

# BULLETIN

Equipping Today's Church Leaders

Volume 1, Issue 4

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## BULLETIN

The Union University *Bulletin* is a bi-monthly publication designed to equip church leaders.

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Richard Joiner, Ph.D.  
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Gregory A. Thornbury, Ph.D.  
Ray Van Neste, Ph.D.

All Tennessee Baptist Convention pastors receive a copy of each issue of this publication. Electronic copies in Adobe Acrobat format are available to all other church leaders at <http://www.uu.edu/unionbulletin/>. If you or other church leaders would like to receive an e-mail notification of each new issue, simply visit the website and fill out a short form.

## WORSHIPPING

### Worship for the Grieving and Hurting

Richard Joiner, Ph.D.

Chair of the Department of Music and Professor of Music



A friend and fellow church member stopped me after worship services last fall with the question, "Richard, what do you know about healing services?" Ignorance crossed my countenance as she smiled and said, "I am sure that, since you are Chair of the Worship Committee, you will want to help me plan one." Inexperienced as I was, I went home to consider the function of worship in the lives of the hurting. Several instances came to mind during which worship services in recent years had been designed to address the needs of members of our congregation who had suffered incalculable loss. The friend who asked me to help plan the service had lost her only sister in a small plane accident just three months prior to our conversation. Two years before, a very active church family had lost a child in a boating accident. During the weeks immediately following that tragedy, the church underwent the trial of ministering to, suffering with, and eventually losing to leukemia a beloved Minister of Education. If your church is like mine, the need, nay the outcry, for worship ministry to the grieving and hurting is huge.

In the process of dealing with grief, most believers pay more than passing consideration to the questions involved with believing in our loving God who allows suffering. We must not let our search for answers distract us from another aspect, however: God is also the God of healing. Corporate worship during times of despair can and should offer a pivotal medium by which God moves and heals in unique ways. Such a gathering of fellow pilgrims can provide hope for the hurting, patience for periods of pain and grief, and can introduce the element of time into the process of overcoming grief. In the words of a former pastor, Christian worship can place a great comma between loss and healing. During that comma of time, God and reality can meet in a true renewal of faith. What is more, worship services for the grieving should also provide some focus for fellow worshippers who have empathy for their suffering friends, and who will inevitably experience similar loss.

From the functional point of view, how can the process of worship do these things? Two ways come to mind: a special worship service, set aside to provide or initiate all or some of the above aspects of healing in one session. Such moments are ordinations, if you will, of a time/space in which we draw apart, learn to wait, remind each other of our vulnerability, find assurance of God's personal love for us, and experience the magnificence of touch. The latter may come, for some, in the form of spiritual contact with a minister, friends,

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# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Chad A. Cossiboom

College Heights Baptist Church  
Gallatin, Tennessee

Senior

Major: Christian Ethics

Minor: International Studies

“God has used Union the past three years to shape who I am and what I strive for in life. There are so many aspects of the university that have challenged, enabled and equipped me for the future that God has planned for me.

My freshman year, during GO (Global Opportunities) Week, I began hearing clearly the desire that God has for all people to know Him, and that I could be a part of furthering His kingdom. Since then Union has helped facilitate my service in the Philippines, South Korea, China and most recently Italy.

I know that God has placed me here, at Union, for a specific reason, and there is no other place I would rather be.”

# PREACHING



## Got Security?(1 Cor. 1:4-9)

Paul Jackson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Christian Studies

