

# vision

NEW ORLEANS  
BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY

WINTER 2008 | Volume 64.4

## Inside

NOBTS partnership in Cuba  
equips worship leaders

Stevens marks 20th year  
on seminary faculty

ound  
Theology



**Dr. Chuck Kelley, New Orleans Seminary President**

## Happy Birthday to NOBTS

**I**n 1917 the Southern Baptist Convention met in New Orleans and did something new. The Convention voted to create a school for training ministers and Christian workers, and they decided to put it in New Orleans. More than once I have wondered, “What were they thinking?” New Orleans was overwhelmingly Catholic. There were only four or five Baptist churches in the city. As has been the case with major port cities, New Orleans was well known as a “party town,” to say it as gently as possible. Morality and virtue were not heavily promoted. It was the equivalent of Corinth in ancient Greece. Unlike the rest of the South, New Orleans was very European. The first faculty included two professors teaching French, Italian, and other European languages to enable students to talk to the large ethnic populations in and around the city. Nothing about New Orleans would make a Baptist feel at home. Added to all this was the sheer difficulty of life in New Orleans. You probably heard about the hurricanes threatening cities along the Gulf Coast this year. Imagine the threats to New Orleans before today’s levee system was in place. But that was not the only threat. Classes for the new school actually began in the fall of 1918, 90 years ago. They started a month late, however, because New Orleans was one of the major beginning points for the 1918 flu epidemic that killed thousands and thousands of people across the nation and around the world. Classes were postponed and the city evacuated until the epidemic

## Southern Baptists knew then what we know now. New Orleans is one of the great cities of the world.

ran its course. It was not unusual for the swampy city to encourage evacuation when there were outbreaks of yellow fever. New Orleans was the most un-Baptist and difficult place in the entire territory served by Southern Baptists of that age. Why put a seminary in such an inhospitable place, particularly for Southern Baptists? It was not an accident. There were reasons.

### Strategic Place

New Orleans was and is a place of great strategic significance to the United States. Thomas Jefferson thought his most important accomplishment as President of the United States was the acquisition of the city of New Orleans to secure its port and the mouth of the mighty Mississippi River for the nation’s goods to go to the world and the world’s goods to come to the United States. To this day the port of New Orleans remains a vital cog in the distribution cycle of national and world commerce. In more recent years oil from the Gulf has become even more important. Today 25 percent of the nation’s oil comes from the Gulf, much of it passing through New Orleans. The city of New Orleans is vital to the economic interests of the United States. Add to this the allure of the distinctive culture of a city unlike any other. The jazz music, the great food, the architecture, the peculiar rhythms of life are known all over the world and attract people from all over the world. Rarely do I travel to a place where New Orleans is not known. Southern Baptists knew then what we know now. New Orleans is one of the great cities of the world.

Southern Baptists also saw New Orleans as a place of great missions significance. The world was in New Orleans. Students who trained there would have the opportunity to reach people from around the world. They would also experience a bit of the missionary life. New Orleans was and is unlike any other city in the country. It has a foreign feel to many who come, and the culture is unlike that of the rest of the country. With so few Baptists and other evangelical Christians, the field was wide open for planting churches and sharing the gospel. Students were not just sitting in the classroom. They and their professors were engaged in ministry, practicing as well as studying. The first motto of the seminary became “Learning to Do; Doing to Learn.” Every student was required to do Field Evangelism. Faculty members and students went out each weekend all over New Orleans, South Louisiana, and South Mississippi. No records were kept on how many churches have been started by the students and faculty of the Seminary, but it is more than 100 in the greater New Orleans area alone.

Many students had their first experience of leading someone to Christ while they were a student in New Orleans. Many met and interacted with people from other countries and different racial groups or from completely different religious backgrounds for the first time in New Orleans. Often students tried organizing volunteers to do something for Jesus for the first time, an essential ministry skill, as a part of a church planting effort or a street or neighborhood evangelism project. Street preaching, knocking on doors to share Christ with others, dealing with negative attitudes toward Christ or Southern Baptists were all a common part of the seminary experience for NOBTS students.



Photo by Boyd Guy

By the time students finished their degrees and left an area like New Orleans, Southern Baptists felt they would have more than knowledge. They would have basic skills, confidence, and perspectives helpful for a lifetime of ministry in any context. They would also have a missionary mind set. Southern Baptists wanted a school for ministry in this international crossroad of commerce and culture in part to strengthen the Baptist presence at that crossroad and in part to raise up Baptist leaders who would see and learn about the wide world and its needs from the experience of living at the crossroads for a season.

Three times in recent years the State Department of the United States contacted us about groups of VIPs touring the United States. The State Department picked New Orleans as one of three U.S. cities for the groups to visit because of its distinctive character and charm. These particular groups had questions about the religious life of our nation, and we were asked to meet with them and answer their questions. Two of those groups were Islamic scholars from various nations in the Middle East. They sat in our living room asking question after question about the gospel, forgiveness of sin, and the grace of God. We had that amazing opportunity to bear witness to Jesus to these professors of Islam because we were in New Orleans. It is still an international crossroads attracting people from all over the world.

### Spiritual Fitness

What I have grown to appreciate more and more is the role New Orleans plays as God's gym for spiritual fitness. Every student who comes experiences challenges and difficulties. They have to adjust to life in a different place where even the popular foods are unlike back home. There are financial challenges, cultural challenges, occasional storm threats and the possibility of another Katrina. Today there is an openness to the gospel I have not seen in my 30-plus years in this city. Students have real opportunities to try explaining our faith to people who have never heard it before.

Learning to live with confidence in God's faithfulness cannot be learned from reading a book or hearing a lecture. One must be in difficult circumstances to find that God is faithful in every circumstance. New Orleans has never been for the faint of heart, but it is a great place for people who want to grow their spiritual muscles and learn those lessons of faith that will sustain them for a lifetime and enable them to teach and train others to live and work by faith. Students are not simply taught. They are strengthened.

**Learning to live with confidence in God's faithfulness cannot be learned from reading a book or hearing a lecture. One must be in difficult circumstances to find that God is faithful in every circumstance.**

Southern Baptists knew enough about New Orleans to know training students in God's gym would be a good thing for future leaders of SBC churches.

No chapter in the history of our seminary has been easy, but every chapter has been filled with the blessing and faithfulness of God. It is why our students began long ago to call this place the School of Providence and Prayer. As we prayed, God always provided.

I cannot imagine a better place for training your future pastor and your future missionaries, musicians, counselors, educators, youth ministers, and other Christian workers. Reality-based training that stretches the soul and the mind, the skill and the will of students is a good thing for the next generation of our leaders. You can help us by supporting the Cooperative Program through the tithes and offerings you give to your church. If God has given you enough resources, you can add to that support direct help to keep ministry education affordable for students through giving to the Annual Fund. Thank you for considering an investment in the future, an investment in preparing the next staff members who will serve your church and family. The more we raise in the Annual Fund, the less we have to charge the students.

If you are facing a challenge today in your own life, please consider this: for 90 years New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has been training Baptist ministers in this most unBaptist of places. Through opposition, meager resources, all sorts of storms, and even the greatest natural disaster in the history of the United States, God has sustained this School of Providence and Prayer. We are His illustration of how faithful He will be to you. God will take care of you. You are in His grip, and nothing on earth can loosen it. May the Lord bless and keep you!

