Union Forum Speakers Address Supreme Court Changes

A renowned legal scholar and one of the nation’s most visible journalists is weighted in on the changing U.S. Supreme Court during the eighth annual Union Forum presentations.

Robert George, the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University, focused his student discussion on natural law and an exciting opportunity to clarify what really happened in the life of Jesus. For starters, George said during a campus forum that was open to the community.

“Is it possible that there could be a trove of thousands of documents out there that were not mentioned anywhere in ancient literature, for which there is absolutely no evidence at all?” Guthrie asked. “Perhaps, but the point is, there is absolutely no evidence to support the idea. It is fiction in every sense of the word.

“The book’s claims rely upon the historical facts about the life of Jesus and the validity of the New Testament. For starters, Guthrie disputes the book’s claim that thousands of ancient documents exist that present a picture of the life of Christ.”

WASHINGTON — S. Churchill will be the keynote speaker for the 10th annual Scholarship Banquet at Union’s on the Perkins Civic Center on Tuesday, Sept. 26.

Grandson and namesake of the former British prime minister, Churchill is an accomplished author, journalist and parliamentarian. He worked as a roving war correspondent in the Congo, Angola, Borneo, Biafra, Vietnam and the Middle East. At age 30, he entered Parliament as the youngest Conservative Party member. He served 27 years, and was named to the Defence Select Committee of the House of Commons.

“Winston Churchill was one of the greatest leaders in modern world history, and his grandson connects us to this eloquent and inspirational statesman,” Union President David S. Dockery said.

“When he promised the British people ‘blood, sweat and tears,’ and when he described communism’s life behind an ‘iron curtain,’ Churchill coined phrases that have stood the test of time. It will be an honor to welcome his gifted grandson to Union University.”

In addition to his leadership as prime minister, Churchill served as British colonial secretary during the 1920s, playing a major leadership role in the Middle East during that era. His grandson has studied that contribution and produced significant writings about the region.

“Churchill’s book ‘Six Day War’ has remained the definitive work on that conflict many years after its run on the best-seller list,” Dockery said. “He will bring our audience a perspective on world affairs that starts with his grandfather’s legacy, but is very much based on personal experience as a journalist and historian.”

Previous keynote speakers at Union University’s Scholarship Banquet include George H. W. Bush, Mikhail Gorbachev, Lady Margaret Thatcher, Colin Powell, James Baker, Rudolph Giuliani, John Major, Robert Doles and Lou Holtz.

This year’s lead and premier sponsors include BankSouth, Porter Cable & DeVilbis, which is now Black & Decker, Harvy Smith and Schilling Enterprises, Roy White and White Investments LLC, FirstBank, Benny and Norma Festime, Lloyd Hansen, Jack and Zuz Holmes, The Jackson Sun, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network/Rod and Amy Parker, Jack and Faye Porter, Mike and Trish Weeks, West Tennessee Healthcare and an anonymous donor.

Sponsorship opportunities are available at all levels. For ticket information, including table sponsorships and individual balcony seating, contact Union’s Office of University Relations at (731) 661-5090.

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Summer Completion Date Expected for New Fesmire Field House

In the event of delayed completion, the 18,000 square-foot Fesmire Field House should be ready for tours in the summer and athletes to use in the fall. The facility will include a 9,000 square foot turf room suitable for variety outdoor practice sessions. Also included in the plans are locker rooms and showers for each home and visiting team, coaches’ offices and an athletic training room. It will serve baseball, softball and soccer teams.

Union Choir Selected to Perform at Educators Meeting

Union’s Voices of Proclamation performed the feature concert at March 30 at the joint meeting of the Tennessee Music Educators Association in Nashville.

As the feature concert, Proclamation was the only group that presented an evening concert during the meeting.

“It was the only event which was attended by hundreds of music educators, conductors and all-state choir members at the conference,” Proclamation director Richard Joiner said.

Joiner said most of the program was a cappella, consisting of masterworks in Latin, English. It also included some American folk hymns and a piece in gospel/blues style, accompanied by Union music professor Ronald Boud.

The meeting was held at First Baptist Church in Nashville.

Union 2010 Capital Campaign Tops $80 Million

“Union 2010: A Vision for Excellence” has already exceeded $80 million in gifts and pledges.

The campaign was launched at the 2005 Annual Scholarship Banquet in September. Since then, Union has set records for donor contributions in a single month, and highest dollar figure in a single month. Both marks were set in December.

“We are on target to reach $110 million by 2010,” says Charles A. Fowler, senior vice president for university relations. “Our alumni and friends are embracing this vision, and responding in wonderful ways.”

The campaign targets three key areas of opportunity: New and enhanced campus facilities; endowment growth; and operations support.

Call 1-800-338-6644 to find out more about joining this historic effort. Online, log on to www.uu.edu/union2010. The campaign Web pages provide news on the latest developments, multimedia presentations and a variety of opportunities for participation.

Union Class of ’06 Ready to Make an Impact

Graduation from college does not mean a freedom from requirements in life, Paul Corts told a group of nearly 400 Union University graduates at spring commencement on the university’s Great Lawn.

