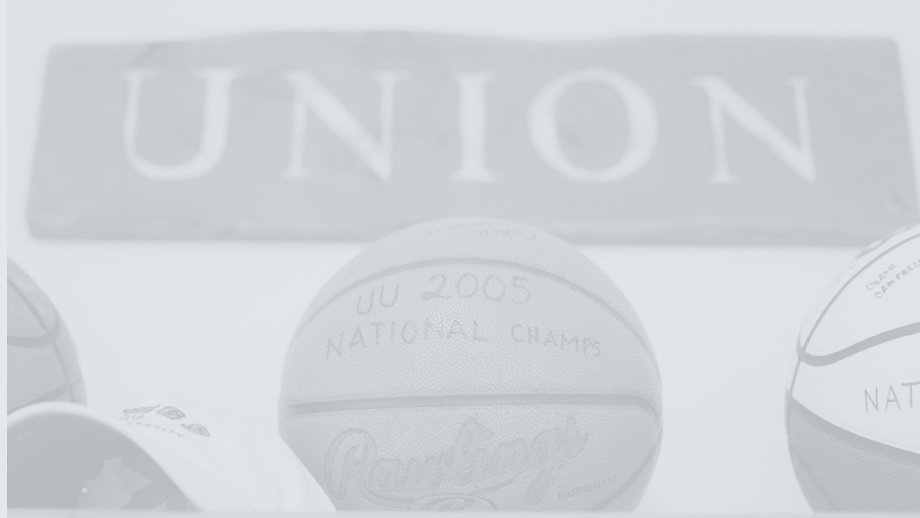
When David S. Dockery ('81) describes what his career aspirations were as an eight-year-old boy growing up in Birmingham, Alabama, his entire face lights up.

"I always wanted to be a sports journalist," recalls Dockery, the tenth president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "I grew up loving sports – any kind, every kind."

Dockery would listen to ballgames, including the Atlanta Braves and the University of Alabama football and basketball games, on "my little transistor radio," he says, moving his hand to his right ear to demonstrate how he would tune in to the games. The elementary-aged Dockery would use his tape recorder to see if he could repeat what he heard as he would "broadcast the game to myself," he remembers.

"I was either going to be a coach or a sports broadcaster," the future Baptist theologian says. "My life was filled with sports and that was the direction that I was going." Dockery adds he "dreamed" about going into sports "all my life," and as a high schooler would broadcast the junior high ball games from the press box.

Dockery's love of sports would lead him to the University of Alabama, where he would study on a full athletic scholarship – not as an athlete on the field, but as a student worker in the university's athletic department. As part of the Crimson Tide's athletic team, Dockery has an SEC championship ring that he still often wears.



His time at the University of Alabama would prove to be pivotal to several aspects of his future. Through leading a Bible study while a college student, Dockery met his wife, Lanese. Though a couple of grades ahead of her, Dockery and Lanese both grew up at Hunter Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. Dockery explains at Hunter Street they knew of each other, but about the time they both would have been in youth choir, Dockery's family changed churches to First Baptist Church of Birmingham.

However, as a freshman at Alabama Lanese was one of 15 college students from Hunter Street who attended the Bible study Dockery led in the A-Club Room on the university's campus.

"I think one of the things that initially attracted me to him was his love for Scripture and his love for the Word, and I really trusted his walk with the Lord," Lanese recalls, adding she "learned a lot in those Bible study experiences that we had together." Throughout their nearly 50-year marriage, she has witnessed firsthand her husband's "humility, and the way he cares for people, and he doesn't lord it over his family or the teammates and team that he puts together. He listens well and is able to take difficult situations and simplify them."

They were married in the summer of 1975.

In the summer of 1973, while studying for his undergraduate degree in education, with a minor in journalism, Dockery had the opportunity to attend the Institute for Biblical Studies in Chula Vista, Mexico, which he describes as "life-changing." Influenced by a campus ministry, Dockery made a "renewed commitment of my faith in Christ," as a sophomore, he explains. As a nine-year-old at Vacation Bible School, Dockery made what he describes as "a step toward God, a public profession of faith, and was baptized."



If I have the privilege to study Scriptures like this and teach them to others, this would be what I would love to do.

DAVID S. DOCKERY

Dockery grew up in a Christian home on Birmingham's west side, "the working-class side of the city," he describes, "and had a wonderful upbringing in so many ways." Dockery's father, Sam, was a deacon at their church and he recalls his dad "taught me how to work hard and taught me to respect others and to put God first in my life, too." He explains that "from the earliest days," his mother, Pansye, "was my Bible teacher." He says his mother, "while not a theologian," taught him Bible stories, and as he became involved in Bible drill, "she drilled me to make sure I knew those Bible verses and could find Habakkuk and 2 Peter and Jude and those hard-to-find books." Dockery adds, "I owe her a lot."

Building on the Christ-centered foundation his parents laid, the Lord used Dockery's time in Mexico as he "learned to study the Bible systematically" and "took my first little doctrine and apologetics courses and fell in love with the idea of studying the Bible and studying theology." Dockery returned home and "said to the Lord, 'If I have the privilege to study Scriptures like this and teach them to others, this would be what I would love to do.'" He adds he "didn't know what that meant" at the time and thought he would be a "youth minister teaching Bible" for high school seniors at a "private school or something." Upon his return to the Alabama campus, Dockery began leading a Bible study in the athletic department and another smaller Bible study on campus.

"I was in love with the Scriptures," Dockery says. "I had a Living Bible and a New American Standard Bible, and I would go back and forth, reading them and reading them, reading them, and begin to memorize them and just wanted to teach others what I was learning."

Dockery was "surprised" in the spring of 1974 when Tommy Lea, pastor of Hunter Street Baptist Church who would later become the dean of the School of Theology at Southwestern, invited the young college student to begin serving as the minister of students at the Birmingham church. "Having sensed a call to ministry following my summer at the Institute for Biblical Studies in Chula Vista, Mexico, in the summer of 1973, I viewed the invitation from Dr. Lea, which I did not seek or for which I did not apply, to be an open door from God," Dockery explains.

He added while he was "truly grateful for the years of opportunities" in the Crimson Tide's athletic department, he "had sensed that my

▶ GET TO KNOW DAVID S. DOCKERY

FAVORITE BOOK: *Knowledge of the Holy* by A. W. Tozer or *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer

FAVORITE HYMN: "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" or "And Can It Be?"

FAVORITE CLASS TO TEACH AND WHY: Master's level course: Systematic Theology III - enjoying trying to apply the themes of the Holy Spirit, church, and eschatology for the Christian life; Doctoral seminar on higher education to try to help future faculty, staff, and administrators prepare for a calling to serve in Christian higher education



FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY: 7-year-old birthday party, which was a full-scale football game with uniforms, helmets, pads . . . as well as an official referee. It was quite special.

FAVORITE SNACK: (Pre-heart attack) – popcorn / (Post-heart attack) - unsalted mixed nuts

BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED THAT YOU WOULD GIVE TO SOMEONE ELSE: Best advice received while in seminary: study not for the next assignment or next exam, but study for a lifetime of ministry.

MOST MEMORABLE VACATION: 2022 family trip (all 15 of us) to Wyoming/ Yellowstone

future was going to be ministry focused rather than in athletics” and he “accepted the invitation from Dr. Lea and began serving at Hunter Street in the summer of 1974.”

A week after his 1975 graduation from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Dockery and Lanese were married. The couple soon relocated to Indiana so Dockery could begin a Master of Divinity degree at Grace Theological Seminary “to prepare for whatever God was going to do next,” he explains.

“At that time, I was scared to death of taking beginning Greek and beginning Hebrew,” Dockery remembers. “I didn’t think I could do those. I didn’t quite have the confidence at that time to even imagine doing anything but just learning how to study the Bible.” Lanese adds he took both biblical languages “at the same time.”

While in Indiana, Dockery was also the women’s basketball coach for the undergraduate team at Grace College. Following his 1979 graduation from the Winona Lake, Indiana-based school, the Dockerys relocated to Fort Worth so he could begin pursuing a Master of Divinity at Southwestern.

While in Fort Worth, the Dockerys’ three sons, Jonathan, Benjamin, and Timothy, were all born.

Dockery chose Southwestern due to “four influential pastors” during his childhood and adolescent years who were Southwestern grads, including Lea; the late Charles C. Bowels, who formerly served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors’ Conference; the late Darold H. Morgan, who would later serve as president of what was then known as the SBC Annuity Board; and the late James Landes, who would later serve as president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“When I thought about the Baptist seminaries, Southwestern was the one that influenced me through Southwestern graduates,” Dockery explains. Before completing his second master’s degree in 1981, Dockery says he “had some faculty members who encouraged me to do doctoral work” and “that’s when that seed was planted that ‘you perhaps should teach.’”

“In the back of my mind, I had hoped that maybe one day I could come back here, but that seemed like a far-fetched dream, frankly,” he remembers. “When I thought of Curtis Vaughan and James Leo Garrett and John Newport ... no way I could think of myself in those kinds of categories.”

Over the next four decades, after seeing God’s providence and leading through a Master of Arts in New Testament from Texas Christian University, a pastorate in Brooklyn, New York, a professorship at Criswell College in Dallas, a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Texas system, serving as provost and dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, a distinguished presidency of Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, that spanned almost two decades, and a presidency of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Bannockburn, Illinois, the Dockerys returned to Fort Worth in 2019 so he could begin serving as distinguished professor of theology and theologian-in-residence at his alma mater.

The Lord’s leadership and sovereignty would prove itself to Southwestern as Dockery was named interim provost in December 2020, a role he would hold for 14 months, until February 2022. Seven months later, Dockery was named interim president of the institution until he was elected president by the seminary’s trustees in April of this year, which was made retroactive to September 27, 2022.

Barbara McMillin, a recently elected Southwestern Seminary trustee, is president of Blue Mountain Christian University in Blue Mountain, Mississippi. Before assuming the leadership role at the north Mississippi institution in 2012, McMillin served as associate provost and dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Union University. Her time at the Tennessee-based school overlapped with Dockery’s presidency by 16 years.

McMillin explains that Dockery is a “humble, prepared, visionary, godly leader and each of those adjectives has a lesson that goes with it.” She adds while at Union “he consistently led in ways that are God-honoring.” “He consistently presents in a genuine way his humble approach to leadership,” McMillin says. “He is a man who gives incredible prayer time to



At that time, I was scared to death of taking beginning Greek and beginning Hebrew.