*Charles S. Kelley, Jr.*

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LEAVELL CENTER  
for EVANGELISM & CHURCH HEALTH

NEW ORLEANS  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# vision

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### Clarification

The cover painting of Dr. Landrum P.  
Leavell II featured on the Fall 2008  
Vision magazine was painted by Norman  
Shreiner of Kerrville, Texas. The painting  
is currently displayed in the Leavell  
Legacy Room at NOBTS.



# ound Theology

**With new instruments and renewed programs,  
music division builds on tradition of excellence**



ARTICLE BY PAUL F. SOUTH  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOYD GUY

**I**n 1996, at his first faculty meeting as president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Chuck Kelley posed a question to professors: What was their God-sized dream for the seminary?

It was Professor Becky Lombard's first meeting since she joined the faculty. Not intimidated by being a new faculty member, her hand shot up.

"Finish the organ in the chapel," she said "Our instruments are in terrible shape. I think it would be such a message to our music alumni and to our city if we can do the organ and do it right. I know it seems impossible because of the expense, but I know that God can do it."

Twelve years later, and after the worst natural disaster in American history, the organ in Leavell Chapel is completed, as is the organ in the recital hall at Sellers Music Building. Books can be readily replaced for theology, preaching, Greek or Hebrew. But high-quality instruments are another, big-ticket story.

But God did it.

The new instruments – state of the art organs, pianos and electric keyboards and other instruments are in place. And after being shut down after Hurricane Katrina, the seminary's doctoral program in musical arts in church music (DMA, one of only eight DMA programs with a sacred music emphasis in America), has been reinvigorated. Only one other university in Louisiana, LSU, offers a DMA. However, NOBTS is the only school in the state offering the research doctorate in church music.

While training in sacred music has been part of the academic heart of NOBTS since its founding, the new instruments and revived programs represent a new era for the program. Still, what sets the program apart from others around the nation remains unchanged.

Dr. Darryl Ferrington, Professor of Music Education, says the distinctives are intertwined. First, there is a small student body, meaning a small-student teacher ratio, which means more time for one-on-one instruction. This personalized instruction runs the gambit from performance to music education to worship leadership.

"For a student who excels, the heightened interaction with professors means that the student can be encouraged, learn more and delve deeper into the study of music and its use in the church," Ferrington said.

The low ratio means the chance for students to build relationships with their teachers. Professors, in turn, can offer personalized instruction.

"Here, we give the essence of what's important in every field, but we are able to also take students questions and apply them to the current situation where they are, wherever they are serving," Ferrington said.

Like every academic emphasis at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, music students are encouraged to step outside the gates and minister in the city.

"We are so rooted in local church ministry, Ferrington said. "That's our identity, not only for the whole school, but for the music division, because we want to prepare our music students to go and lead wherever God may lead them. We want to minister to the whole flock of God, not just those who agree with our style and taste."

The faculty, all involved in local church ministry, sets the standard. Faculty members serve in churches large and small.

"We practice what we teach, Ferrington said. "It's not an ivory-tower syndrome where we flit around from conference to conference all over the nation. We have real roots in the local church. Some of the things that students are facing in their churches, we face in ours. It keeps us grounded in reality and real ministry."

In recent decades, the art of worship has become more complex. No more are hymnals in the pews a guarantee. A 150-year-old white-columned church may still embrace the traditional hymns, but the new church plant in suburbia may sing the new songs of contemporary praise. In this climate, teachers and students learn a valuable lesson at NOBTS. In Ferrington's words, "Be ye flexible."

"If I'm going to stay authentic and valid as a teacher of church music, I have to be willing to step out of my comfort zone and to explore and to grow in appreciation for different styles of worship and realize that they are valid," he said. "And whatever we do, we do with quality. If you lead worship, we want you to do so with quality."

In the division, instruction is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor.

"It's tailor-made, not a suit off the rack," Ferrington said of the division's philosophy of instruction. "We're able to tailor the instruction to the needs and the interest of the student and their current church."

Andrew Pressley, a Greenville, S.C. native, heard the call of God to worship ministry while serving at a church in Anderson, S.C.

“In college I was filling in at a church and filling in for the music guy, I really felt that this is something I can do permanently. I was really connecting with the body. Pretty much from then on, I knew (my ministry) would be in music and in church ministry,” he said.

Pressley now ministers at a church in the New Orleans area, and at many campus chapel services, he leads worship with the chapel praise band. The band recently released a disc of some of its music. Pressley has found encouragement in his ministry while in the music program. Every type of church music -- from Southern and bluegrass gospel to the traditional great hymns of the faith -- are embraced at NOBTS, as part of ministry to all of God’s flock.

Pressley began his work in chapel following the seminary’s reopening after Hurricane Katrina.

“We get pulled a lot of different directions. But the music department has given us a lot of leeway as to what we are allowed to do. They’ve entrusted us with what we do and don’t really try to breathe down our necks. But it is a representation to them too. It’s been a really unique experience for me to lead that, just as a student, to be consistent in worship.”

Pressley remembers well the first semester after Katrina hit. With many of its instruments waterlogged or in splinters, the program was struggling. The DMA program was discontinued and musicians were in a difficult spot.

But thanks to the seminary’s commitment, the department

is forging ahead. Pressley compared the department in Katrina’s immediate aftermath to today. Then, the department was at a crossroads. Now the department is providing services as an outreach to a still-hurting city – programs like the recent “Carols and Candlelight” Christmas event.

“The first semester or so (after the storm) was kind of frustrating because everything needed repair,” Pressley said. “We were missing pianos and had to have a lot of rentals and things like that. But now is the time that everything is getting finished up. We’ve got the new instruments in place. We have brand new organs that no other place really has. We’ve got beautifully redone pianos. It’s evidence of the administration’s commitment to the music program.”

Before Katrina, the seminary had a classic Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ and a Moeller organ. Both were ruined by Hurricane Katrina. The seminary’s new organs, an 83-rank pipe organ in Leavell Chapel and a 33-rank pipe organ in Sellers Recital Hall, can perform all forms of worship music. A rank is a unit of pipes, ranging in size from the circumference of a straw to 16-inches round. The size of the instruments opens the door to a wide array of musical literature that would have been closed in the past. The recital organ is a more academic instrument, while the Leavell Chapel organ can handle academic demands, but is primarily for worship.

Two new grand pianos are also part of the seminary’s commitment to the music division, Ferrington said.

The division offers a wide array of academic offerings at the certificate, undergraduate and graduate levels. In 2007, the seminary expanded its musical offerings to its North Georgia hub



⤴ Andrew Pressley  
Master of Divinity



⤴ *Carols and Candlelight*



⤵ *Carols and Candlelight*  
Dr. Becky Lombard





**Dr. and Mrs. Chuck Kelley in front of the restored Leavell Chapel Organ with the Division of Church Music Ministries Faculty (Dr. Michael Sharp, Dr. Ed Steele, Dr. Benjie Harlan, Dr. Darryl Ferrington, and Dr. Becky Lombard.)**

in the Atlanta suburbs. The Atlanta hub has been approved for one additional degree offering – the Master of Arts in Worship Studies.

The Master of Arts degree in Worship Studies is a 53-hour degree that prepares individuals to serve as worship ministers in a local church. Foundational courses offering a broad theological understanding complement in-depth courses in worship planning and worship leadership.