“Most of you graduates probably thought that with commencement you find yourself free from having to worry about fulfilling requirements,” Corts said. “Your time at a great Christian university like Union has been preparing you to live your life in accord with God’s requirements for you. As the Scripture has reminded us, to whom much is given, much is required.”

The rain-shortened service saw 400 students receive their degrees, bringing to nearly 900 the number of Union University graduates. The ceremony was held at the U.S. Department of Justice since 1994.

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Undergraduate Research Showcased

Is there a scientific basis for how coffee-loving chemistry students should select their favorite blends? Can engineering students build a better robot for Federal Express? How can global positioning systems be used to get pizza delivered more efficiently?

These and scores of other questions were answered with solid, quantitative student research at Union’s third annual Scholarship Symposium. Sometimes the research involves everyday situations such as ordering coffee or pizza. Other projects delve into subjects such as a lymphoma that primarily attacks African-American children, an in-depth survey of computer ethics studies on the nation’s college campuses, or the benefits of becoming bilingual.

More than 100 students from 18 departments participated in the event, presenting significant research conducted alongside a faculty adviser during the 2005-06 academic year. It’s the type of serious exploration usually reserved for graduate study at most institutions. Faculty members say completion of such work often makes Union students stand out on employment or graduate school applications.

Kolo Goshi ’05 gave the keynote address at a reception after the day of presentations. Goshi was in the first engineering class at Union and now works in the aerospace industry in California.

Students who transferred to Union University as a result of Hurricane Katrina attracted the attention of some New Jersey women they don’t even know.

Kindred Spirits Quilters, from Hydewood Park Baptist Church in North Plainfield, N.J., made and sent 13 quilts to Union, one for each of the students displaced by Hurricane Katrina, and two for the students’ children.

I sent them an e-mail once I received thequilts, and I told them that the group is really a spiritual group to think of other people,” said senior Kimberly Brown of New Orleans, who graduated from Union this spring. “It’s really good to know that there are other people in your corner when you are at your worst.”

Kimberly Thornbury, Union’s dean of students, said her mother, Carolyn Carmichael, who lives in New Jersey, told Mary Lou Kirkland about the students who had transferred to Union because of the hurricane.

Kirkland is involved with Kindred Spirits Quilters, and said the group had been looking for a way to help the hurricane victims. When she heard the story from Carmichael, she knew her group had found its project.

“I asked the other members of Kindred Spirits Quilters to produce either throw-size or bed-size quilts,” Kirkland said. “We’d get them quilted, bound and sent to Tennessee as soon as possible. We added a label to the back of each quilt with a Scripture verse of promise – and to let the recipients know that there are strangers who care for them and are praying for each of them.”

The verse attached to each quilt was Psalm 91:4, “He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust.”

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New Jersey Group Focuses on Katrina Victims at Union

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Union Students Spend Spring Break Helping with Katrina Relief

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast last fall, Union University sophomore Kaye Maxwell knew she wanted to help.

“I had my heart hurt for the people down there,” said Maxwell, a Memphis native. “It was such a bad thing. I just wanted to help in any way I could.”

Over spring break, Maxwell had her opportunity. She and 12 other Union University students spent the week of March 19 in Gulfport, Miss., helping the North Carolina Baptist Men’s disaster relief group by painting houses and doing other jobs as needed.

The Gulfport team was one of 11 Global Opportunities teams Union sent out worldwide over spring break to such places as France, Romania, Honduras, North Africa, Guatemala, Canada, Boston, New York and Chicago.

Lisha Whitten, an enrollment counselor who led the Gulfport team, said the students learned a valuable lesson about service. They wanted to do some of the more difficult jobs, like gutting houses, but instead spent much of their time painting and doing other “easy tasks.”

“One of the things they learned and I learned was that we really just needed to do what they told us to do,” Whitten said. “Those small tasks really do fit into the bigger picture of getting those homes completed.”

The last couple of days we got to work in areas where we could really see the disaster, and see how the hurricanes affected people,” said Union sophomore Blake Waggoner, of Biloxi, Miss.

“I love the school,” Denney said. “I feel like I’ve been here for years instead of just two months. It just kind of fits.”

Denney is just one of 11 college students who had transferred to Union University in the fall because of Hurricane Katrina. To accommodate students who had been affected by the hurricane, Union extended its enrollment deadline and offered to help such students academically, socially and financially.

But he knows if he stays in Jackson, Tenn., he’ll stay at Union.

“Union is like a small family where everybody knows everybody and everybody is very helpful,” Tien said. “If you need help they’re willing to help you. It’s a very nice place to be. It’s a good study environment, and the professors are very helpful.”

Chrsy Ennault of New Orleans echoed that assessment of Union’s professors. A nursing student who heard about Union from a friend, Ennault said Union’s faculty members have been “outstanding.”

She specifically cited the help of nursing faculty members Tharon Kirk and Jill Webb, who have helped Ennault by soliciting donations and providing her with gift cards to purchase some necessities.

“They’ve been helping in a lot of ways,” Ennault said. “Hopefully, if everything works out, I might just stay to graduate here.”