DAVID S. DOCKERY



▶ GET TO KNOW DAVID S. DOCKERY

COOLEST PERSON YOU HAVE MET: People that I have had extended conversation/visit and not just a handshake greeting: Margaret Thatcher, former prime minister of England; George H. W. Bush, 41st president of the United States; Mikhail Gorbachev, former Russian leader; or Billy Graham

WHAT MAKES YOU LAUGH THE MOST? Being with our grandchildren

ASIDE FROM PHYSICAL NECESSITIES, WHAT ONE THING COULD YOU NOT GO A DAY WITHOUT? Reading a portion of Scripture



the steps that need to be taken and he encourages others to do the same.” McMillin describes Dockery as a “person of vision” adding that “many people, I think, might be able to cast a vision, not everyone can communicate it effectively as David Dockery.”

McMillin explains Dockery is “tireless,” humble, and is a leader who “listens,” and is both attentive and supportive.

“I think he looks for ways to help people to grow,” McMillin explains, adding she believes “he knows how to put together a team of people who have a host of gifts and then see how those gifts are best utilized when they are employed in conjunction with other people’s gifts.” She notes that “people tend to perform more effectively when they are in partnership with other people who have been empowered to use their gifts.”

Dockery’s own leadership philosophy was shaped, in part, by sports. While working in the Alabama athletic department, Dockery had the opportunity to work with legendary Crimson Tide football coach Paul “Bear” Bryant and men’s basketball coach C.M. Newton. While both coaches would be elected to the hall of fames for their respective sports, as a college student Dockery learned lessons that would impact how he leads – or coaches – people on his teams.

“Coach Bryant was authoritarian, strong, [and] people feared him,” Dockery recalls. “Coach Newton: people loved him. He invested in people. The



He consistently presents in a genuine way his humble approach to leadership.

BARBARA MCMILLIN

WHAT IS THE LONGEST YOU HAVE GONE WITHOUT SLEEP AND WHY? Following the tornado at Union University in February of 2008, I hardly slept for the first few days as we worked to assess the damage and try to formulate a plan to restore the campus.

DO YOU COLLECT ANYTHING? I collect baseball caps from major league teams.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB? I had a paper route in my neighborhood when I was in junior high school.

person who sat on the end of the bench was just as important for him as the star player.” Dockery adds Newton was a person of character and faith, and he “admired him greatly.”

There were Southern Baptist leaders who also taught Dockery about leadership, including W.A. Criswell and Herschel Hobbs, and other ministry leaders, such as Chuck Colson and Carl Henry, as well. “It’s kind of a confluence of all of them that has shaped my understanding of leadership,” he says.

As Dockery leads it is with the philosophy that, “Everyone has something to offer and if you can invest in them and help them become the best” then they can “live their calling the best they can.” He looks for his team member’s “sweet spots” and “how their gifts can be matched to the right place.” “I think part of leadership is not just giving ideas and coordinating things, but investing in people and helping people learn to think about their own calling, and how they can maximize their gifts at a particular season in life and be prepared for whatever might come next,” he notes. “But it’s God’s kindness that has allowed that to happen. I can’t take credit for any of it.”

Dockery’s leadership style has been one that has benefited his pastor, Chris Wright, who serves at South Hills Baptist Church in Fort Worth and is a Doctor of Educational Ministries student at Southwestern. Wright says Dockery does not want “attention or accolades” but has been a “quiet encourager.” “Anytime there’s a guest speaker or some kind of special testimony or camp report, he’s individually reaching out to those church members or to that guest or fellow staff member who happened to be preaching that day, and encouraging them, lending his support to them however he can,” Wright

explains. He adds when he has a question or needs leadership advice or wisdom, Wright can contact Dockery who will “help give me clarity on something I’m trying to figure out.”

Dockery has used the same approach at Southwestern Seminary – long before assuming the role of president. As he now leads the 115-year-old institution, it is with the self-label of “reluctant president.”

“There’s one of C.S. Lewis’s biographies, it’s called *The Reluctant Convert* and I think I’m the ‘reluctant president,’” he explains. “I didn’t really want to do this, but I felt the seminary was in a very difficult time and I wanted to help. I love Southwestern Seminary. It had a life-changing effect upon me and I wanted to give something back to the seminary. And I think it’s out of that love for the Southwestern heritage that I did so as well as the fact that I love this faculty and wanted to try to help them in a difficult time.”

Yet, true to his character of humility, Dockery concludes, “I want to help for as long as I can. If my prior experience can be beneficial to Southwestern during this short time, then I’m happy to try and if it’s not, I’m happy to step aside and let somebody else try, but I’ll do what I can and trust the Lord’s kind providence to show His favor to this institution once again. And we pray that will be the case.”

Ashley Allen ('03, '09) is managing editor of Southwestern News.

**Some photos for this article were provided by the Dockery Family and Union University.*



I think part of leadership is not just giving ideas and coordinating things, but investing in people and helping people learn to think about their own calling, and how they can maximize their gifts at a particular season in life and be prepared for whatever might come next.

DAVID S. DOCKERY

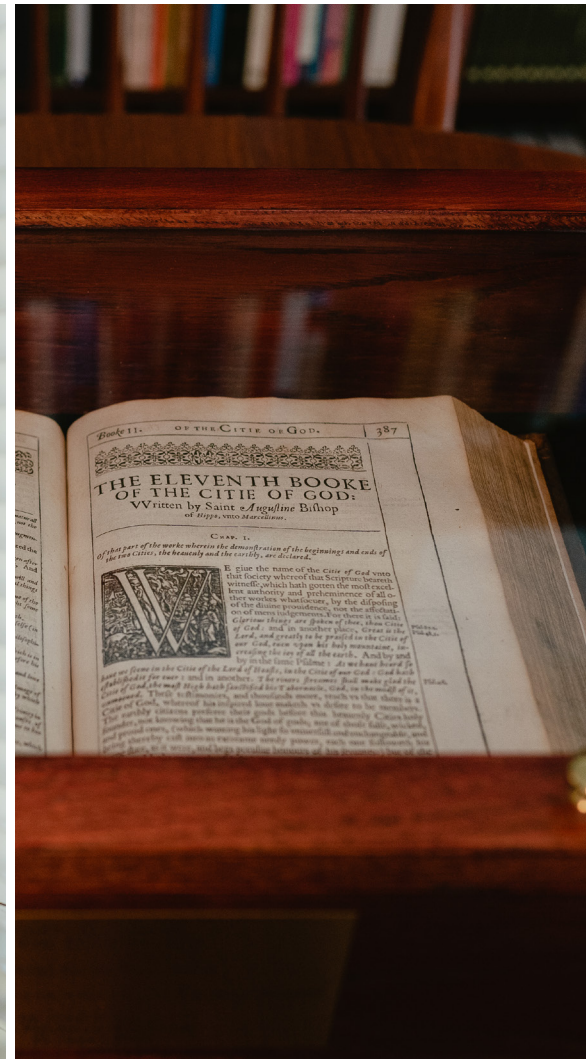
▶ GET TO KNOW DAVID S. DOCKERY

IF YOU COULD JOIN ANY PAST OR CURRENT MUSIC GROUP, WHICH WOULD YOU WANT TO JOIN? Play the saxophone in a group like Chicago.

MOUNTAINS OR BEACH? Mountains

COFFEE OR TEA? (Post heart attack) neither

FAVORITE CLASS YOU EVER TOOK: Patristic Theology with James Leo Garrett Jr



IF YOU COULD LEAVE IMMEDIATELY TO GO TO ONE VACATION SPOT, WHERE WOULD YOU GO? Rocky Mountains

FAVORITE MOVIE: Chariots of Fire

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS? We do not.

FAVORITE BASEBALL TEAM: Boston Red Sox or Chicago Cubs

Teaching from the heart

Dean Sieberhagen's love
for Christ and people
drive his ministry

BY ASHLEY ALLEN



Illustration by
Savannah Cheatham



When Dean Sieberhagen, interim dean of the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, returned to his seat after he was awarded the David S. and Lanese Dockery Teaching Excellence Award during the May 5 commencement ceremony at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, tears were streaming down the former missionary's cheeks.

A native of South Africa who has taught at Southwestern since 2013, Sieberhagen is known across Seminary Hill for the intentional investment he makes in his students in the classroom and, alongside his wife of 35 years, Sandra, outside of the classroom. The Dockery Award, an annual recognition that honors a Southwestern professor who is nominated by faculty colleagues for faithful teaching and care for students' spiritual development, was a surprise to Sieberhagen, but an affirmation of his philosophy as a professor.

"I think any role we play as professors here is way beyond the classroom," Sieberhagen explains. "I think it's a life calling. This is not a job."

For Sieberhagen, part of his calling to serve at Southwestern is seeing "every student I have [as] an opportunity to disciple somebody and to see how it can help them in their call to ministry, specifically missions."

Sieberhagen, who served 13 years as an International Mission Board missionary with his wife and their four sons, is part of a line of generations of missionaries but was the first known believer in his family's history. Growing up in his native South Africa, he says he does not "even remember a Bible in our house" and that Christianity was "cultural" with his family attending church on Christmas and Easter.

However, when the family moved to Johannesburg due to his father's job as a banker, his dad allowed Sieberhagen and his three brothers to participate in a Sunday school class that was held in the elementary school he was attending. The couple teaching the class led Sieberhagen to the Lord and his brothers soon also professed Christ as Lord and Savior.

"We then worked on my parents and finally my parents came to the Lord," Sieberhagen recalls. "Through all of that, we all ended up in full-time ministry;

even my parents ended up as missionaries.” Sieberhagen’s father came to faith in Christ as a 47-year-old man and became a missionary at the age of 55 years old. Today, two of Sieberhagen’s brothers are pastors in the United States and one of his brothers is the director of Africa for Christ Evangelistic Association in South Africa.

“God has been so incredibly good to us and to me and to our family, just through redeeming us and preparing us,” Sieberhagen reflects.

While attending an all-boys boarding school, Sieberhagen met his wife who was a day student at a partnering all-girls school. Sieberhagen and his future wife were responsible for planning the equivalent of Fellowship of Christian Athletes events together. Several years later they were married and Sieberhagen began to put his Bachelor of Commerce degree from Rhodes University to work as he ran his own business.

However, following the abolition of apartheid in South Africa in 1994, the Lord revealed two things to Sieberhagen: a love and skill of teaching and a desire to take the Gospel to the nations. Sieberhagen began teaching accounting to “black African students who had a disadvantaged education to help them make a bridge into university.”