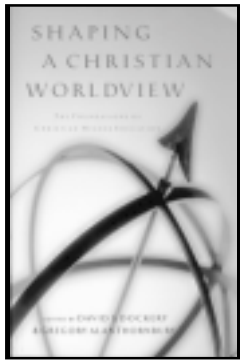
How secure are you feeling since 9-11? I remember having to fly to Denver on business only a couple of months after this terror-filled tragedy struck the heart of our nation. To begin with, airplanes are not my favorite mode of transportation anyway. It is not that I am afraid of flying. At 38,000 feet, I am afraid of not flying! So, the possibility of some horrible terrorist hijacking/suicide mission recurring made me even more uneasy. Having to arrive at the airport an extra hour early, seeing National Guard troops wielding M-16's, and almost being strip-searched were all new indications of not only trying to prevent someone from breaching beefed-up security measures, but also trying to reassure the frazzled and cautious flying public. But, we have seen this summer on July 4th that security at an airport in Los Angeles was compromised by an Egyptian who unloaded his gun killing several people at the El Al ticket counter. You see, violence and mayhem do find a way to surface even in what we might think is the safest of environments. Has life ever really been any different though? Is evil, natural or designed, any more predictable now? Is it safer now? I do not think so. We have seen one young girl kidnapped in the middle of the night from her own bedroom in Utah; yet another even younger yanked from her front yard as she played with a friend and then brutally raped and murdered. Thankfully, her executioner was caught within the same week. The summer of 2002 brought daily reports of wildfires in Colorado and New Mexico engulfing homes causing hundreds to flee from its seemingly inexhaustible path of destruction. An apparently healthy St. Louis Cardinal Baseball player dies in his sleep, stunning family, teammates, other players, and fans across the nation. Watch CNN any night and the list will quickly mushroom. You see, the unexpected has always been with us; it just stuns us when it assumes an unfamiliar face, or if it strikes in proximity to our private lives. Do you really think Tom Ridge and the newfound Homeland Security initiative should make us feel better or safer? Should being a citizen of the country whose military swings the most sophisticated and lethal stick make us sleep any cozier in our beds at night? While our technological, medical, and military prowess does grant us some relative physical security, it can fail us. If we want foolproof, surefire security, we only have one place to turn—to God. The only totally trustworthy security available during this life is found in a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul shed light on the concept of security in the midst of his thanksgiving paragraph in 1 Cor. 1:4-9. For Paul, true security is tightly connected to the process of salvation.

### **Being secure begins with accepting the grace of God (4-6).**

Of all the churches that Paul dealt with, the Corinthians probably gave him the biggest headaches—migraine proportion! Nevertheless, Paul continually thanked God for the presence of grace in their lives. Receiving grace is the beginning of security because that is

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## READING



### Shaping a Christian Worldview: The Foundations of Christian Higher Education

Edited by David S. Dockery and  
Gregory A. Thornbury  
Broadman & Holman, 2002

Union University has announced the release of *Shaping a Christian Worldview: The Foundations of Christian Higher Education*, a collection of essays that address the key issues facing the future of Christian higher education. Published by Broadman and Holman, the book is the first of its kind to address the critical questions of mixing faith with academics and any area of vocation, whether the arts, sciences, education, business or communications – with the contributing authors all from one university.

“This lively volume displays the intellectual energy made possible when faith and reason work with, not against one another,” said Jean Bethke Elshtain, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Professor of Social and Political Ethics at the University of Chicago. “The book is written in a style that makes it accessible

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## ENGAGING



### **The Problem of Pain and the Scars of Jesus**

Gregory A. Thornbury, Ph.D.  
Director, Carl F.H. Henry Center for Christian Leadership  
Assistant Professor of Christian Studies

“And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?””  
Mark 15:34

On September 11, even as rescue squads flooded lower Manhattan to save lives and care for the wounded, pastors and teachers of the Word of God hastily formed spiritual emergency units of their own. Even as the shock of the day’s events still hung in the air, the question formed on many a person’s lips: did God permit these terrible things to happen? Where is God in the midst of pain and suffering? Is God in control? Such probing queries require careful thought and helpful answers. During the greatest crisis in recent memory, the world desperately needed able pastor-theologians. Some leaders in the church rose to the challenge. Others missed an incredible opportunity to bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes Christians are tempted to offer easy answers to complex problems. We provide clichés rather than well spoken convictions from both our hearts and our heads. When the World Trade Center towers collapsed, many Christians were caught flat-footed. The pain and suffering of our fellow men demands clear biblical thinking. Recently, a good friend of mine found herself witnessing to a non-Christian on a passenger train. When my friend mentioned God, her companion immediately responded, “Where was God when 6 million Jews were slaughtered during the Holocaust?” Good question – a question to which my friend had no ready response.