In recent months, members of the music faculty have scoured the country in an effort to recruit bright, talented students. The DMA program has created a buzz among many who are interested in a research doctorate in sacred music. One student has already applied to the program and more are expected. Not surprisingly, many of those interested in the program have ties to the seminary.

“Most of the students’ parents were graduates of NOBTS and their children have a desire to return home,” Ferrington said.

The DMA program offers a variety of specializations, including piano, organ, voice, composition, composition and hymnology; a study of the history of church music. It demands excellence in academics, as well as in application of musical abilities, Ferrington said.

That feeling of home and family, combined with sound biblical theology is the reason students like Pressley came to NOBTS. Institutions spend big bucks annually on glossy ad campaigns aimed at luring students to campus. But Pressley’s NOBTS story highlights the power of a simple home-cooked meal.

“A big part of why I came here was personal, just the personal contacts from some of the professors. When I came here for a visit, I had dinner at a couple of the music professors’ houses and just

the relaxed atmosphere and their support made me want to come here,” he said.

Borrowing a phrase from a World War II retrospective, Ferrington calls the close-knit music community “a band of brothers . . . and sisters.”

“They really do extend to each other that helping hand, that word of encouragement. There is a strong sense of comradeship and bonding,” Ferrington said.

When pressed to cite one reason to attend NOBTS, Ferrington paused before answering.

“Our education is classically based,” he said. “You’ll learn the theory. We teach the history. You’ll have all the requirements of a traditional music education. But, the application of that will be to the local church, to feed the flock, to minister to them. It is not our needs that are being met. We go to be servants to the congregation. So wherever God has you serve, we want you to be prepared and equipped to be a blessing.”

And so it has been for the music division at NOBTS since E.O. “Uncle Fuller” Sellers came to the then Baptist Bible Institute to teach music and evangelism. Through wars and storms and hard times, the music program’s sound theology has been taught to generations.

After Katrina, with the new organ in place in Leavell Chapel, Becky Lombard sat down to play a fitting first hymn to the majesty, grace and goodness of God: *Holy, Holy, Holy*.



# news briefs

## New Orleans Seminary mourns loss of two Foundation Board members

### Max Thornhill

One of New Orleans Seminary's longtime Foundation Board members, Max Thornhill, passed away at his home in Brookhaven, Miss., on Aug. 28 after a lengthy battle with cancer.

Thornhill was a successful businessman involved in oil exploration and real estate. He enjoyed photography, music, woodworking, singing in the choir, playing the bass in the church orchestra, traveling, snow skiing and most of all his family.



Thornhill

Thornhill is survived by his wife of 56 years, Bonnie Pierce Thornhill, his daughters Debbie Thornhill Acker, Dana Thornhill Simmons and Diane

Thornhill Irby and 11 grandchildren.

In 1993 the Thornhill's established the Max and Bonnie Thornhill Chair of Evangelism.

### Gordon Campbell

Gordon Wallace Campbell, 76, of St. Petersburg, Fla., went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, Nov. 9. Campbell was a member of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Foundation Board.

Campbell was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force serving from November 1954 until November 1956 and discharged in November 1962, as Captain USAF Retired Reserve. He graduated from the University of Iowa in 1954 and completed post-graduate work in Business Administration at Bradley University and the Stonier School of Banking at Rutgers University.



Campbell

Campbell was Vice Chairman of Mercantile Bank, Director of The South Financial Group, Chairman of Argyll Associates, Inc., Vice Chairman of Templeton Annuity Company, Director of Fiduciary Trust International of the South, Director of Opus South Corporation, and a Trustee at the University of Tampa.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Patricia M. Campbell; four children, Mark W. Campbell, Melissa Campbell Harris, M.D. (Mike), Elizabeth Campbell Vannoy (Kevin) and Andrea Campbell Vernon (Patrick); and five grandchildren, Lillian Vannoy, Rosemary Vannoy, Amelia Vernon, Campbell Vernon and Jeremy Christopherson (Lauren).

## Annual Fund giving update

Thank you for supporting the NOBTS Annual Fund. Three months into the 2008-09 Annual Fund campaign, friends and alumni have given over \$144,000, or nearly 15 percent of total goal of \$1,025,000. Giving has declined when compared to the same period a year ago – an indicator of the ailing economy. Several donors have shared how they are not able to give as they have in the past due to the financial crisis.

We can rejoice in spite of all of the grim economic news that currently floods the airwaves. How can we rejoice when there is negative financial news? We can rejoice because we serve a God who knows our needs and will supply what is needed for this School of Providence and Prayer. Since Hurricane Katrina, the cost of doing business is higher than ever. The Annual Fund prevents students from having to absorb these higher expenses. Each and every Annual Fund gift that we receive is money that students do not have to pay for their NOBTS education.

Tax deductible gifts may be given conveniently online ([www.nobts.edu](http://www.nobts.edu)), through the mail, or in person at the Office for Institutional Advancement. Please make NOBTS a matter of prayer and consider supporting the Annual Fund. In addition to our appreciation for your support, our students thank you as well.

Given To Date  
**\$144,000**

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2008-09 Goal  
**\$1,025,000**

## \$26,060 given in memory of Dr. Landrum P. Leavell II

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary received 59 gifts in memory of Dr. Landrum P. Leavell II. The total given was \$26,060 to the following funds:

Annual Fund	<b>\$6,840</b>
Dr. Leavell Memorial Fund	<b>\$7,845</b>
James H. & Susan E. Brown Chair of Christian Counseling	<b>\$1,000</b>
Jim & Ann Ginnings Scholarship Endowment Fund	<b>\$10,000</b>
JoAnn Leavell Scholarship Fund	<b>\$225</b>
Women's Auxiliary Scholarship	<b>\$150</b>



Leavell

## Housing needs top NOBTS prayer list

New Orleans Seminary is facing a significant housing crisis. Twenty-five couples are in temporary housing this semester.

Please join us in asking the Lord to supply the funds needed to construct new apartments.

Rendering of the proposed two-bedroom student apartments



# NOBTS mourns loss of former V.P. Carl McLemore

**R**ichard Carl McLemore, former Vice President of Business Affairs at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, passed away on Saturday, Nov. 15, 2008 at Touro Infirmary in New Orleans. He was 92.

McLemore was born in Meridian, Miss., on Sept. 27, 1916. He attended the University of Alabama and worked with Alabama Power Company until he joined the Army Air Corps in November 1942. He became a cadet, receiving his pilot wings and commission as a Second Lieutenant in 1944. Upon discharge from the Air Force, he returned to Alabama where he was employed with the Internal Revenue Service in the Audit Department.

McLemore was again called back to military duty in 1951 serving in Japan during the Korean conflict, as he refueled



**McLemore**


planes over Korea. He retired in 1976 from the Air Force Reserve as Lieutenant Colonel.

In 1957 McLemore became Vice President for Business Affairs at the NOBTS. He served in that role until he retired in 1979. McLemore served during the presidential tenures of Dr. Leo Eddleman, Dr. Grady Cothen and Dr. Landrum P. Leavell II.

He was a member of the Rotary Club and a deacon at the First Baptist Church in New Orleans serving in many capacities. He and his wife became active members of Shades Mountain Baptist Church upon moving to Birmingham in 1980.

At the time of his passing, Mr. McLemore was a resident of Woldenberg Village in New Orleans. There he touched the lives of many and will be greatly missed.