“I found through that I really loved the teaching,” he remembers. He explains that it was “so fulfilling” to begin the year with the students and see them change as they “knew more” and he was able to “have influence on them.” “I just loved that, and I just thought, ‘Okay. Somehow teaching has to be part of my life,’” Sieberhagen says. Simultaneously, the Lord was working in Sieberhagen and his wife’s hearts to show them the need for the Gospel around the world.

He recalls while both he and his wife were active in their church – he was a deacon, taught Sunday school, and they led missions teams – the “Lord just impressed upon me one time that most of my life I was holding business



books in my hand and in my spare time I was holding the Bible in my hand.” Sieberhagen says he “felt this burden that it should be the reverse” and he had a “conviction of ‘I want to teach eternal things’” as he wanted to “teach” and “touch lostness full-time, not just part-time. Not just in my spare time.”

Sieberhagen says he and his wife “couldn’t get over that 2,000 years after Jesus said, ‘Go to all the world,’ there were still those who have never heard.” He adds the “calling” on their lives “became to do our part to change that.”

With two small sons, and a third on the way, the Sieberhagens “went from a house and three cars and dogs and everything to eight suitcases,” as the family moved from South Africa to Wake Forest, North Carolina, so Sieberhagen could begin in the 2+2 graduate level program at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. The program allowed Sieberhagen to take theology and missions courses on campus for two years and then spend the remaining two years of the degree program on the mission field.

Following two years of classroom study, and the birth of their fourth son, the Sieberhagens began 13 years of serving the Lord in Central Asia as missionaries with the IMB. He explains during their time as missionaries they were “privileged by the Lord” to experience all six components of the IMB missionary task, including entry, evangelism, discipleship, healthy church formation, leadership training, and partnership and exit.

When Sieberhagen, who earned a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of South Africa in 2013, began teaching at Southwestern that same year, he was able to draw from his missionary experience as he taught in the classroom. He was elected to the faculty as assistant professor of missions and Islamic studies – with a promotion to associate professor in 2017. Sieberhagen began occupying the Vernon D. and Jeannette Davidson Chair of Missions in January 2018. During the October meeting of the seminary’s Board of Trustees, Sieberhagen was elected to the Charles F. Stanley Chair for the Advancement of Global Christianity. The chair is named after the late Southwestern Seminary alumnus and pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Atlanta, Georgia, Charles Stanley.

“The blessing for me is when I teach, everything I teach, I can refer to something I experienced, because I got to experience all of that,” he explains. “I can only use my example because it’s limited to just where I was, but I can always talk about ‘This is what I saw and this is what I experienced’ - both





God has been so incredibly good to us and to me and to our family, just through redeeming us and preparing us.

Dean Sieberhagen

good and bad." Sieberhagen adds he draws from his "mistakes," "things that went well," "opposition," "challenges," and "spiritual warfare that took place" as he teaches.

However, Sieberhagen also notes that "one of the things that is very successful on the mission field is the whole idea of hospitality and living life with people."

Alongside his wife, he says the couple wants to "model" hospitality and living life together for the students as it complements what he teaches in the classroom: "If you're going to most of the unreached parts of the world today the principles of "hospitality and friendship" are "very important virtues." "Every student that comes to Southwestern is someone for us to treasure and disciple and live life with; not just see me in the classroom," Sieberhagen adds. "If I have a closed door to my office where you don't know if you can come in, that might work in a secular company. That's not who we are. We're God's institution and these are God's people He's given us to minister to and care for."

The open door Sieberhagen has to his office is the same open door the couple has to their home. Weekly, the Sieberhagens have an "open table" for Sunday lunch following church when they invite people to join them in their home for lunch around a home-cooked meal. Depending on the Sunday, he says the group can include five or six people or as many as 15 people.

Gatherings with students are not limited to Sundays, however. It is not uncommon for the Sieberhagens to have as many as 30 international students in their home on the United States Thanksgiving holiday and to have students join their family Christmas celebration. The couple learned how to brine a turkey using a recipe from Pinterest and have perfected it to make it their own over the last decade.

Sunny Choi*, a student enrolled in the 5-year-degree program at Southwestern, is one of the students who has joined the Sieberhagens for U.S. holidays. Choi, who is originally from East Asia, says the time at Thanksgiving is filled with "giving thanks to the Lord for what we are thankful for in this passing year" and praying together. In addition to the meal, the celebration also includes playing games past midnight, she says, adding that the Sie-





berhagens usually go to bed at midnight while everyone continues to play.

Choi, though, first met Sieberhagen through the Everyday Evangelism teams he leads to share the Gospel around Fort Worth. In 2015, Choi explains, she was taking English as a Second Language (ESL) at a Fort Worth area university. A new believer at the time, Choi built a friendship with the Sieberhagens that resulted in them discipling her and having her over for meals and family gatherings. Following a car accident that resulted in a concussion, and subsequently needing to leave the university and her campus housing, the Sieberhagens invited Choi to recover in their home.

She recalls the time in the Sieberhagen home allowed her to see how they “love people” and “welcome people” and “what missionaries should be.”

“I think this family gave me kind of encouragement and example of what a marriage life should be,” Choi says. She said the couple is a “very good example of working alongside each other to serve the Lord.”

The experience also clarified God’s calling on her life, Choi adds, as she was “at a crossroads” as she realized she “needed to give my unknown future to God” and to “let God use my life for His kingdom and His people.” The Sieberhagens prayed with her, disciplined her, and had conversations with her, she says.

“There was one time I had a conversation with [the Sieberhagens] and they said, ‘Well, you can think about coming to seminary to get equipped,’” Choi remembers. The result was her enrolling in the 5-year-program at Texas Baptist College and Southwestern that allows her to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees in five years. The hope is that following graduation in May 2025, she will return to her country to be an ambassador for the Gospel.

Though the Sieberhagens have four sons – two who serve with the IMB, one who uses his vocation as an engineer to be a missionary in his Dallas-Fort Worth area workplace, and one who just graduated from college – Choi says, “Obviously, their spiritual children are all over the world.”

Another one of the Sieberhagens’ spiritual children is Soja “Bosco” Soajoro, a native of Madagascar who is also enrolled in the 5-year-program at Seminary Hill.

Soajoro came to faith in Christ in 2015 when Sieberhagen, who was leading a mission team from Southwestern, led a Bible study at the Fort Dauphin, Madagascar, English club he was attending. Soajoro, who says he was “very far from God” at the time, resonated with Sieberhagen as he talked about “moving from darkness to light.”

“He said, ‘We all are in sin, we all live in darkness, and whether you go to church or not, and so you can’t get out of darkness, by your work by the



If I have a closed door to my office where you don’t know if you can come in, that might work in a secular company. That’s not who we are.

Dean Sieberhagen



good deeds that you do," Soajoro recalls. He adds Sieberhagen presented the Gospel of Christ, and gave an invitation, "and I just knew God was pressing on my heart. This was my time to come to the Lord." While the IMB missionaries followed up with Soajoro and began discipling, he explains they would relay that Sieberhagen would check on how the new disciples were growing.

When Soajoro expressed a desire to "study theology," he says Sieberhagen encouraged him to study at Southwestern. He adds this is when he and Sieberhagen "began to talk personally."

"He helped me from the beginning of the process up to now," Soajoro explains, adding that when he arrived in Fort Worth in January 2022, the Sieberhagens connected him with other people from Madagascar and he lived in their home until he could move into the dormitory on the Southwestern campus.

Upon completion of his bachelor's and master's degrees, Soajoro says he will return to Madagascar to teach at the Fort Dauphin Baptist Theological

Seminary while he works on his Ph.D. online. The Madagascar-based seminary is not without Sieberhagen's influence either – the institution's founder, Nirintsoa Mamitiana ('18, '22), was Sieberhagen's doctoral student.

It is not hard to understand why Sieberhagen was recognized by his faculty colleagues. And, yet, he describes the recognition as "humbling" and an experience that he "doesn't want to dishonor the Lord by feeling at all prideful about it."

"It was quite emotional for me to think that the Lord would honor me in that way," Sieberhagen concludes. "I love what I do. ... I love the teaching."

Ashley Allen ('03, '09) is managing editor of Southwestern News.

**Name changed for security reasons.*





Life & ministry together

How Spencer and Shelley Plumlee follow their ministry callings together

BY JAMES DUGGER

PHOTOS BY AMANDA B. WILLIAMS



From meeting each other in the classroom at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2007, to serving in a church 20 minutes from the campus, Spencer ('07, '13) and Shelley ('08) Plumlee have been following God's will to make the biggest Kingdom impact possible. Through discipleship and remembering where they came from, they help show Christ's love in the Mansfield, Texas, community and beyond.

Today, they serve together at First Baptist Church of Mansfield, the congregation in which Shelley grew up, while Spencer was reared in Memphis, Tennessee.

"First Baptist Mansfield is my home church," says Shelley. "This is where I grew up and my mom actually works here in the office. I did all the children's church and youth group stuff growing up until college where I attended a small church plant."

Spencer attended Christian Brothers University in his hometown. As he was in the middle of earning a degree in finance, he felt a different calling on his life.

"I sort of was officially feeling called to pastor halfway through college," says Spencer. "I got some advice that led me to finish the degree, then go to seminary and follow my calling. When I did research, Southwestern seemed to be the best place for good theology, but also for good practical advice."

Spencer adds that some of the best advice he received was secondhand advice. "In college, I started going to Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis and Adrian Rogers was the pastor. He met with a friend of mine and told him to go to Southwestern, and I was the one who took Dr. Rogers's advice and not my friend," he remembers.

At Southwestern, Spencer pursued a Master of Divinity followed by a Doctor of Philosophy in systematic theology. Shelley earned a Master of Arts in Christian Education.

The Plumlees recall they enjoyed many classes while attending Southwestern, but they both enjoyed their systematic theology classes more than any others.

"I would say that the systematic class on the atonement that I took was the most helpful class at Southwestern," says Spencer. "I took it as an elective, and spending the entire semester thinking about the death of Jesus and the weight of it, I think did more clarifying work for me theologically."

Spencer adds that "through these classes, Southwestern challenged me to think deeply about God's Word so that I not only developed theological convictions but also a theological vision for ministry."

Though she, too, says she enjoyed her systematic theology classes, Shelley says she enjoyed her Old Testament classes and "evangelism was a class that was really enjoyable and beneficial to me."