While Christians believe and teach that God sovereignly rules and governs the universe, the problem of pain and suffering poses a powerful emotional challenge to that truth. Clearly, and according to the Bible, God is in control (Eph. 1:11). But hurting people may need to hear more than a cold recitation of that fact in their moment of crisis. They need to know God cares. We can confidently declare that God does care for those undergoing trial. We know this because God did not exempt himself from pain and suffering. Rather, in the second person of the Trinity, God underwent torture, humiliation, and death on the cross. We can take comfort in the fact that God is no cold and aloof deity. He is a God who cared enough to die for sinners. By pointing to the suffering of Christ on the cross, we point people to the Gospel. Despite the evil that resulted from the Fall, God has purposed to set things right, and this through His only Son. No man ever suffered like Jesus. Jesus is a Savior for those who are in pain.

When people raise the problem of suffering, we must not miss the opportunity to point them to the cross of Jesus. Almighty God came to earth and endured scorn, abuse, and death so that such things might ultimately be put to an end. We find the answers to the mystery of evil in the scars of Jesus. One must see the crucified Jesus before he can know the risen Lord who restores and gives life.

to laypersons and scholars alike and is a welcome addition to an ongoing cultural debate.”

Edited by Union President David S. Dockery and Greg Thornbury, director of the Carl F.H. Henry Center at Union, the book is written with the freshman college student in mind.

“The excellent essays in this volume are generally targeted for beginning college students,” said Dockery. “We believe, however, that the book will serve as a healthy guide for faculty members and trustees who serve Christian colleges and universities across the land. We also hope it will provide a stimulus for serious Christian engagement for graduate students and all others interested in Christian education at primary, secondary or post-secondary levels. It’s my wish that it will spur rich conversations in coming days.”

Designed for classroom use and discussion as well as individual reading, the university is also hoping to make a discipleship training kit available in the early part of 2003 to assist those churches wanting to use the book in their discipleship training programs. The discipleship training material will include a supplemental study guide to assist leaders in chapter discussions.

The book, which went on store shelves Sept. 1, is available at LifeWay Christian Bookstore, Amazon.com and other major book stores. A book signing will take place Monday, Sept. 23 at 10 a.m. at LifeWay Christian Bookstore, located on Union’s Jackson campus.

## Resource Recommendations



Ray Van Neste, Ph.D.  
Director, The R.C. Ryan Center for  
Biblical Studies and Assistant Professor  
of Christian Studies



Lee Tankersley  
Pastor, Cornerstone Community Church

This issue’s topic, suffering, is one which pastors are often called to address whether the suffering be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual, individual, church-wide or national. We have found that the best wisdom both in contemplating the difficult issues raised by suffering and in counseling people in the midst of crises is often found in great voices of the past. Hebrews 13:7 tells us, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God . . . and imitate their faith.” Too often our memory of past leaders extends back only 50 years or so. Therefore we will focus on three spiritual giants from the more distant past who can give us much wisdom in the area of pastoral counsel.

One important voice from the past is Martin Luther, and he has left us an excellent work in *Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel* (Vol. 28 in the Library of Christian Classics, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955, ed. Theodore G. Tappert). This volume is full of letters written by Luther to friends and family in which he provides comfort for the sick and dying, courage for those who are anxious and despondent, admonitions to courage, encouragement to the persecuted, suggestions for problems facing pastors, and much more. In reading them, one will find that Luther is both utterly qualified in giving such exhortations (as his road was no doubt traveled with more troubles and threats than our own) and is forthright in saying what needs to be said. He answers the call in our day to speak pointedly to believers to believe and obey the Word of God.

In a similar way Samuel Rutherford provides an excellent model for forthright and yet tender counsel in the midst of suffering. Sadly, Rutherford is not as widely known in many of our circles today. This lack of awareness is our loss as this 17th century Scottish preacher has been deeply influential and highly esteemed. The book, *The Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, is available in several editions (the one edited by A. A. Bonar being the most complete) and is still in print. A brief and helpful introduction to Rutherford focusing on the pastoral counsel of his letters (many written from prison) can be found in *Samuel Rutherford and His Friends*, by Faith Cook (Banner of Truth, 1992). One key focus of this book is Rutherford’s counsel in times of grief and trials- and believers in 17th century Scotland had many causes for such sufferings including severe persecution. Indeed, Rutherford wrote to one correspondent, “I am persuaded that it is a piece of the chief errand of our life . . . that we might suffer here for a time amongst our enemies . . .” Mrs. Cook provides us with glimpses of Rutherford counseling parents grieving the loss of children, elderly widows facing loneliness, men facing death and individuals mourning wasted days of youth. In these instances Rutherford is tender and compassionate though also strikingly forthright. This book could be profitably read by a pastor and deacons for insight on

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pastoral counseling (a full review is available at [www.uu.edu/centers/biblical](http://www.uu.edu/centers/biblical)).