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New Home at Union

L ike thousands of other residents of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, Chrisy Denney fled ahead of Hurricane Katrina’s path. She and her parents made their way to Alamo, Tenn., to stay with Chrisy’s aunt and uncle.

“We only usually get to see them during hurricane season,” Denney joked.

But Denney wasn’t at home in Alamo this time. Instead, she found herself working in areas where she could help.

“What Denney didn’t realize at the time was that she’d be staying much longer than she expected. A freshman in college, Denney originally planned just to take some online courses this semester until she could return home to Moss Point, Miss., and finish her schooling there.

But Denney soon decided to enroll as a full-time student at Union University. Now she’s decided to stay and graduate from Union in four years.

“I love the school,” Denney said. “I love the atmosphere. I feel like I’ve been here for years instead of just two months. It just kind of fits.”

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Steve Tien, of San Jose, Calif., previously attended Louisiana State University. A computer engineering major, Tien isn’t sure yet what his long-term plans will be.

“My people are polite, motivated and respectful in their work.”

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Union Men Take TranSouth Golf Title

Cody Floyd took first place individual honors in the 2006 NCAA Region XI golf championship, leading Union to a third place team finish just days after the Bulldogs captured the TranSouth conference title.

Floyd, a sophomore from Milan, earned an automatic bid to the NAIA National Golf Tournament in Kansas as an individual qualifier. In the regional tournament, Floyd led after two rounds and then fired a 70 for a three-day total of 211. That was four strokes better than the second place finisher.

In the conference tournament, sophomore William Boyd took third place overall to lead Union to its ninth TranSouth title.

Several post-season honors came home with Union, including Head Coach Don Morris being named the TranSouth Coach of the Year. Boyd, Floyd and sophomore Drew Cannon were each named to the TranSouth All-Conference team.

Union Men Finish Memorable Season atop TranSouth

For a second straight year, the Union University Bulldogs won the TranSouth Conference Tournament championship, their fifth such title in nine years.

Union, which finished 28-6, clinched the tournament title with a 92-79 victory over Trevecca Nazarene in Nashville, and finished the regular season No. 5 in the NAIA men’s basketball rankings.

For much of the season, Mountain State (W.Va) University was the top-ranked team. The Cougars lost only two regular-season games, and Union accounted for both of those defeats. The first victory over MSU put Union atop the men’s national poll for the first time in school history.

In addition to Mountain State, Union defeated several other top non-conference opponents, picking up wins over NAIA powers Houston Baptist, Oklahoma City and Lindsey Wilson.

The Bulldogs even threw a scare into NCAA Division I Middle Tennessee State, leading the Blue Raiders by as much as 14 in the first half and trailing by only a point with three minutes remaining. MTSU went on to a 95-82 exhibition win.

The season ended with a first-round loss to eventual national champion Texas Wesleyan at the NAIA tournament in Kansas City. Mo. It was the second consecutive year that an unseeded team started a Cinderella-style run to the national championship with a win over Union.

But as they remember the 2005-06 season, Bulldog fans will savor all those big wins, and some outstanding individual performances.

Keshy Sellars, Corey Buckett and Ben Frederick were first-team selections for the TranSouth All-Conference squad. Dewayne Lee made second-team, and Sellars was named Newcomer of the Year.

Coach Ralph Turner took Coach of the Year honors in the conference.

Union Moves to November Homecoming

The key reason for moving Union University’s annual homecoming celebrations from February to November is the unreliable weather that is possible during a west Tennessee winter.

The point was illustrated dramatically during the final February event.

Forecasts of ice and snow on Friday, Feb. 17 forced the University to cancel scores of homecoming events.

“We did get in all the Friday activities,’’ says Gary Williams, associate vice president for alumni services. “But almost everything on Saturday had to be canceled.’’

The men’s basketball game set for Feb. 18 was played, but Homecoming Queen Kari Bachman of Louisville, Ky. and her court were not introduced until the following weekend.

The switch to November means there will be a second homecoming weekend in the calendar year 2006. It has been scheduled for Nov. 3-4.

The alumni awards luncheon canceled on Feb. 18 has been rescheduled as a dinner on Nov. 3.

Among the accolades to be awarded that night:

• Distinguished Faculty/Staff Award, Jimmy H. Davis
• Distinguished Service Award, Donald R. Webb
• Distinguished Alumnus Award, Raymond A. “Buddy” Boston
• Honorary Alumnus Award, David S. Dockery
• Outstanding Young Achiever Award, Andrea McDaniel

The potential for better weather in early November should lead to some new activities on future Union homecoming schedules. Tailgate parties, barbecues and outdoor activities for families are in the planning stages.

The initial plan is to conduct any formal activities on Friday, followed by ample time for departments and organizations to hold reunion events, dessert receptions and open houses. Saturday will be reserved for outdoor events and basketball.

“Saturday will be a totally relaxed, casual and fun day,’’ says Williams. “We’re already planning a golf tournament. Family and student activities will be mainly in the morning, with the basketball games in the afternoon.’’

Among those actively involved in the planning are students in Ashley Blair’s public relations class. They will study strategies for increasing student participation and attracting alumni to campus.