McLemore was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Elizabeth Thompson McLemore, his parents George and Leila McLemore, a brother Lucas McLemore and sister Evelyn Smith.

Survivors include his daughter Elizabeth Mueller, son-in-law Dr. Gordon Mueller, President & CEO of The National World War II Museum in New Orleans, and grandsons David Mueller of Charlotte, N.C., and John Mueller of New Orleans. 



## A LOT HAS CHANGED IN 30 YEARS . . . . . WHY?

**Jerry Barlow**  
Petal, Mississippi  
1978 MDiv Graduate  
Yearly Tuition: \$420



**Phillip Chenault**  
Decatur, Alabama  
2008 MDiv Student  
Yearly Tuition: \$2,610



1950

1960

1970

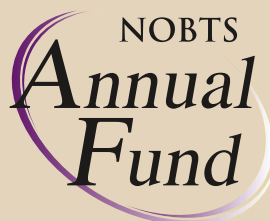
1980

1990

2000

2010

A person can expect many changes over three decades. However, in this case the answer is that Cooperative Program giving has not kept pace with inflation. Students paid very few fees thirty years ago because the Cooperative Program paid for most of their seminary education. Today, the Cooperative Program covers less than half of the costs for Southern Baptist students. Encouraging your church to give more to the Cooperative Program is one way to help students pay for their seminary education. Giving directly to the NOBTS Annual Fund is another. Gifts to the Annual Fund from generous donors help cover inflationary costs so students like Phillip Chenault won't have to.



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# NOBTS partnership in Cuba equips worship leaders

BY GARY D. MYERS

**T**he graduation of 18 worship leadership students at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Havana, Cuba, last summer was historic and strategic.

The event was groundbreaking because the students were among the first to graduate from the seminary with a degree concentration in an area other than pastoral ministry. It was strategic because the new graduates will immediately begin teaching the skills they learned to other worship leaders throughout Cuba.

A formal partnership with the International Mission Board, NOBTS and the Florida Baptist Convention made the school's new worship leadership concentration possible. While the IMB, NOBTS and the Florida Convention have long been involved in Cuba, the partnership forged in 2006 was a strategic effort to develop trained worship leaders for the country's traditional churches as well as leaders for the rapidly expanding house church movement.

Cooperation between the groups is crucial. Each member of the partnership provides a different but essential piece of the puzzle.

IMB representatives coordinate the program and manage the travel logistics. Faculty members from NOBTS travel to the island nation periodically to teach the

worship leadership courses. The Florida Baptist Convention connects the dots by providing funds for travel and training.

The roots of the formal partnership stretch back to 2001 when NOBTS music professor Michael Sharp began traveling to Cuba. Sharp, a fluent Spanish speaker, began providing yearly intensive training sessions for Cuban worship leaders.



Over time, other Spanish-speaking professors from NOBTS joined with Sharp to provide other types of specialized training.

NOBTS faculty members made dozens of trips to Cuba from 2001 to 2006. As the house church movement began to expand, Cuban Baptist leaders sought to formalize the worship ministry training and develop a way to train additional church worship leaders.

"The [participants] were hand-picked across both eastern and western Cuba to

receive training so that they could become teachers for this curriculum throughout the country," Sharp said.

According to Sharp, program participants were selected based on their music skills, leadership qualities and ability to work well with others. The NOBTS professors did not teach music to these gifted musicians. They instead taught students the biblical basis for worship, the historic flow of worship and worship planning skills.

Four current members of the NOBTS music faculty have participated in the training program over the years – Darryl Ferrington, Becky Lombard, Sharp and Ed Steele. Sharp and Steele taught in Spanish, while the others taught with the assistance of a translator.

The 18 graduates of the program received a degree in ministry with a concentration in worship leadership. The degree is equivalent to an undergraduate degree, however many of the students came into the program with advanced degrees.

Sharp and Steele attended the historic graduation ceremony in June. Both expressed deep emotion when they speak of the students and the commencement service.

"I felt very humbled that God would give us the opportunity to participate in this," Sharp said. "Getting to see where God is at work in an incredible way is just amazing."

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# Solving the puzzle: Visiting Oxford scholar helps NOBTS students unlock mysteries of biblical times

BY PAUL F. SOUTH

**I**n the cramped room, surrounded by glass cases containing copies of centuries-old Bibles and ancient texts, students fix their eyes on a copy of Greek text. Some letters are clear, others nonexistent. Holes in the text give the document the appearance of moth-eaten fabric, like an old neglected sweater.

Deciphering the mystery of the holes, wrought by time, weather and ancient wars, is the goal of the students who work daily in the H. Milton Haggard Center for New Testament Textual Studies at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. And it is that cross-disciplinary puzzle of language, history, archaeology, theology and science that, in part, drives Michael Theophilos.

Theophilos, a research scholar who earned his doctorate at Oxford University, spent the fall semester at NOBTS. He recently conducted a three-day workshop on papyrology offering hands-on experience which allowed students to come in contact with papyri, experience reading papyrus texts in the original languages as well as English, and examine what those texts – everything from ancient sales receipts to invitations to pagan feasts – mean for biblical interpretation.

Papyrology is the study of papyrus, aimed at deciphering ancient Greek and Latin texts written on papyrus or other easily portable material. The goal of the workshop, Theophilos said, was to give students a deeper understanding of the historical context of biblical events.



**Theophilos**

“The goal for any student of the text is to appreciate that the text we are reading comes from a very definite historical period,” Theophilos said. “It is not something that happened in the ambiguous distant past. It’s not something that is some kind of abstracted philosophical system we are reading in our text.”

Along with the biblical text, students studied documents that helped weave the fabric of daily life – a receipt for imported wheat, a receipt for the sale of a donkey, an invitation to a pagan festival. Every document could unlock deeper understanding of biblical times and their context.

While at present, the only New Testament manuscripts available are from the mid-2nd century, scholars do have access to original documents which chronicle daily life in the New Testament times. These extra-biblical documents bring a greater reality to the biblical text.

“It gives the Bible a greater humanity and historicity in the sense that it isn’t something that merely was manifested from thin air,” Theophilos said. “This is something that was in conversation with other documents in the ancient world.”

Trying to piece together ancient manuscripts is “like a big jigsaw puzzle,” Theophilos said. “There are going to be big gaps. One of the ways to piece things together is by understanding genre and context.”

“Understanding genre is just as important as understanding language,” the 29-year-old Australian scholar said. For example, students of children’s fairy tales might find a manuscript with the words “Once \_\_\_ a time” and know that the missing word was “upon” based on wording common to fairy tales. Similarly, a



Photo by Boyd Guy

A papyrus-making display at the H. Milton Haggard Center

missing word from an ancient text can only be reconstructed with the appropriate knowledge of the genre.


But for every closed gap, there are countless mysteries and variants in the ancient texts to solve, using a combination of science, art, history, archaeology, theology, language and old fashioned detective work.

Theophilos has high praise for the students he’s encountered at NOBTS and for the H. Milton Haggard Center. There, scholars labor over ancient texts, trying to solve the puzzle of the ancient world. And those discoveries have been shared with biblical scholars across the globe.

“At the basic level, [the center] is providing a very concrete tool to help people realize that the text that we have when we pick up our English versions has a very rich and complicated – but very interesting – textual history,” Theophilos said. “It’s a tremendous lesson to learn. I think it’s a very helpful way for people to get into the issue and see the aspects involved in this sort of study.”