While studying at Southwestern, Spencer and Shelley were introduced to each other by mutual friends and then started dating more intentionally, soon realizing "early on when we started dating each other that I was the grader for her systematic theology class," Spencer remembers. "I was able to talk with the professor and get it worked out that the other teaching assistant would grade her assignments, but it was a funny coincidence for us."

The day following Shelley's spring 2008 commencement, marking the seminary's 100th anniversary, the couple was married.

"I was a centennial graduate which was fun because we got to graduate outside," said Shelley. "I graduated that morning, then in the evening we had our rehearsal dinner, and we got married the next day."

In 2004, Spencer became the college minister at Southcliff Baptist Church in Fort Worth while he was earning his M.Div., but he began "part-time as the assistant to the youth minister, and I quit my paint job to volunteer as the college ministry director," he says. "As the ministry grew, they brought

me on part-time as the college minister, and eventually full-time as we grew to have about 250-300 college students attending.”

During his ministry at Southcliff, Spencer befriended Madison Grace ('06, '12) who was also pursuing his Master of Divinity. Grace, who was recently installed as provost and vice president of academic administration and dean of the School of Theology at Southwestern, also was ministering to college students in Fort Worth.

“While Spencer was at Southcliff, I was a college minister in south Fort Worth, and we were both getting our M.Div.s,” said Grace. “We were doing a lot of similar things in the same area as each other and we became friends during that time as we both pursued our Ph.D.s in systematic theology.”

During his Ph.D. work, Spencer and Shelley felt called to move from the college minister position at Southcliff to Riverview Baptist Church in Osage Beach, Missouri, so Spencer could serve as pastor.

“In between our time at Southcliff Baptist Church and First Baptist Mansfield, we spent five years at a great church in Missouri,” says Spencer. “While there my name got recommended to be one of the preachers at the SBC Pastors’ Conference. It was an incredible experience to meet different pastors from all over the country.”

Spencer adds that it was a “humbling experience” to be one of the seven pastors invited to preach. “It was actually really encouraging to see the health of our denomination. I think there is a lot of ‘the sky is falling’ attitude towards the SBC, but I think the average SBC pastor is doing great work,” he notes.

In 2018, the Plumlees followed God’s calling and moved their family from Missouri to Mansfield, Texas, and Spencer became the senior pastor at the same church where Shelley grew up.

Though Shelley is not on staff at First Baptist Mansfield, she does feel that she has a ministry in the church from her position as the pastor’s wife. “My newest ministry is working with newborn babies, and that is one of those things that God has kind of showed me that I didn’t know I would love, but I love it,” says Shelley. “When I get in there, I can talk to those moms being on the other side of having babies since our kids are grown and I can just encourage them in that way.”

One way Shelley was discipled was through help from the pastor’s wife and youth minister’s wife at the church plant she was a part of in college, Gateway Church. She explains what they modeled and taught has helped her in her role as the pastor’s wife.

“The pastor’s wife and the youth minister’s wife both really took me under their wing and just really discipled me,” Shelley recalls. “They showed me



what it was like to be a pastor’s wife and I just was able to watch them minister through that position, and they really confirmed my calling in that way.”

Discipleship is part of the entire church’s vision and Spencer himself is “very passionate about multiplying disciples in our church, it’s kind of passion number one,” he explains. “I am actively looking to help the people around me take their next step in their relationship with Jesus. Whether that is conversion, discipleship, or disciple-making, I want to help them move forward.”

“As I’ve come to First Baptist Mansfield, we have really led and organized our resources, our time, our staff, and all of the things that our church has in terms of stewardship around our disciple-making ministry vision,” Spencer says. “As of today, we’ve seen about 400 or so of our adults go through the disciple-making process, and many of them are engaging in replicating that ministry.”

One way First Baptist Mansfield focuses on disciple-making is through their intensive discipleship program. Throughout this program, members go through several weeks of Bible study and review of practical applications of the Word.

Tray Traylor, facilities director at First Baptist Mansfield, went through the program three separate times and feels that the process was “very rewarding.”

“The experience has enabled me to speak to and listen to others to help us each to understand how to walk to honor God and to depend on Christ,” says Traylor. “It’s my favorite part of the Bible, knowing we are commanded to ‘go,’ do what we can to teach others, baptize others, and to bring others to Christ.”

Another way Spencer and the church focus on helping followers of Christ take the next step in their relationship with Jesus is through the pastoral residency program. Through the program, the church employs someone who is pursuing pastoral ministry but needs experience. The church provides a full-time salary and benefits and allows the resident to have an active leadership role in ministry to gain vital experience.

“One of our great ministry efforts is one for the Kingdom as a whole, and it is our residency program,” Spencer says. “Our current resident is Harrison Frueh, and he is leading our college and young adult ministry. He is getting some good experience and development through it.” Through the residency





I can talk to those moms being on the other side of having babies since our kids are grown and I can just encourage them in that way.

Shelley Plumlee





It is a great joy of mine to get to participate in seeing future generations come through a place that has been so rewarding to us.

Spencer Plumlee





program, Frueh ('23) is able to learn in a practical way what it means to be a pastor of a church.

"There are three things that we are hoping for in formation of me as a person and those are character in Christ, competency with the Word, and capability in ministry," says Frueh. "Spencer has just been pouring into me and helping me develop in that way."

As the pastoral resident, Frueh shares an office with Spencer in order to witness decisions and daily tasks that Spencer and many other pastors face each day.

"They just renovated the office so that I work in his office," says Frueh. "A lot of my learning has been just watching him do pastoral ministry and him telling me why he did something a certain way."

Spencer added that the program is geared specifically towards pastoral ministry as the need for young, experienced pastors is growing. "I see many older pastors who are going to retire in the next few years, and we need to support our churches by equipping young men to be pastors in those churches," he adds.

The church's emphasis on discipleship is not only focused on Christian growth in the lives of the members but it is also focused on training the members to share the Gospel to those who do not know Christ. One way this is done is through the work of Carl Bradford ('11, '18), interim associate dean of the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions, assistant professor

of evangelism, and Malcolm R. and Melba L. McDow Chair of Evangelism, who serves as the minister of evangelism at First Baptist Mansfield.

"We evangelize to make a disciple, and we disciple by teaching others to share their faith," Bradford says. "It demonstrates Spencer's commitment as a shepherd to the Great Commission. He teaches that ministry is not business but raising people to God. I also like that we have a healthy balance between the two. The church is both inward- and outward-focused."

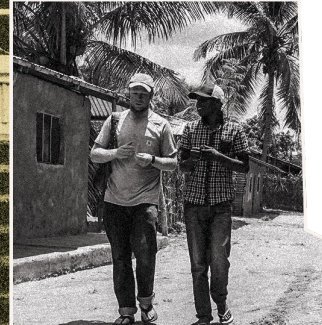
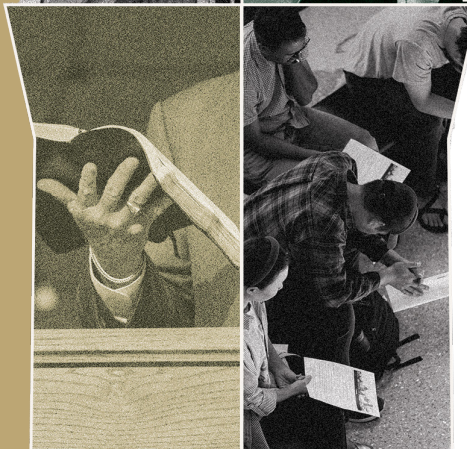
Along with Bradford, Grace also serves at First Baptist Mansfield, formerly as a teaching pastor and currently as a lay elder. Bradford and Grace serve alongside Spencer at the church and seminary as Spencer is also an adjunct professor of pastoral ministry.

"It is a great joy of mine to get to participate in seeing future generations come through a place that has been so rewarding to us," says Spencer. "To get to do this is so incredibly enriching and [a] blessing to us."

Spencer and Shelley Plumlee grew up in completely different areas, but both ended up at Southwestern Seminary where God grew their knowledge and love for Him while bringing them together. "Southwestern is very special to our family and we owe a lot of who we are as a family and who we are as ministers and leaders to our time there," says Spencer. "It was incredibly fortunate."

James Dugger ('23) is a news writer for Southwestern News.

Next-Gen



ministry

How Doug Bischoff pioneered helping Houston's First be a 'better partner for parents'

BY JAMES DUGGER

ILLUSTRATION BY SAVANNAH CHEATHAM

In most churches today, children's ministry and youth ministry have little to do with each other outside of sharing a building. At Houston's First Baptist Church, however, Southwesterner Doug Bischoff has pioneered ministry that seeks to make "church a better partner for parents" throughout their childhood journey.

There is a rise in what some call a "Next-Gen" minister. This new ministerial position is one that connects all the younger-aged ministries together and brings parents closer to what their children are learning. Before, parents could be left in the dark about events or even theology taught to their children: this new position seeks to change that while keeping students at the heart of this new position.

"Adult change is hard," says Bischoff ('93, '11), who currently serves as the Next-Gen Minister at Houston's First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. "I like kids because kid change is not hard." Bischoff has been involved with student ministry since he was 21 years old.

Bischoff says he "was one of those kids that was in church nine months before I was born." The church in which he was reared was Hamlin Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri. It was "just a great place to grow up in," says Bischoff. "I was involved in everything." From there, he went to college at Missouri State University in his hometown of Springfield. After his junior year in college, Bischoff had an internship in computer sciences, his undergraduate major, which helped show his true calling in a way.

"I did an internship in St. Louis, Missouri, and I was bored," says Bischoff. "I didn't know anybody there. I would go to work and go back home."

When he was faced with this boredom, he decided to call someone he knew well. "I called my youth pastor and asked, 'What do I do?'" His youth pastor, J. C. Beckner ('80), mentioned Oak Ridge Baptist Church in St. Peters, Missouri, which needed help in the area of youth ministry. "He didn't tell me that the church did not have a youth minister, so I became the youth minister and they let me be the youth minister for seven months," Bischoff recalls.

After college, Bischoff only had one seminary on his mind where he would further his education. "Southwestern was just the one and only choice for me and it was a perfect choice," he says. Beckner not only assisted in Bischoff getting into youth ministry, but even encouraged him to go to Southwestern. "He began to tell me about Phil Briggs and Wes Black, and I couldn't wait to get to a place to hear from those two men," Bischoff explains, noting influential former faculty members.