Lastly, one of the most spiritually edifying books for believers is *The Pilgrim's Progress* written by John Bunyan. This commonly known book is not so commonly read. Bunyan wrote this book from prison while being detained for the sake of Christ. The work is a story of a man named Christian who journeys through the Christian life from his conversion until his glorification in the presence of his Lord. Along the way he encounters despair, struggle, and many individuals who try to sway him off the path. His responses to these situations will provide any reader with great spiritual insight and encouragement. Bunyan, unlike too many today, is well aware that suffering is to be expected along the path to the Celestial City.

Though it is an allegory that will be enjoyed by children as well as adults, Bunyan speaks in greater theological depth from these pages than can be found in most other works. His writing is full of Scripture, which is intertwined in the dialogue among characters as well as the narration. One cannot read this book without better understanding the gospel, the necessity of God's Word as our hope, and God's gracious work of persevering His saints.

Because Bunyan is writing in the form of an allegory, he is able to speak on hard topics in the dialogue between characters and is therefore able to confront his readers with pointed truth while asking difficult questions. It is a must-read for all believers.

Finally, we encourage you to purchase a hardback edition of the book, for you will no doubt be referencing this work for years to come. You will rarely preach a sermon in which you would not be able to quote Bunyan's great work.

## WORSHIPPING...continued from page 1

and/or with scripture. It may also come, however, in a portion of the service dedicated to actual anointing. For some of us, this may be a very radical departure. After being ordained and serving several terms as a deacon, however, the ordination process of "laying on of hands" has come to have a very special meaning in my own walk. If the touch of a friend during the observance of ordination can mean support, prayer, and love for service as a deacon, how much more can this scriptural procedure mean during structured moments of anointing for healing?

While a service of healing may not be practical or plausible for many churches, an awareness of worship's ministry to us remains vital to our services. We already establish the structure for this process when, within our services, we allow a time for pastoral prayer. During such moments, the clamor of the world, the battering of telephones, TV sets, mindless conversation, and, even organ music, may be put to rest in order that silence, peace, and healing can fill our minds and lives. We have often introduced such prayer seasons with announcements concerning latest developments since the congregation was last together: a recent death, a new illness, a recent blessing, a new baby. While we usually utilize corporate prayer during these moments, we could also introduce hymns that speak directly to issues of loss and God's healing and providence. In this way, the words of such hymns become our words, their thoughts our thoughts, their prayers our prayers. Consider these examples:

"Day by Day," by Caroline V. Sandell-Berg (1832-1903) contains the phrase:

"The protection of His child and treasure is a charge that on Himself He laid;  
'As thy days, thy strength shall be in measure,' this the pledge to me He made."

"My Shepherd will Supply My Need," a metrical paraphrase of Psalm 23 by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), closes with:

"O may Thy house be my abode, and all my work be praise.  
There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come;  
No more a stranger, nor a guest, but like a child at home."

The timelessness of the book of Psalms reminds us that God works within a time frame and according to a purpose much different from our own. This brings to mind Watts' classic hymn paraphrase of Psalm 90, "O God Our Help in Ages Past," as well as a hymn which seems to elucidate these same thoughts with more freedom, William Cowper's "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

The current Baptist Hymnal (1991) contains scores of additional examples. A quick examination of this hymnal's Topical Index reveals hymns related to worship for the grieving under such topics as: Assurance; Comfort; God the Father—Faithfulness; God the Father—Providence; God the Father—Love for Us; Guidance and Care; Hope; and Faith and Trust. The Baptist Hymnal is only one of several evangelical repositories of song in which a rich treasury of verse can be found for our use in any part of a service designed for the grieving.