Dr. William Warren, Director of the Haggard Center for New Testament Textual Studies and Professor of New Testament and Greek at NOBTS, praised Theophilos’ contributions to scholarship at the seminary during his semester here.

“In-depth understanding of the setting in which the biblical events took place requires studying the data from the time periods of the events,” Warren said. “Having a [visiting] specialist in some of that data has enhanced the experience of many students and faculty at NOBTS since he is an expert in the early papyrus manuscripts.”

Warren added: “He has opened windows into the world of Jesus and the early church by presenting and explaining the importance of letters, documents and New Testament fragments in lectures and a special workshop. His work is on the cutting-edge of accessing the data that undergirds our understanding of the Biblical world, with current work including the analysis of several additional New Testament papyrus fragments from the Oxyrhynchus finds in Egypt. His level of scholarship combined with his evangelical faith has provided a great example of how we can love God with all of our mind in the best possible sense.” 

# Fisher of men: Fishing opens door to ministry for Barataria Baptist Church's Eddie Painter

BY MICHAEL McCORMACK

The alarm sounds at 4 a.m. in Eddie Painter's house. In the Village of Jean Lafitte, a tiny fishing community just south of New Orleans, the early November sunrise is still close to two hours away.

Painter emerges from the bedroom a few minutes later, dressed in boots, a heavy jacket and a floppy-brimmed hat – his uniform for a day at sea. After a quick breakfast, Painter heads out the back door toward his boat docked on Bayou Barataria.

This local pastor has two stops to make before heading south toward his 200 crab traps. Just down on the east bank of the bayou, Painter stops for bait and crab boxes. He takes a few extra boxes, hoping to catch at least 775 pounds (a catch that would be a personal best).

Next, he cruises back across the bayou to buy gas and some food for the day. A group of commercial fishermen is inside, catching up before a long day on the water. After a few stories and laughs, the fishermen disperse as they notice the black horizon beginning to fade to a deep red.

For many residents of Jean Lafitte, Painter's morning routine is just that – routine. By percentage, Lafitte residents work in fishing, hunting and forestry more than any other field. But for Painter, a 15-year veteran pastor, Mississippi native, New Orleans Seminary student and pastor of Barataria Baptist Church in Jean Lafitte, becoming a commercial crabber was a surprising and innovative career twist.

This fisher-of-men, who began pastoring Barataria Baptist Church April 1, 2007, became a commercial fisherman to better



Photos by Michael McCormack

reach his community and to supplement his income. It's the definition of incarnational ministry and innovation, and it started soon after he went there as pastor.

Painter first got to know his new community. Early on, he spent time sipping coffee in a local hardware and fishing supply store called the Canal Store where he would meet people as they came for supplies.

Also during those first months Glen, a deacon at Barataria Baptist Church and a local commercial crabber, began to take Painter with him to run his crab traps. Painter was hooked.

"You know, I grew up fishing with my granddaddy," Painter said. "So I've always enjoyed being on the water. This was just a natural fit for me to go into a community where commercial fishing was part of the backbone of what everyone does."

He started commercial crabbing in May 2008. He said he limits his crabbing to about four days a week. Evenings and the remaining three days are reserved for family, ministering to the community and preparing for worship services. And the community has supported him.

"When I started out, I had a bunch of traps given to me – about 118," Painter said. "At the prices right now, that represents close to \$4000 worth of traps."

His first boat was given to him, but it proved too small for the open waters of Barataria Bay. With the help of Glen,

Painter found a fully rigged crab boat for an outstanding price. In no time, Painter was up to about 200 traps in the water, a fully outfitted boat and a brand new motor. But the going hasn't always been easy. For the beginner, commercial crabbing is neither easy nor lucrative.

"I put out 30 traps and lost them overnight," Painter said recalling one of his first days as a commercial crabber. "I'd found a channel where the barges were coming through. But I didn't know what happened, so I put out 30 more. So right off the bat, I had 60 traps just whacked. Man, I was singing the blues!"

Of course, losing traps comes with the job, and fortunately for Painter, he's avoided any more mass losses. But still, commercial crabbing is far from easy.

"Take this morning," Painter said with a smile. "My expenses were \$120, so I cleared \$26 today. That ain't doing too good!"

Still Painter trusts that, in time, he'll become more efficient. And he knows that he's learning more than a new trade. There's the challenge of learning patience as he, a local pastor-turned-crabber, earns the trust of the fishing community.


"They know who I am," Painter said of being a pastor. "And they'll sometimes joke about it, but they're very standoffish. It's like getting permission. You finally get a little permission to enter their turf and talk to them, and that's how it starts."

Painter offered one of the crab buyers as an example.

"I just found out that he and his wife are separating," Painter said. "I got just a little opportunity to talk with him this evening. I started this in April or May, so it took from then to now for me to get an open door.

"And he came to me for questions."

Little by little, Painter is building relationships and impacting lives. He's using commercial fishing to fish for men.

In addition to crabbing and pastoring, Painter is a leader in Jean Lafitte's recovery from hurricanes Gustav and Ike. To partner with Barataria Baptist Church in that community's recovery, contact Painter at 504.520.0191. 



## NOBTS marriage initiative gains momentum with couples retreat

BY GARY D. MYERS

**F**or students and their families, the move to a seminary campus brings many new challenges. Seminary families are often faced with tighter finances, smaller living quarters and the stress of theological studies. Add in the adjustment to new churches and new schools for the children and the combined effect can strain family relationships – especially marriages.

NOBTS professor Kathy Steele and a small group of campus leaders at NOBTS developed a burden for student marriages. Known as the Marriage Initiative Group, the leaders began meeting together in May 2008 to develop a plan to help strengthen and enrich marriages. They believe a focus on strong marriages during ministerial training will result in healthier ministers and, in turn, ministries.

NOBTS Provost Steve Lemke agrees.

“No [married] minister can be maximally effective in Christian service without a healthy marriage,” he said. “We want our graduates not only to teach about healthy marriages but also to model healthy relationships in their own marriages.”

The team, which also includes professors Kristin Carver, Jerry Pounds and Ed Steele along with Dean of Students Craig Garrett, dreamed of creating an intentional focus on healthy marriages at NOBTS – a dream that now has become a reality.

### *Marriage Initiative*



As the team studied the

issue, God placed a similar burden for campus marriages in the hearts of the leaders charged with planning the Leavell Lectures, an annual event sponsored by the student wives organization on campus. Rhonda Kelley, President’s Wife and Professor of Women’s Ministry, asked the group to plan and lead a campus-wide marriage retreat during the Leavell Lectures.


“God really opened the door for us to have this retreat this semester,” Steele said. “Our hope was to motivate and encourage couples, but not only that, to give them some basic skills that can make a difference in their marriage relationships.”

Eighty couples participated in the two-day retreat which focused on communication and oneness in marriage. Retreat presenters shared biblical principles to help couples identify problem areas in their marriages and practical tools to address those problems.

The Marriage Initiative Group also received help from a timely coincidence – the release of the Christian, marriage focused film “Fireproof.” Not only were student couples encouraged to see the movie, but the seminary offered them a chance to see it for free.

The seminary rented a local theater and seminary couples packed the theater for the free screening of the movie. As a follow-up, the Dean of Students’ office also provided free copies of LifeWay’s book *The Love Dare*. The book is a 40-day guided devotional book similar to *The Love Dare* book featured in the movie.