Following the encouragement of his high school youth pastor, Bischoff began his Master of Arts in Religious Education with an emphasis in youth ministry in August of 1990. While working on his degree, Bischoff spent two stints of time in Saudi Arabia as a youth minister - once between his second and third years at Southwestern, and again following his graduation in 1993.

Following his time overseas, Bischoff says he "didn't have a clue" as to what he was going to do with his life. He decided to go back to his home in Springfield and visit family and friends. He met with a friend who had been pastoring a church whose building had been damaged by an arson fire. While going to visit with him and see the damage, Bischoff left with a clear new role for his life, youth minister at Spring Hill Baptist Church in Springfield—the very same church.

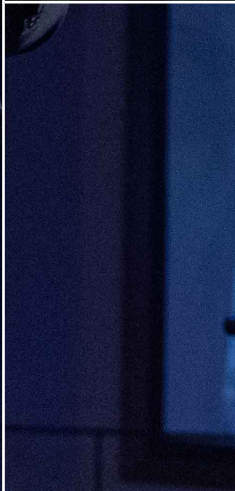
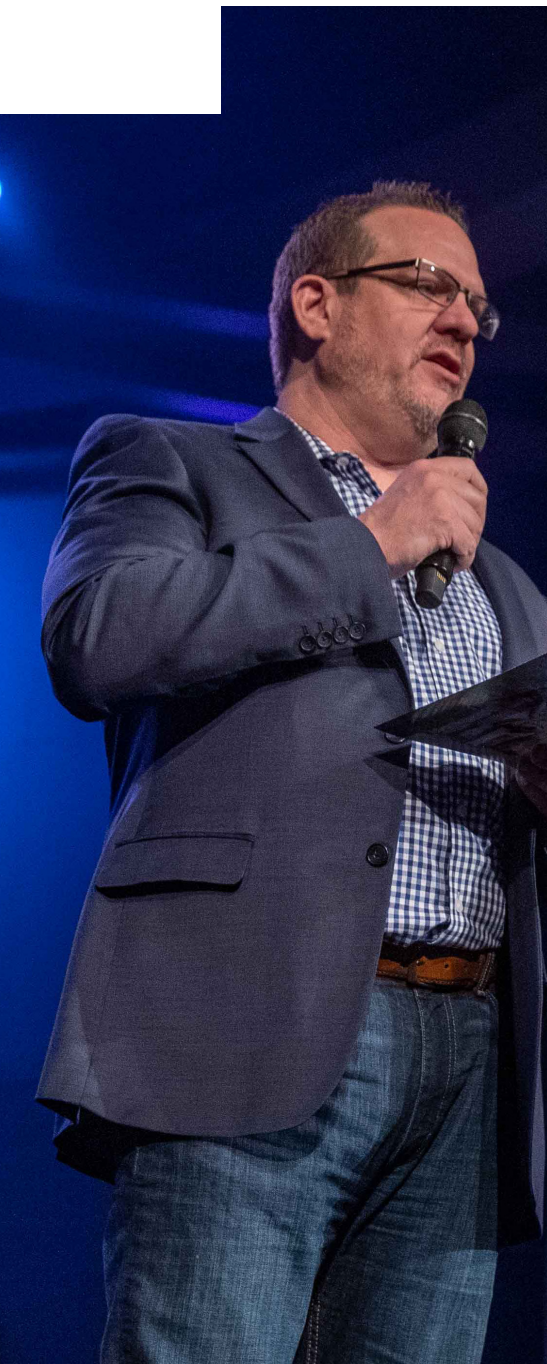
"The craziest thing about it is that it was a volunteer" position, says Bischoff. "I'm the guy who went to seminary to get a volunteer job." The job did not remain volunteer for long, however, and he became a part-time youth minister there after six months. "I was in conversation with a church in Alabama at that time about being full-time and I just knew that God wanted me in Springfield at this little church."

"It was a church of about 125 people, so not even the pastor was full-time," Bischoff remembers. He stayed at Spring Hill Baptist Church for 12 years, full-time for 10 and a half of those years. "The church grew from 125 members to 1,000 in about six years," he says. When people would ask Bischoff how their church was growing so quickly, his response was always the same, "I don't know. God's just doing it, and we're trying to stay out of His way."



Southwestern was just the one and only choice for me and it was a perfect choice.

Doug Bischoff



During his time at Spring Hill Baptist, Bischoff met and married his wife, Wendy, and had all four of his children there. Bischoff reflects, "It was just an incredible 12 years." After being at the church for 10 years, the pastor left, and Bischoff became the interim pastor for two years. The role solidified his call and passion for youth ministry. "I just couldn't wait to get back to the students," Bischoff recalls. "It just was not how God wired me," he explains.

Though Bischoff has many years of experience in youth and student ministry, he did learn much of what he knows from professors at Southwestern. During his first stint at Southwestern, he learned from the late Briggs, professor of student ministry, and Black ('78, '85), retired professor of student ministry, that "youth ministry could be a career," he says. He explains they taught "there is a depth to youth ministry beyond games and camp. They taught me that depth, they taught me the why behind so many things about kids and the development of adolescence."

When Bischoff returned to Southwestern to begin working on his Doctor of Philosophy in 2005, he was able to learn the same information at a deeper level from a different professor, Richard Ross ('74, '80), senior professor of student ministry. "It was the same thing, second verse in that it was deepening, again, my understanding of student ministry." With bringing in 20 years of experience to his Ph.D. studies, Bischoff was in an unfamiliar place. However, he did know what he wanted. "I wanted to learn more, and I wanted to learn it from Dr. Ross." Bischoff graduated with his Ph.D., majoring in student ministry, in 2011.

Ross says, "Every day Doug presses to know how to redeem, fully transform, and send out young believers." Ross says Bischoff's work in ministry reflects that Next-Gen and student ministry are "more than a job description" they are "the passion of his life." Though Bischoff has made a large impact in his ministry at Houston's First, Ross believes that his ministry goes "beyond the church," as "his master's and Ph.D. studies have prepared him to make a wider impact on Next-Gen ministries in many other congregations."

Bischoff wrote his doctoral dissertation on the impact of mission service on adolescent identity. While still at Spring Hill Baptist Church, he got connected with William Taylor ('83) who was the missions director at



I don't know. God's just doing it, and we're trying to stay out of His way.

Doug Bischoff

Southwest Baptist University. "William took college students every year to this far off place called Houston, Texas. Through that, I began to include my high school students," he remembers.

During his time at Spring Hill, they would take students to four different mission opportunities, "which is a lot for a small church." The students went to Chile and even as far as Uganda. Recalling a story of a student who experienced a call to ministry during a mission trip to Uganda, Bischoff says, "He got up to preach and got an incredible response. He came up to me afterwards and said, 'I want to do that again.' He ended up planting and pastoring a megachurch in Houston."

Through missions, students can "see their ministry giftings," says Bischoff. "Missions is not about creating missionaries vocationally. Missions is about kids understanding how they're wired." He recalls another student who felt a calling on their life on that same trip to Uganda. "He's an accountant and is a godly man who leads mission trips," Bischoff says, explaining that "he learned his organizational and administrative gifts on that trip." After joining the staff of Houston's First Baptist Church in 2007, Bischoff helped implement a missional focus on students that spans from fourth grade to high school graduation and includes five events "that are meant to build upon each other so that the kids can learn who they are in Christ and how God has wired them."

Bischoff credits the long legacy of student ministry at Houston's First to Johnny Derouen ('93, '05), former professor of student ministry at Southwestern Seminary. "Johnny started a legacy in the 80's that I was aware of, and it was just really exciting for me to be a part of," he explains.

After spending around seven years as the youth minister, Bischoff was called to be the Next-Gen Minister. "I talked about it more and more with my peers, and my supervisor, about [how] we could build a better discipleship program for parents." In 2013, he says his church told him, "Okay, great. You get to be the Next-Gen and make all that happen." Bischoff says he "didn't have a clue" what he was doing as he was "just making it up as I go along" because he is the first Next-Gen minister "the church has ever had" and he was "just trying to find ways to make church a better partner for parents."

To Bischoff, establishing the church as a good partner for parents means "helping parents know what we're teaching so they can reaffirm it at home." Communication can be an issue in churches, but especially in

large churches. "So, we're trying to diminish frustration. We're trying to put resources into the hands of parents," he explains.

"We are not kid experts, but we are kid specialists," Bischoff says when discussing why it is important to involve parents so heavily in ministry. "A parent is the expert of their kid; nobody knows their child better. And we as a church are not going to try to pretend like we're the expert on their child." Bischoff is still working with youth and student ministry, but he wants to emphasize the importance of children being disciplined at home. He also believes in the importance of training up the next generation of church leaders.

Through a collaboration between Houston's First and Southwestern, called the Difference Maker Institute, which launched in August, students can enter into a year-long residency program that allows them to earn 18 hours of seminary credit while getting real-life ministry experience at Houston's First. The students, who moved to Houston, have seminary classes chosen for them by the church staff, and "the application will be done by us here in our church staff," he explains.

To Bischoff, Next-Gen ministry is about more than just student ministry. "I love as a Next-Gen minister, to some extent, pastoring my team," he explains as he believes "part of my job is just pastoring my team and loving my team and reminding them who they are in Christ and what God has designed them to do." Bischoff is the Next-Gen minister at the main campus of Houston's First, but he is also critical in helping with providing direction for the church's other three campuses as he is the first and only Next-Gen minister among the campuses of the congregation.

Bischoff has seen his role, and student ministry as a whole, change over his time in ministry. While many things change over time, Bischoff's heart and calling still remain in growing up the next generation of church leaders and disciples. His hope, in the end, is that more people will come to know Christ for the generations to come.

James Dugger ('23) is a news writer for Southwestern News.

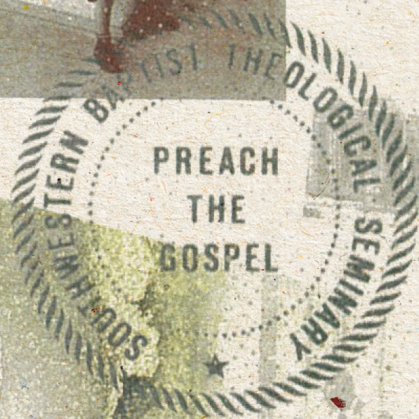
Photos for this article were provided by Houston's First Baptist Church.