Finally, we must acknowledge that the need for a worship ministry to the hurting is timeless. This need seems always to be present. Therefore, it is important that we have the spontaneity to worship and minister whenever needed. In my teaching, I have claimed the

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*WORSHIPPING...continued from page 6*

privilege on various occasions of introducing corporate prayer into my lectures or rehearsals when grief or concern dominates our thoughts. The healing message of corporate prayer and/or hymn-singing in such spontaneous moments can not only provide a comma of time for understanding, but a reconsideration of God's life-changing gift of love:

God is love, his mercy brightens all the path on which we trod;  
Bliss he wakes and woe he lightens. God is wisdom, God is love.

Chance and change are busy ever; Man decays and ages move;  
But his mercy waneth never: God is wisdom, God is love.

E'en the hour that darkest seemeth will his changeless goodness prove;  
Thro' the gloom his brightness streameth: God is wisdom, God is love.

He with earthly cares entwineth hope and comfort from above;  
Ev'rywhere his glory shineth: God is wisdom, God is love.

John Bowring, 1825

*PREACHING...continued from page 2*

how you start the journey through this life with God. So, where faith exists, security flourishes. Paul goes on to say that they have received everything "in Christ" and therefore are lacking nothing for their sojourn on this earth. The New Testament concept of the already/not yet tension of salvation needs to come into focus here because it helps us deal with the unexpected in a healthy way. This perennial truth simply means that although God has showered us with his grace, we still sin, we still die, and we still need full transformation. So, we can feel secure by knowing that while we might suffer terribly in the white hot spots of tribulation and tragedy, we need to see the bigger picture of God's eventual and decisive triumph over evil at the end of time. No matter what happens to us during the interim, we will be with Him at the end. God always finishes what He starts. The best way to stay a step ahead of evil and the unexpected is to have faith. Do you know someone who is excessively troubled by the threat of terrorism? Lead them to a saving relationship with Christ and they should be healed of that problem. The existence of faith always outweighs the trouble of this world. The confirmation of the Corinthians' faith caused Paul to bubble over with thanksgiving to God.

**Being secure continues with traveling the road of salvation (7).**

The result of faith's confirmation is that the Corinthians would not come up short in any spiritual gift. They would be fully equipped or gifted to meet every circumstance of life, no matter how violent, unexpected, or trying it may be. Paul referred not to some nebulous feeling either, but precisely to a given state of affairs. Frankly, it does not feel good to be a Christian sometimes. And occasionally it is not physically healthy to be a committed disciple. So, what does Paul have in mind? What lies in the distance that gives him ultimate comfort and security? He includes himself in the "eager expectation of the revelation of Jesus Christ." A proper eschatological focus will remedy a lot of present day ills. We will continue to struggle in this life with the unexpected. To understand the nature of this struggle, however, we need to reflect on Paul's teaching concerning the "three tenses of salvation." The well-traveled analogy of the lifeboat is still an effective way to illustrate the battle with disaster during the process of salvation. A person may have been saved (past) decisively from a sinking vessel; but as the lifeboat brings the believer through perilous, turbulent seas (present), the ultimate safe landing on the solid shores of heaven lies in the distance (future). Then, and only then can we celebrate the cessation of the battle with sin and other woes of this life. But, this does not mean we are without help now. With this hope squarely fixed on the horizon, we can be of good cheer knowing that we will reach that safe shore regardless of the inequity or intensity of the world's many security breaches along the way. True security is never determined by what life brings; it is determined rather by the One who travels with us on our journey. So, what shall threaten my security? Shall terrorism, or the volatile, unpredictable stock market, or poor health, or natural disasters, or marital woes, or persecution? I am persuaded that nothing can destabilize the security I have in my unending relationship with Jesus Christ.

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## Fall Chapel Guests

September 4

Robert George, McCormick Professor of  
Jurisprudence and Director of the James  
Madison Center, Princeton University

September 6

Todd Brady, Minister to the  
University, Union University

September 13

Jay Ridenour, Director of Discipleship  
Ministries, Union University

September 25

Stan Jones, Provost, Wheaton College

September 27\*

Chuck Colson, Founder, Prison  
Fellowship Ministries

October 2

Ray Van Neste, Director, R. C. Ryan  
Center for Biblical Studies and  
Assistant Professor of Christian Studies,  
Union University

October 4

George Guthrie, Chair, Department of  
Christian Studies and the Benjamin W.  
Perry Associate Professor of Bible, Union  
University

October 11

Todd Brady, Minister to the  
University, Union University

October 23

Jack Graham, President, Southern  
Baptist Convention and Pastor,  
Prestonwood Baptist Church

October 30

Doug Walker, Senior Vice President,  
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

November 6 & 8

Don Whitney, Professor of Spiritual  
Formation, Midwestern Baptist  
Theological Seminary

November 15

Julie Hunt, Adjunct Professor, Department  
of Social Work, Belmont University

November 22

Todd Brady, Minister to the University,  
Union University

\*Special time - 11:00 a.m.