Just weeks after the retreat, the seminary launched two home-based Bible study groups to continue the momentum started at the retreat. The six-week studies use video segments from “Fireproof” and *The Love Dare* book to help participants give proper focus to their marriages.

“One of the things that has been exciting to me is to see how many of our faculty couples really feel a passion and a burden to help students deal with marriage issues,” Steele said. 

## Lemke addresses Calvinism at John 3:16 Conference

BY BAPTIST PRESS and NOBTS STAFF

**T**he John 3:16 Conference, described by organizers as a biblical and theological assessment of and response to 5-point Calvinism, was held Nov. 6-7 at First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga.

The conference, which drew about 1,000 pastors and laypeople, was sponsored by Jerry Vines Ministries, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Luther Rice Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

TULIP is an acronym for the five points of Calvinism – total depravity, unconditional election, limited



Lemke

atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints. Individual speakers addressed each point. NOBTS Provost Dr. Steve Lemke spoke to the point of irresistible grace.

Lemke gave careful attention the nature of God’s call and the responsibility of people to respond.

“Salvation is tied in some measure to our response,”

Lemke said, citing several biblical examples of what he said were people resisting God. For example, in Acts 7:51 the Jewish men who stoned Stephen were said to be “always resisting the Holy Spirit.”


Lemke said that while Calvinists don’t deny people can resist the Holy Spirit in some situations, they believe the effectual call is irresistible.


“It doesn’t seem to me that [the effectual call] helps in this particular situation, because the Jews after all were God’s chosen people, they were under the covenant. If you have a covenant theology, then these people would seem to be among the elect. ... It is precisely these divinely elected people who are resisting God.”

Whether generalized or personalized, Jesus’ teaching pattern seems to be inconsistent with irresistible grace, particularly in his lament over Jerusalem, Lemke said.

In Matthew 23:37 and Luke 13:34, where Jesus longed to gather his people as a hen gathers her chicks, Lemke said the Greek verb “to will” has an even sharper contrast, so Jesus is saying, “I willed but you were not willing.”

In both examples, Lemke said, it is not just the current generation that is being addressed but many generations.

In addition to the all-inclusive invitations of scripture, when people in the Bible ask “What must I do to be saved?” Lemke said they are told to repent and believe. He expressed concern that irresistible grace can lead to the denial of the necessity for conversion. 

 For a detailed report on the John 3:16 Conference visit: [www.bpnews.net/BPnews.asp?ID=29318](http://www.bpnews.net/BPnews.asp?ID=29318)

# Dr. Stevens marks 20th year on NOBTS faculty

*Veteran professor uses technology to inspire students of Greek and New Testament*

BY MICHAEL McCORMACK

For 20 years, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Professor of New Testament and Greek Gerald Stevens has been beating the curve – and by necessity, so have his students.

Since 1988, much has changed for the typical Stevens class, but his passion for New Testament, Greek and students hasn't. For him, these two decades have gone by in a flash.

"I can't believe how much time has passed so quickly," Stevens said.

Stevens' path to NOBTS professorship was no straight shot. Stevens double majored in math and physics at the University of Southern Mississippi. Toward the end of his college days, his call to ministry began to take shape.

"It was probably somewhere in the junior-to-senior-year transition that I began to recognize that God was working in my life in a very special kind of way," Stevens said.

After graduation, he and his wife, Jean, moved to New Orleans for seminary. While earning a master's degree at NOBTS, Stevens pastored a nearby church. Out of that ministry came personal direction.

"Whenever I was in a teaching mode, I always got this strong response," Stevens recalled. "It was the pastoring experience that led me to the realization that God had gifted me for teaching."

That sense of calling led Stevens to enter the doctoral program at New Orleans Seminary. But near the end of his doctoral studies, his sense of call was challenged. The field of teaching was flooded. And despite all his efforts, he couldn't get a teaching job.

"I sent out probably 60 résumés the spring of graduation and got not one response," he said. "That was a real challenge to my sense of call."

## Learning Flexibility

Stevens said that "just by lagniappe" he decided to interview with the Alabama Baptist Campus Ministries. With no other opportunities in sight, Stevens saw no reason not to. Soon enough, Stevens became the campus minister of the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"I loved [college students'] energy, their excitement for life," Stevens said. "I love being a part of someone's life when they

were making major life decisions about faith and commitment to a spouse."

But at the same time, Stevens said he was becoming restless. His seven years of campus ministry were extremely fulfilling, but he still felt called to teach. Stevens decided to be as open and flexible as possible. Maybe, he thought, God was leading him in another direction. Not long after, an opportunity with the Sunday School Board (now LifeWay) came his way. He accepted, found a condo in Nashville, and even agreed to serve as singles minister at a local church.



Then an unexpected phone call came from Landrum Leavell II, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary at the time. Leavell was to the point: "Gerald, do you want to teach?"

"I was in instant career crisis," Stevens said. "I thought I was doing all the right things, and then suddenly, out of the blue, there was this invitation to teach."

He called Leavell back the next day – this time armed with four hurdles to his coming to NOBTS. To his surprise, none of them was a problem for Leavell. After another long night of prayer, Stevens agreed to come to New Orleans for an interview.

"I knew without a shadow of a doubt, after all the spiritual struggle I went through over that two-day period, this was God's will," Stevens said. "So in the fall of 1988 I started teaching at New Orleans. The rest is history."

## A Standout Teacher

A Gerald Stevens classroom is technologically intense. By Stevens' own

admission, technology has always been a driving force in his presentations. At New Orleans Seminary, he's always been on the forefront of technological developments.

"I've always been the one who was hanging ten on the front of the wave," he said. "If anything's happening technologically, I'm there."

Stevens even connected his widely used Greek grammar textbooks to technology. About the same time Stevens came to the conclusion that students needed a more graphics-oriented and user-friendly Greek textbook, a new technology called "desktop publishing" was hot off the presses.

That first textbook has led to an updated primer, an intermediate Greek grammar and, due out Fall 2008, *Syntax in New Testament Greek*, written in conjunction with fellow NOBTS New Testament and Greek professor Dr. Bill Warren.

And all of it is student focused. Throughout his tenure, Stevens has been committed to students, and it shows. In 20 years, Stevens has never missed a class.

From 1988 to 2008, students are both different and the same, Stevens said.

"Culturally, they've changed because the culture they confront is different," he said. "The life around them is much more fast-paced. News and information come at an alarmingly fast rate, to the point that you have to respond to something without reflecting on it. And that's dangerous."

But Stevens said students have not changed spiritually; their spiritual needs are the same. He pointed out that students first need a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. Without that, he said seminary makes no sense.

"And students still need a mentor," he continued. "No matter how you're getting the information, somewhere along the way you still need a mentor to guide you along the way of learning how to become a minister."

A student's mentor acts as a sounding board for digesting and integrating information into ministry, Stevens said. Finally, he said that students need professors to be personable.