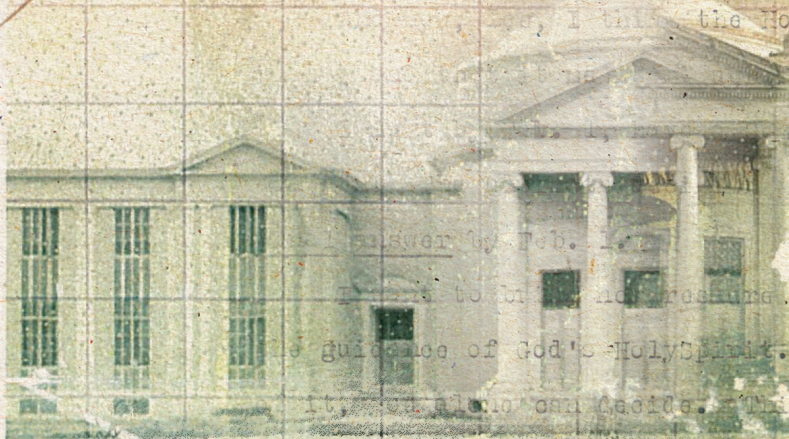
**A GREAT COMMISSION
AND GREAT
COMMANDMENT VISION
FOR THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION AT
SOUTHWESTERN**

by W. Madison Grace II

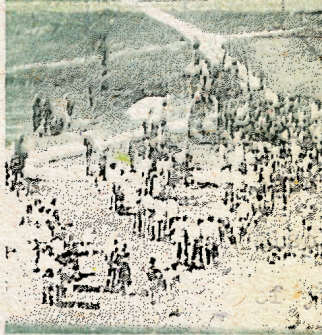
Illustrations by Savannah Cheatham



I think the Holy Spirit is the author of your providence
 for your future.
 Field Sec. You'll prefer above
 I must have decision &
 answer by Feb. 1st
 of your mind other than
 guidance of God's Holy Spirit. of their clear. Your part
 particularly the reference



could do fairly well as field secre-
 There are, know me now, only two living men to whom I would
 first. The other I suppose is
 him if you decline. Telling both o
 of my, I will leave it to him who is never's tightened for means
 and as. His Chair of Fire.



SEMINARY HILL

Yours for the Lord's Kingdom on earth & in
glory,

(SIGNED)
B. H. Carroll.



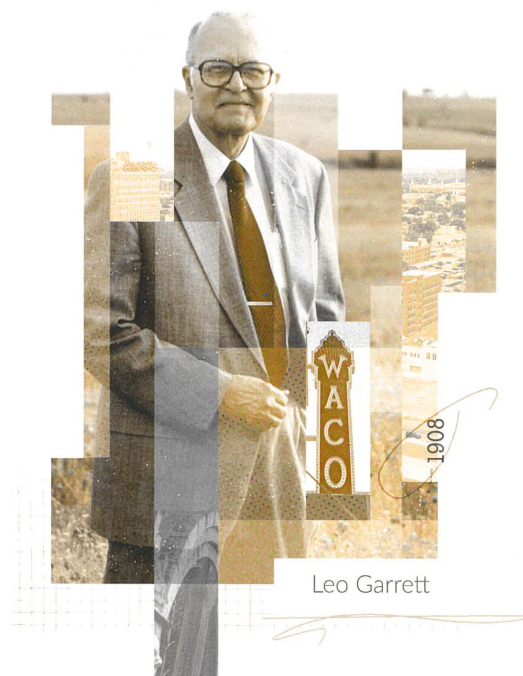
In 2000, I surrendered to the call to vocational ministry. As a 20-year-old, I did not know exactly what that meant other than I knew God had a plan for me and I wanted to serve Him in and with the local church. Theological education was core to that decision. I was attending Mississippi College and switched to a major in Christian studies. I found a position at a local church where I could intern. This was an exceptionally formative time in my life. I learned about ministry both academically and practically, yet knew I needed more equipping. Every mentor in my life at that time—family, professors, and church—mentioned I needed to go to seminary to complete my education.

Going to seminary was an easy decision to make; what was difficult was where to go. There were a few excellent options close to my home, but I wanted to make sure that the education I would receive would be one that would not just train my mind but would prepare me for the work of ministry. In 2001, I traveled to Fort Worth, Texas, with the thought of potentially leaving behind family, friends, and the church I served and loved dearly. What I discovered on Seminary Hill was a place that could train me academically and professionally, a place that was good for my mind as well as my soul. I decided at that time Southwestern Seminary is where I needed to be.

Twenty-two years have passed since that initial visit. Much has changed. The seminary is different. We have gone from three schools to five including Texas Baptist College, our undergraduate program. Theological and higher education is different; for example, online education is now a significant percentage of our student population, while it barely existed when I began seminary. The world has changed tremendously and with it the concerns of ministry and missions. Theological education in the twenty-first century requires different approaches than my grandparents received; indeed, the needs today are different than only one generation ago. What remains unchanged, however, is that Southwestern Seminary is committed to equipping our students into the God-called ministry that

they will be entering for the Kingdom. We still teach the Bible, theology, preaching, and pastoral ministry. We still equip ministers in music ministry, children ministry, student ministry, counseling, and family ministries, to name a few. We are ever concerned with reaching the lost and equipping every Southwesterner in missions and evangelism, although we now do it with the contemporary challenges in mind. We still exist to assist churches by training church missions leaders for Gospel service.

The historic nature of Southwestern Seminary is seen in how we have been committed to living out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission throughout our 115 years of ministry. This is clearly articulated in our recently restated mission:



Leo Garrett

The primary mission of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is to glorify God by providing theological education for individuals engaging in Christian service, assisting Southern Baptist Convention churches by biblically educating and equipping Christian men and women for ministry which encourages the priority of the Great Commandment and the fulfillment the Great Commission.

And to do so with our vision:

Through theological education, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will seek to equip servants for the church to influence Texas, the region, the nation, and the world for the cause of Christ and the Kingdom of God.

These are the things that we do because this is who we are. In fact, we have crafted an identity statement to clarify:

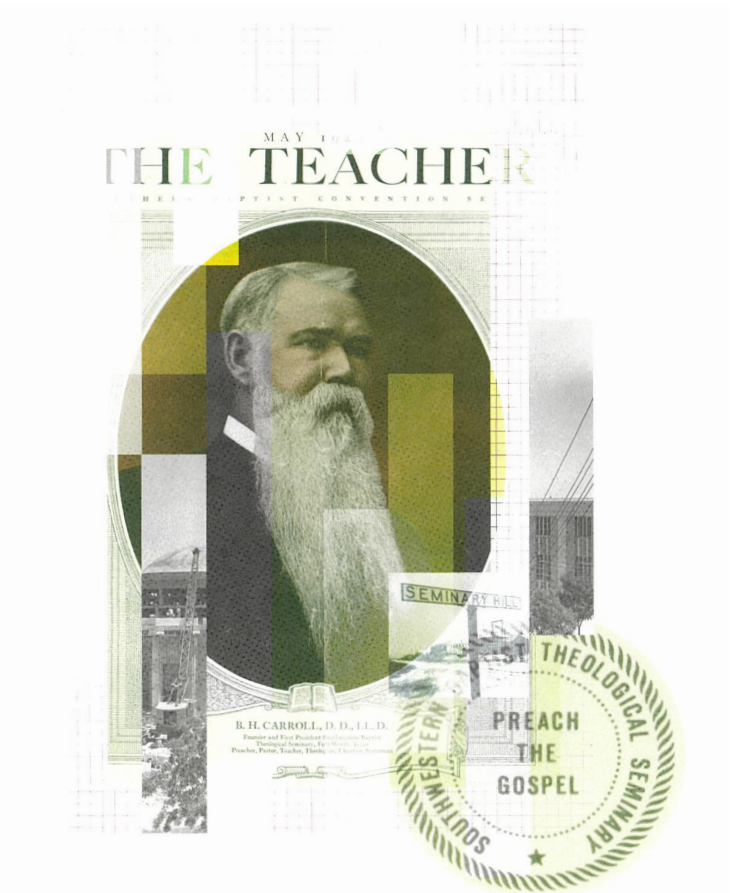
In keeping with its heritage as a Great Commandment and Great Commission institution, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary guides and equips students in living their calling, seeking to glorify God through Christ-centered education that encourages academic excellence and faithful ministry preparation.

As I ponder the future of Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College, it is no less than these statements and the dual commandments they embody that drive my vision for theological education on Seminary Hill. Our commitment both inside and outside of the classroom is to keep these two biblical mandates ever before us. We recognize that student formation for Gospel ministry is our goal and our curriculum in the classroom must be as academically rigorous as it is practically effective. We are committed to ensuring that our students are effective in both local church ministry and global missions. The essence of the Great Commission is to go forth into all nations teaching all that Jesus commanded. We want to ensure that any student's call to the uttermost is buttressed by intellectual and practical training that ensures effectiveness for Kingdom work as they fulfill the Great Commission.

We also are concerned with how every member of the Southwestern community is being formed and conformed to the image of Christ. The Great Commandment calls us to love both God and neighbor with all that we are. Our desire is for Southwesterners to go forth into ministry with not only head knowledge about the Bible and theology, but with hearts that are broken for the lost as well as passionate for true discipleship in this broken world. How we love the people to whom we are ministering is just as important as how well we engage in the everyday tasks of ministry. The hidden curriculum at Southwestern and Texas Baptist College, outside of the classroom, is shaped to not only help Southwestern become a place of integrity, trust, and flourishing, but also to cultivate our students so that they are equipped to lead in ministry in a like manner.

The dual task of fulfilling the Great Commission and living the Great Commandment is supported by our six core values that are central to our engagement inside and outside of the classroom. We are an institution that is Grace Filled, Christ Centered, Biblically Grounded, Confessionally Guided, Student Focused, and Globally Engaged. Our unapologetic commitment to Christ and His churches as well as Baptist theological identity guides us as we focus on the students entrusted to us to send back out to engage the world.

As Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College engages in its task to assist churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, we do so



with the commitment to touch hearts and minds. The intersecting point between academics and practical ministry preparation has been key to Southwestern since B.H. Carroll helped found the school in 1908. It continues to be the heart of our school as we equip ministers to be effective in the twenty-first century. Vocationally this means a heightened focus upon both full- and part-time ministries that local churches and missionaries need today. The biblical, theological, evangelistic, and missiological impulse of Southwestern's history is being focused in on the needs of ministry in the world today.