And for 20 years now, Stevens has been just that. **V**

More on Dr. Stevens at [www.nobts.edu/Publications/News/Stevens.html](http://www.nobts.edu/Publications/News/Stevens.html)



## faculty books

Recent publications by New Orleans Seminary professors

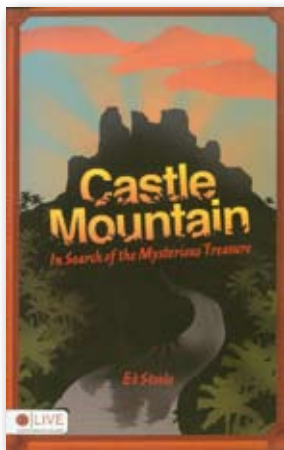
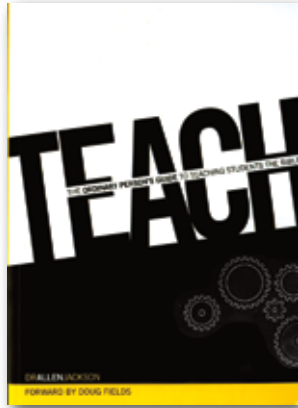
### ■ **TEACH: The Ordinary Person's Guide to Teaching Students the Bible**

Allen Jackson  
Birmingham, Ala.: Student Life,  
2008

Written especially for youth volunteers, NOBTS Professor of Youth Education Allen Jackson's new book *TEACH: The Ordinary Person's Guide to Teaching Students* offers personal stories and practical instruction for teaching students the Bible. *TEACH* includes a detailed discussion on how teens learn and offers some proven methods for teaching them. "We are ordinary people," Jackson said of youth workers, "but we have the privilege of teaching extraordinary truth to the teenagers God has place in our lives."

The book may be purchased online at [www.studentlife.com](http://www.studentlife.com).

**R. Allen Jackson** is Professor of Youth Ministry and Director of the Youth Ministry Institute at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.



### ■ **Castle Mountain: In Search of the Mysterious Treasure**

Ed Steele  
Mustang, Okla.: Tate Publishing,  
2008

In his new book *Castle Mountain: In Search of the Mysterious Treasure*, Ed Steele, Leavell College associate professor of music, combines his 14-year missionary experience in Central America with a flair for adventure.

The children's adventure book tells the story of a

missionary family that finds an ancient diary that may lead them to a pre-Colombian treasure.

"It was my hope to take the natural love children have for adventure stories and mix that with missions and trust, that they might learn to trust God in a deeper way," Steele said.

The book is available for purchase in print and e-book format online at [www.tatepublishing.com](http://www.tatepublishing.com).

**Ed Steele** is Associate Professor of Music in Leavell College at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

For additional New Orleans Seminary faculty book listings visit: [www.nobts.edu/Publications/FacultyBooks.html](http://www.nobts.edu/Publications/FacultyBooks.html)

## Faculty Anniversary

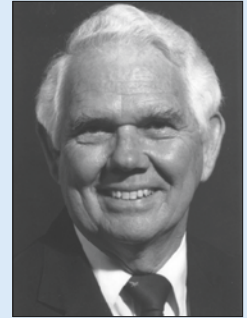
### 10 years

**Dr. Robert B. Stewart**, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Theology; Greer-Heard Chair of Faith and Culture; Director of the Institute for Christian Apologetics

## In Memory

### Dr. Robert B. Barnes

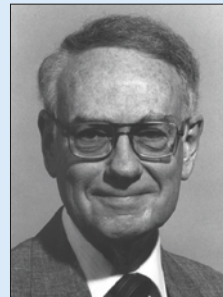
Dr. Robert "Bob" Barnes, age 82, died May 16. Born in Atlanta, Ga., he was the son of the late William Marshall Barnes and the late Margaret Hester Barnes. Dr. Barnes was a retired Baptist minister and member of Sumter First Baptist Church. Dr. Barnes graduated from Mercer University and New Orleans Baptist



Theological Seminary. He served pastorates in Georgia, Mississippi and Louisiana, and a Professor of Church History at NOBTS. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II. Survivors include his wife, Donna Nicks Barnes; three children: Kathy Occhipinti (John); Rev. Bryant Barnes (Cheryl); and D. Allen Barnes; and four grandchildren.

### Dr. Charles D. Graham

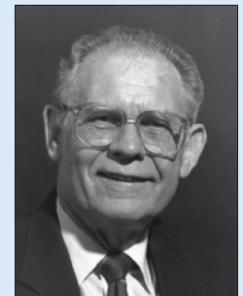
Dr. Charles D. Graham (THD '57), 85, died Aug. 30. Graham was a World War II veteran, serving on the USS Wisconsin. He received his A.B. degree from Samford University, Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology from NOBTS. He served as mission pastor in Louisiana while a student at NOBTS. He later pastored four



Alabama Baptist churches. In 1977, he returned to the seminary where he served as Professor of Old Testament until his retirement in 1989. After his retirement to Fairhope, he remained deeply involved in Christian service activities, including teaching Sunday School and serving in an interim pastor capacity for several Alabama churches. Graham is survived by his wife, Carolyn Graham; one son, Ralph Graham (Joanna).

### Dr. Bob Simmons

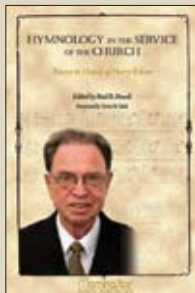
Dr. Bob Simmons (THD '55), 81, died Oct. 3 in Meridian, Miss. Dr. Simmons served on the faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary from 1983-1992. He is survived by his wife, Mary Johnson Simmons; a son, John Douglas Simmons; daughter, Ann Simmons Brown; a sister, Nora Jane Jennings; grandson, Robert Gardner; two great grandchildren.



# alumni updates

## 1960s

**Eskew, Harry** (MCM '60), Professor Emeritus of Music History and Hymnology, has been honored with a volume of contributions by his former students and others, "Hymnology in the Service of the Church: Essays in Honor of Harry Eskew" (St. Louis: Morning Star Music, 2008). The *festschrift* was compiled and edited by Dr. Paul R. Powell, retired librarian of Princeton Theological Seminary who is a former student.



It was published by Mark Lawson, also a former student and President of Morning Star Music. Many of the essays were presented as papers during a retirement celebration held for Eskew on campus in 2001.

## 1970s

**Ross, Clyde** (MDiv '78) is now the pastor at Campground Baptist Church, Woodville, Texas.

**Pedersen, Jonathan** (MRE '78) retired in 2006 after 31 years of vocational ministry. He lives in Knoxville, Tenn.

## 1990s

**Smith, Brian K.** (MDiv '97) is serving as a Chaplain in Iraq.

## 2000s

**White, Kevin** (MDiv '00) accepted call for associate pastor to families at North Park Baptist Church, Van Buren, Ark.

## Births

**Morton, Jeremy** (MDiv. '07) and wife, Carrie, welcomed their first child, a son, Ezekiel Timothy Morton (Zeke), into the world on Aug. 17, 2008. Jeremy serves as pastor of Cross Point Baptist Church in Perry, Ga.

## Deaths

**Alexander, Kathleen L.** (Spouse of Elliot Alexander BCT '42) passed away July 3, 2008.

**Ballard, William P.** (MRE '67) passed away Oct. 9, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Winnie Bordan Ballard.

**Bankester, Hancell G.** (BDiv '63) passed away Sept. 13, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Lois Bankester of Vicksburg, Miss.