As I begin this new role of leading the academic division of this Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College, an institution that has shaped and formed me, I stand on the shoulders of leaders like B.H. Carroll, W.T. Conner, Leo Garrett, and others who knew the need to equip ministers of the Gospel. It is my desire for Southwestern to be renewed as the place that equips God-called women and men to be trained for ministries in the local church and on the mission field. As Robert Naylor claimed years ago, "The sun never sets on Southwestern." This is because the historic mission and vision of the school on Seminary Hill remains. Our graduates have gone out into the entire world making disciples and we are not going to back off from that great effort today. Our focus is clear, we are and will be devoted to equipping future leaders to do the work of ministry, making disciples, and reaching the lost.

W. Madison Grace II ('06, '12) serves as the provost and vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology.



Formed in His Image

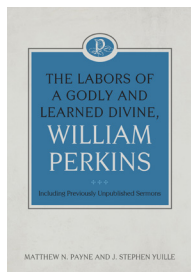
Ford's latest release encourages molding into the likeness of Christ

Formed in His Image: A Guide for Christian Formation, authored by Coleman Ford, assistant professor of humanities at Texas Baptist College, encourages readers to be formed to the image of Christ rather than being shaped by the things of the world. Through the Broadman and Holman book, Ford challenges readers to allow God's Word to shape them while also relaying the necessity of Christian formation. Ford calls readers to bring themselves to a "deepened commitment" to formation in the image of Christ by seeking Christ, building friendships, and welcoming humility into their lives. The book also includes practical applications for use in the local church while simultaneously providing insight and instruction on foundational doctrines for Christian formation.

“What I like best about Coleman Ford’s *Formed in His Image* is his division of the book into ‘Doctrinal Foundations for Christian Formation’ and ‘Practical Foundations for Christian Formation.’ This aligns with Paul’s instructions to ‘keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching’ (1 Tim. 4:16). In other words, in your Christian life and ministry, pursue both piety and theology, heart and head, heart and light, spirit and truth. The most Christlike spirituality is consciously guided by the truth of Scripture, and theology is most accurately understood when it results in Christlike actions.”

— DONALD S. WHITNEY ('79),

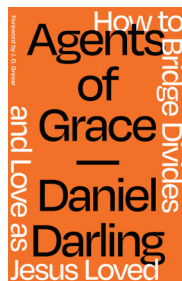
professor of biblical spirituality and associate dean of the School of Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



THE LABORS OF A GODLY AND LEARNED DIVINE, WILLIAM PERKINS: INCLUDING PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED SERMONS
Reformation Heritage Books (2023)

J. STEPHEN YUILLE

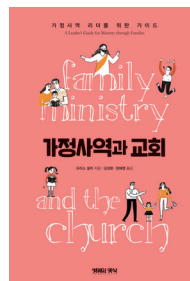
Through *The Labors of a Godly and Learned Divine*, William Perkins, Yuille provides the reader with never-before-published sermons from English theologian and preacher Perkins. Dubbed “The Father of Puritanism,” Perkins’s sermons that were published as books, as well as those that were not, are included in this volume.



AGENTS OF GRACE: HOW TO BRIDGE DIVIDES AND LOVE AS JESUS LOVED
ZONDERVAN (2023)

DANIEL DARLING

Darling encourages believers to adhere to the biblical command to pursue peace in a world and culture that thrives on hostility and division. Speaking from personal experience, Darling examines biblical truth to help believers learn to be grace-filled in a world that is not.



FAMILY MINISTRY AND THE CHURCH: A LEADER’S GUIDE FOR MINISTRY THROUGH FAMILIES (KOREAN TRANSLATION)
RANDALL HOUSE PUBLICATIONS (2023)

CHRIS SHIRLEY ('94, '02)

Shirley’s 2018 publication has been translated into Korean to assist ministry leaders in defining family ministry. Additionally, the book addresses topics including equipping members of the family to minister and serve, how to strengthen marriages as well as parents, how to equip grandparents, and how to address modern-day family issues from a biblical worldview.

BYLINES

Why do seminaries fear theology nowadays?

David S. Dockery ('81)

president

“There are certainly areas of theology which are debatable. But to deny the teachings found in the pattern of Christian truth as established and done in almost every era of the Christian history must be recognized as heterodox, or heretical.”

(on nwaonline.com)

Strong student ministry in-between student pastors

Richard A. Ross ('74, '80)

senior professor of student ministry

“Many individuals positively impact the lives of teenagers, but a God-called student pastor can make a unique contribution. A year without someone in that role can contribute to a teenager’s having a crisis of faith, choosing other life priorities, losing a sense of community with the youth group, slipping into depression, and many other eventualities.”

(on baptistpress.com)

Teen gender transitions hit roadblocks in Europe

Lilly H. Park

associate professor of biblical counseling

“Listening and asking good questions are essential to better understand a person’s struggles. We want to demonstrate love in how we engage with the teenager but also be true to the Bible’s teaching on sexuality.”

(on baptistpress.com)

Retired music theory professor Janis Watkins passes at 83

JANIS NUTT WATKINS ('81), RETIRED ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC THEORY at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, died Aug. 9. She was 83.

Born Feb. 10, 1940, in Mineral Springs, Arkansas, Watkins earned Bachelor of Music and Master of Music Education degrees from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, in 1961 and 1965, respectively. Her master's level thesis, "A Study of Music Theory Teaching in the Arkansas Foundation of Associated Colleges," examined the role of music theory in the curriculum of selected colleges in her home state.

Watkins married her husband, Derrel ('68, '72), on January 19, 1962. Derrel is a retired professor of social work in what is now known as the Jack D. Terry School of Educational Ministries at Southwestern.

Before she began serving at Southwestern in 1975, Watkins taught for six years in public and private schools in Michigan, Georgia, and Texas. While she and her husband were serving in Georgia, Watkins was the church music director at First Baptist Church of Monroe, Georgia, until the family moved to Fort Worth.



In 1973 Watkins began a one-year term as a teaching assistant in music theory in what is now known as the School of Church Music and Worship. The following year she began the first of six years as an adjunct teacher of music theory until she graduated from Southwestern with a Doctor of Musical Arts in 1981.

From 1981-1990, Watkins served Southwestern as an instructor in music theory until she retired in 1995 having earned the rank of associate professor.

Watkins was also a member of the Texas Society for Music Theory, the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, and the College Music Society.

In addition to her husband of 61 years, Watkins is survived by her children Derrelynn and Stephen. —A.A.

Retired professor of foundations of education Margaret Lawson dies at 79

MARGARET P. LAWSON, RETIRED ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, died Sept. 29. She was 79.

A native of Harare, Zimbabwe, Lawson began serving at Southwestern as an adjunct teacher for multiple classes, including principles of teaching, building church curriculum, and adult education, for nine years before she was elected to the institution's faculty as assistant professor of foundations of education in 1999. Lawson was promoted to associate professor of foundations of education in 2008, where she served until she retired in 2012.

"Dr. Lawson loved Southwestern and her students loved her," said Chris Shirley ('94, '02), dean of the Jack D. Terry School of Educational Ministries. "She had a passion for Christian education and teaching in the church and always brought her best to the classroom."

Lawson was born October 25, 1943, in Rhodesia, now known as Zimbabwe. Prior to coming to the United States in 1983 to begin studies at Southwestern Seminary, Lawson taught high school English and biology. In a 2002 interview she explained she made a commitment to missions and ministry in 1967 when Bud Fray ('55), a longtime missionary to Zimbabwe, preached a revival service.

In addition to a Bachelor of Theology (1981) from the University of South Africa, Lawson held a Master of Arts in Religious Education (1986) and a Doctor of Philosophy (1994), both from Southwestern Seminary.

Robert H. Welch ('85, '90), dean emeritus of the Terry School, served as dean of the Terry School (2004-2008) and a faculty colleague of Lawson.



He explained Lawson "expected her students to achieve, but she was willing to help them achieve."

Welch recalled the assistance Lawson provided in the area of writing to one student whose first language was not English. The student, who eventually graduated with a Doctor of Philosophy degree, is now a published author.

Welch said he is "sure he achieved that level" due to Lawson's help, but added, "She cared for other students in the same way."

In addition to the academic knowledge she brought to the classroom, Lawson also taught from her ministerial experience. She served as the minister of education or minister of discipleship at several churches in the Fort Worth area, including Springdale Baptist Church, Riverside Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Lakeside, and Woods Chapel Baptist Church, as well as Surrey Hills Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Lawson also served as the director of the Curriculum Center at Southwestern from 1987 to 1993.

Lawson was a contributor to the second edition of *The Teaching Ministry of the Church*, an academic textbook written by the faculty of the Terry School and published in 2008. In 2013 Lawson was awarded the Distinguished Leaders Award by the Disciple Leaders Network, which is a ministry of the Baptist Association of Christian Educators (BACE). —A.A.

ALUMNI UPDATES**1970**

Rex Mayo Horne Jr. (*MDIV 1977*) to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in Little Rock, AR as executive director.

1980

Tony Martin (*MARE 1980*) to *The Baptist Record*, Jackson, MS as editor.

1990

Jeffrey Paul Morgan (*MDIV BL 1990*) to First Baptist Church in Milledgeville, GA as senior pastor.

John Ralph Stuckey Jr. (*MARE 1992*) to First Baptist Church in Atmore, AL as minister of worship and families.

Julio Stevan Guarneri (*MARE 1998*) to the Baptist General Convention of Texas Dallas, TX as executive director.

2000

Jason Clark Gadman (*MACE 2000*) to The Equip Group, as a coach/consultant.

Christy Gadman (*MACE 2001*) to First Baptist Church Clinton, MS, as the children's minister.

Joe E. Early (*PhD 2002*) to Campbellsville University in Campbellsville, KY as director of research and creative scholarship.

Nathaniel William Sprinkle (*MA in MISS 2009*) appointed to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice.

2010

Andrew "Ted" Williams (*MDIV 2011, PHD 2017*) to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, LA as associate vice president of auxiliary services and assistant professor of expository preaching.

David A. Erickson (*PHD 2011*) to Jacksonville College in Jacksonville, TX as president.

Clay Mosley (*MTS 2015*) to Taylorville Baptist in Tuscaloosa, AL as senior pastor.

Joshua Shea Doss (*MDIV 2017*) to North Brewton Baptist Church in Brewton, AL as pastor.

2020

Ted Song (*MTS, MDIV 2021*) to John Brown University in Siloam Springs, AR as chief innovation officer.