**Blosch, Fredrick Carl** (BM '26) passed away March 10, 1970, in Ocala, Fla.

**Boggan, Johnny M.** (MRE '87) passed away June 2, 2004. He is survived by his wife, Ann Boggan.

**Brown, Grace G.** ('46-'47) passed away Sept. 15, 2008.

**Brown, Fred E.** (AX '53) passed away May 25, 2007. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Fred Brown.

**Bryon, Edward R.** (MDiv '62) passed away Aug. 18, 2008. He is survived by his wife, former Emma Gene Cummings.

**Burnside, Weston Jr.** (MDiv '00) passed away Oct. 4, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Tara.

**Carpenter, Kathryn E.** (BCT '42) passed away Aug. 10, 2008. She served with Louisiana Baptist Convention and Louisiana WMU for more than four decades.

**Case, Charles M.** (MDiv '73) passed away March 1, 2007. He is survived by his wife Jean.

**Cash, Phillip B.** (MACE '92) passed away Oct. 5, 2008.

**Clark, Lester D.** (MRE '64) passed away Aug. 15, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Glenice Clark.

**Dickey, Rev. Edward** (BDiv '62) passed away Sept. 26, 2007. He is survived by his wife, Joyce Rowe Dickey.

## NOBTS graduate pens children's Christian fantasy novel

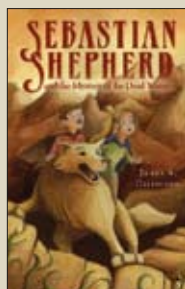
BY PAUL F. SOUTH

**J**amey Gilliland was in Oklahoma, a long way from a beloved niece and nephew in Alabama. He wanted a way to stay close to them, so together, for a year, they engaged in a long-distance collaboration. An uncle's love and their work has resulted in a children's book and a new ministry.

Earlier this year, Gilliland published *Sebastian Shepherd and the Mystery of the Dead Water*, a tale based on the life of King David. It is the first of what Gilliland expects will be a five-volume series, a counter to books like *The Golden Compass*, which are hostile to Christianity.

Gilliland received his Master of Divinity with a specialization in Collegiate Ministry from NOBTS this month. And while he wants to sell books to a wide audience, that is not his primary emphasis. His message is clear when he shares his book with schoolchildren at churches and private and public schools.

"When I speak at public schools I can as an author hold up the Bible and say 'This is my inspiration'" he said. "The 103rd Song of the Elder in the book is the 103rd Psalm."




He added, "I'm in a conservative part of the country. When I speak in public schools, I clear it with the teacher. The reaction I get is that I can say what they wish they said. Once the kids hear my story, maybe they'll want to go to Sunday School, or maybe, just maybe, they'll want to go home, find the Bible and get back to the Word."

The book is peppered with often-fantastic characters, including some based on the Billingsley, Ala., native's professors at NOBTS. The Beloved Elder Jeanine, for example, is based on Dr. Jeanine Bozeman. Cities based on New Orleans and Oklahoma, where Gilliland now ministers, are also in the story.

Gilliland has paid attention to his readers. One was an Oklahoma pastor's granddaughter who had a surprise meeting with the author. One of the first questions the young reader asked: "Are you a Christian?" The visit was a success.

"To see her walk away encouraged and to hear her grandfather say it encouraged her faith walk was worth writing the book," Gilliland said.

Gilliland makes it plain. The message of the *Sebastian* series is this: "I wanted to be distinctly Christian, not vaguely Christian. Someone who is not a Christian can read this as an entertaining story, but the goal is leading people to Christ. I'm unashamed about that." 

**Ennis, Opal H.** (DPRE '66) passed away May 2, 2008. She is survived by her husband, Raymond Ennis.

**Fisher, Charles J.** (DPCH '72) passed away Aug. 6, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Christine Fisher.

**Flowers, Dan Herbert** (ThM '67) passed away on June 19, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Annella Flowers of Fort Payne, Ala.

**Gunn, Curran T.** (BDiv '52) passed away Aug. 10, 2008.

**Haynes, Richard B.** (MDiv '94) passed away Oct. 27, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Karen Haynes.

**Haynie, H. Lowery** (MX '52) passed away Sept. 27, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Rebecca S. Haynie.

**Joyner, Clarence J.** (ADRE '84) passed away Aug. 4, 2008.

**King, Catherine E.** (MRE '61) passed away Aug. 10, 2008.

**Lively, Charles S.** (MSM '53) passed away Sept. 15, 2008.

**McFarlain, Michael J.** (BA '96) passed away April 7, 2006. He is survived by his wife Donna Valliant of Mt. Hermon, La.

**Merritt, Howard B.** (BDiv '60) passed away July 14, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Jerrie Merritt of Blue Ridge, Ga.

**Mitchell, Mildred** (ADRE '90) of Atlanta, Ga., passed away May 10, 2008.

**Nix, Simeon A.** (MCM '88) passed away Aug. 17, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Beth.

**Nolan, Joe Jr.** (BDiv '52) passed away Aug. 31, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Gloria.

**Parshall, Howard W.** (EED '63) passed away Sept. 10, 2008. He is survived by his wife, Clara Wiggins Parshall.

**Skelton, James R.** (MAMF '00) passed away Dec. 23, 2005.

**Townsend, Roy C.** (CCE '99) passed away Oct. 13, 2007.

**White, Frieda B.** (MX '55) passed away Sept. 27, 2008.

**White, Lillie R.** (AX '59) passed away Sept. 10, 2008.



## looking back

In this 1965 photograph, the seminary sign reads "NEW ORLEANS THE LOGICAL SEMINARY." The May 1965 edition of the Vision speculates that the missing "O" "fell of it's own accord," but did not rule out the possibility of a prankster. According to the article "students felt the result was very appropriate."

## Mission Appointments



**Hood**



**Milam**



**Brou**



**Brou**

### International Mission Board

**Hood, Danny**, (THM '70) was appointed by the IMB on Sept. 10, 2008. He and his wife, Claudia, will serve in East Africa.

**Milam, Andy** (MCM '94) was appointed by the IMB on Sept. 10, 2008, to serve in Portugal.

**Brou, Ian** (MDiv '03) was appointed by the IMB on Nov. 11, 2008. He and his wife, **Katie** (BACM '03), will serve in Western Europe.

**Cawthon, Cavin** (MDiv '00) was appointed by the IMB on Nov. 11, 2008. He and his wife, Charlotte, will serve in the Middle America & Caribbean Region.



**Cawthon**



**Pullen**

### North American Mission Board

**Pullen, Edward Jr.** (MDiv '93) and his wife, Pamela, are serving in Shiloh, Ill., where Edward has been named as a church planting missionary.

**Dunbar, Jamie M.** (attended in 2007) was named as a new missionary in Lakeshore, Miss., where she will serve as a ministry evangelism consultant.



Paul Knitter and Harold Netland will dialogue on the pressing theological, philosophical, missiological, and cultural issues pertinent to religious pluralism.

The Greer-Heard Forum is designed to provide a venue in which a respected evangelical scholar and a respected non-evangelical scholar dialogue on critical issues from their differing perspectives.

A dialogue between Paul Knitter and Harold Netland

**March 27-28, 2009**

**Other guest speakers:**

- Keith Yandell, University of Wisconsin-Madison
  - R. Douglas Geivett, Talbot School of Theology
  - Terrence W. Tilley, Fordham University
  - S. Mark Heim, Andover Newton Theological School
- with responses by Harold Netland and Paul Knitter



**Paul F. Knitter**  
Paul Tillich Professor of Theology, World Religions and Culture at Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY



**Harold A. Netland**  
Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Intercultural Studies and Chair of Missions at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

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