ANNIVERSARIES**1970**

Toby T. Irwin (*MDIV 1973*) and Janelle (King) Irwin (*MRE 1973, MA 1983*), 50th wedding anniversary (June 1973).

RETIREMENTS**1980**

Brenton Morris Cox (*MDIV 1980*) retired with wife, Cynthia, living in Manchester, TN.

Glenn J. Schmitt (*MARE 1985*) retired with wife, Pam, living in Baytown, TX.

Karen Bullock (*MDIV 1987, PHD 1991*) retired with husband, John, living in Granbury, TX.

MEMORIALS**1940**

Wilma Alice Kidd (*MARE 1949*)

1950

Albert Cicero Billingsley (*BCH DIV 1959*)

Russell Dilday (*MDIV 1955, PHD 1960*)

1960

Curtis J Crofton (*BCH DIV 1960, MRE 1961*)

Fred Joe Baker (*DIP Theology 1961*)

John (Jack) Hackett Elliott (*BCH DIV 1961, MRE 1962*)

Loyd Ray Kindiger (*MARE 1961*)

Randolph (Randy) Wade Gunter (*BCH DIV 1961*)

Gilford A. Stricklin Sr. (*BCH DIV 1965, MDIV 1983*)

1970

Randall Kent Scott (*MDIV 1970*)
William Marion Honeycutt (*MDIV 1975*)

Walter Clark Wilson, Jr. (*MDIV 1979, DMIN 1988*)

Darwin S. Reynolds (*MARE 1975*)

1980

Chad Owen Brand (*MDIV 1980*)
Janis Nutt Watkins (*DMA 1981*)

Margaret Pascoe Lawson (*MARE 1986, PHD 1994*)

2000

Lisa Marie (Tumlinson) Thomas (*MDIVBL 2001, MDIV 2001*)

2010

David Allen Farley (*MDIVBL 2001, MDIV 2001*)

**KEEP IN TOUCH**

We love to hear from Southwesterners from all over the world. If you have recently changed your ministry positions or celebrated a retirement, anniversary, or birth, we would love to hear about it. Please contact us at:

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Fort Worth, TX 76122-0500

Physical Address

2001 W. Seminary Drive
Fort Worth, TX 76115

Phone (toll free)

1.877.GO.SWBTS (1.877.467.9287)

Phone (local)

817.921.8830

Email

alumni@swbts.edu

Giving back to the school that gave them so much



The Southwestern story of Tom and Claudia Cooksey

BY
JAMES DUGGER

SOUTHWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN THE HEARTS of Tom ('80) and Claudia Cooksey, and for that reason, they decide to give back to an institution that has given them so much.

Both Tom and Claudia grew up on dairy and wheat farms near El Reno, Oklahoma, in Canadian County, just outside of Oklahoma City. The two were raised on farms in different corners of the county and had different church experiences as well. Tom grew up going to Trinity Baptist Church in El Reno, while Claudia attended a United Methodist church in nearby Calumet, throughout her childhood.

Tom and Claudia met each other through 4-H, a youth development program with an emphasis in agricultural learning. From getting to know each other in 4-H, the couple went on to attend



Tom and Claudia Cooksey give to Southwestern Seminary because of their time and experiences at the Fort Worth institution.

college together at Southwestern State College, now known as Southwestern Oklahoma State University, only a 45-minute drive from El Reno.

"For four years, we participated in the Baptist Collegiate Ministries, it used to be the BSU, and we had a very great BSU director," says Tom. "We had some great friends who were involved in the BSU and many of those friends were called to the ministry as well."

Through the BSU, Tom and Claudia went on a mission experience weekend held for college students on Southwestern Seminary's campus.

"We came down to Southwestern for a couple of days for the mission weekend and that was my first time on campus," says Tom. "We met in the chapel area, some of the students put us up for the weekend, and that was our first experience together with the seminary that I recall."

Tom adds that the experience on Southwestern's campus was a positive one and that he was "most impressed" with all that the campus had to offer. "Reflecting back on that, there was a time or two after that experience where I met some seminary graduates at a missions conference or our church which helped establish that connection with the seminary," he says.

After their four years in college, the calling Tom felt from God was confirmed and he ultimately surrendered to that calling by accepting a role as a senior pastor.

"After she graduated, Claudia was fortu-

"Those three years in the late 1970s at the seminary were filled with many wonderful experiences and friendships," says Claudia. "It was a great combination of preachers and elementary teachers, and I believe that God bought us together and formed a very beautiful family friendship. All of that happened there at Southwestern."

After leaving Southwestern when Tom graduated in 1980 with his Master of Divinity, he became the senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Cherokee, Oklahoma, for seven years before he was called to pastor First Baptist

"The only thing I knew was the Bible, my example of faithful pastors, and wonderful Sunday school teachers."

— TOM COOKSEY

nate enough to be hired as a schoolteacher in a rural school, but I still needed another semester of schooling," recalls Tom. "But immediately after I graduated, there was a small church that needed a pastor, and the Lord led us to that church."

Tom and Claudia served at Amity Baptist Church in El Reno for approximately five-and-a-half years. "I didn't have any seminary training during that time," says Tom. "The only thing I knew was the Bible, my example of faithful pastors, and wonderful Sunday school teachers."

Five years into their service at Amity Baptist Church, Southwestern Seminary began to offer satellite degree programs on different campuses by flying professors to those different cities. Tom felt God calling him to gain some seminary education while working as a pastor.

"I enrolled in a couple of courses at Southwestern being hosted at Oklahoma Baptist University," says Tom. "It was that experience that God really opened my eyes that I needed to come to Fort Worth and come to the seminary to continue my education there."

Claudia was offered a teaching job in Crowley, Texas, and Tom enrolled in classes at Southwestern Seminary full-time in 1977. During their time at Southwestern, Tom and Claudia were active members at First Baptist Church of Burleson.

Church of Sayre, Oklahoma. After nearly 18 years at First Baptist Church of Sayre, Tom and Claudia felt called to go back to First Baptist Church of Cherokee to finish his ministry as a pastor. Upon retirement, Tom and Claudia moved back to Tom's family farm in El Reno. As a retired pastor, Tom now pastors Scott Baptist Church in Hinton, Oklahoma, and Claudia plays piano and teaches a children's Sunday school class.

The Cooksey's time and experiences at Southwestern are what drive them to donate to the seminary.

"I'm grateful for those who made a commitment and contributed to Southwestern in the past," says Claudia. "That has allowed us to pray about it and think about it, and begin contributing to carry on this act of giving toward the seminary."

Tom and Claudia feel that the seminary provided them with friendships and strong education, and this helps make giving feel like more than just a financial contribution.

"We want to be a part of someone else's lives, the lives of others, and God has called us to do that," says Tom. "Someone contributed and was a part of our being at Southwestern, so we just wanted to be a part of that. It is very cool that we're able to help a little bit financially with what God is doing at Southwestern. 🏠"

Serving churches through theological education

BY
JOHN MANN

“Christians should be prepared to address these challenges with theological astuteness and pastoral sensitivity.”



It was an unexpected question. I don't know that I had even considered it. I was near the end of my Master of Divinity degree and was waiting to speak to a professor who had encouraged me to pursue a doctoral degree.

While I waited, a well-meaning but impatient student quizzed me regarding which discipline I intended to pursue. “Systematic theology,” I said. He replied, “How does that benefit the church?” He went on to express his desire to complete seminary so he could “get started with ministry.”

The question implies that there have been unfortunate times when theological institutions and local churches have not valued one another enough. Indeed, it can be difficult to reconcile the theoretical with the practical.

I do not remember the student's name. He likely does not remember asking me the question. But that question has occupied my mind for over a dozen years. It was not long after that conversation that I decided to add a minor concentration in preaching to my major in systematic theology. I wanted to study theology so that I could better serve the church.

Having pastored for over twenty years and taught for ten, I have benefited greatly from that combination.

It is this mindset that led to my excitement when I was given the opportunity to serve Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Texas Baptist College in the area of church relations. The responsibility to spend time with pastors and church leaders on behalf of Southwestern Seminary captures the best of both worlds.

My enthusiasm for this role has only grown as I have heard the same love for the local church permeate the campus of Southwestern. From the president to the provost, from the deans to the faculty, the desire to serve the local church is a common theme. This theme is present in each classroom no matter the degree program.

Our guiding statements and our core values keep the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention in our hearts and prayers. Even more exciting, our student body loves the local church. I hear them enthusiastically discussing ways they serve their churches on a regular basis. They regularly comment on how some concept discussed in class has better equipped them for their area of service.

I recently sat with a newly formed student organization, the Southwestern Society for Pastoral

Ministry, where a faculty member voluntarily mentored a group of young men who are called to the pastorate. Before writing this article, I met with one of the leaders of this organization in order to discuss the day-to-day challenges that pastors and other church leaders face.

I have had the opportunity to visit with numerous pastors across the SBC over the past few weeks. The overwhelming sentiment has been, “Ministry is really hard today, but God is really faithful every day.”

As culture continues to wrestle with the chaos that results from human fallenness, Southwestern Seminary and TBC are committed to training students to engage the world with intellectual robustness while teaching them to serve the churches with warmhearted faithfulness.

In the recently published book, *The Great Dechurching*, the authors comment, “Dechurching is an epidemic and will affect both the institutions of our country and the very fabric of our society within our lifetime.” Christians should be prepared to address these challenges with theological astuteness and pastoral sensitivity.

Southwestern Seminary stands prepared to train students to engage the world. Students will go on to serve churches in various capacities, yet they will be equipped to answer the troubling questions of a fallen world. They, in turn, will be prepared to train the businessperson, the factory worker, the educator, and the entrepreneur to respond to the troubling conversations that occur in the marketplace.

Southern Baptists have enjoyed a long legacy of celebrating the relationship between the churches and Southwestern Seminary. I could not be more excited that President David S. Dockery ('81) is leading us to continue that legacy. I could not be more overjoyed than to experience that mindset as it permeates this campus. I could not be more humbled that I am a part of it.

Southwestern Seminary serving the church through theological education is a beautiful picture that practically demonstrates what it means to cooperate in the Great Commission as each of us love the Lord our God with our heart, mind, and soul.

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Preview Day is the perfect opportunity to see everything Texas Baptist College has to offer. Students will be able to meet their professors, chat with students, and experience campus life on Seminary Hill. If you know a student looking for a Christ-centered undergraduate education, then refer them to Preview Day.

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