You are cordially invited to attend. Chapel services  
begin at 10:00 a.m. For more information, please  
call Campus Ministries at 731-661-5062.

*PREACHING...continued from page 6*

### **Being secure concludes with arriving at my final destination (8-9).**

As the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them, Christ will likewise confirm them to the end. God through Christ confirms our end-time security. What is interesting about Paul's words in verse 8 is that we will be delivered "blameless." We may be as Paul described in 2 Cor. 4:8-9; "hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; and struck down, but not destroyed"—and all that these descriptions could possibly entail. We really could have had a tremendously difficult time during our lives by being falsely accused, falsely imprisoned, continuously harassed, mercilessly tortured, and even brutally murdered. But none of that takes away or denigrates whatsoever the capital we have in our relationship with the Lord. Appearing blameless at His appearing means we are free from any charge. We are irreproachable and unimpeachable. We can never lose what God gave us in Christ and was continually confirmed by our faith. I marvel when I read of the sufferings of Paul in his "Catalogue of Catastrophes" in 2 Cor. 11, because although he endured so much, he stayed the course knowing that the world could not undermine his peace or determine his destiny. "The Day of the Lord Jesus" will not only be a day of reward and confirmation, it will be a Day of Judgment and rectification. God, the righteous judge, will rip the heart out of evil and set things right. He will do this because He is faithful. He cannot backpedal on or ignore His promises. This is a logical "cannot" as God has bound Himself by His own choice to be faithful; so there are things God cannot do. This is who I want in charge of Homeland Security. Because I believe in God's faithfulness, I fear nothing. Our God delivers. The Taliban, Osama Bin Laden and all his favorite Al Qaida terrorists are in sore need of a more competent deity, one who can deliver a promise not laden in fear, terror, and violence. Sure, they struck a blow in the name of their brand of jihad; but it was only a physical one and temporary at best. Their promises and their struggles have no meaning past this life. The Christians who died during the 9-11 attacks are very much alive and presently enjoying eternal life with God.

it only takes one day

# one day.

High school students experience what sets Union University apart from other colleges during Preview Days. Whether sitting in on classes, meeting our faculty and students, or touring the campus, they'll discover why Union is one of the finest institutions and best values in Christian higher education.

Fall 2002

Friday, October 4

Friday, October 11

Friday, November 1

Friday, November 8

Friday, November 15

Spring 2003

Monday, January 20

Monday, February 17

Friday, February 21

Friday, March 7

Friday, April 11

Friday, May 2

Register online, call us toll free at 1.800.33.UNION or contact us via e-mail at [info@uu.edu](mailto:info@uu.edu).

You may also contact the Preview Day Coordinator, Wendy Veazey at [wveazey@uu.edu](mailto:wveazey@uu.edu).

# A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



During the course of each year, churches are given opportunities to plan many special services. With the exception of a Good Friday service, most of them are joyous occasions. On Good Friday, we focus our attention on the pain, suffering and death of Jesus. Thankfully, God provided us the opportunity to follow this service with a resurrection celebration on Easter. The death of Jesus illustrates how painful life can be, and those choosing to live for God are not exempt. As the anniversary of 9/11 approaches, I am reminded that we do not often plan worship experiences for today's hurting. No one would deny that the events of 9/11 brought unbelievable pain to all of America. While that one event brought catastrophic pain to us corporately, it is probably no greater than that experienced on a personal level by countless numbers of individuals across our country each week. We all confront death, sickness, financial troubles, divorce, loneliness, fear, and a myriad of other tragedies in our lives. Each time you and I step into a pulpit to preach, the pews are filled with hurting people

who interpret our words through the filter of their suffering. Our prayer is that this issue of the *Bulletin* will serve as a reminder to each of us to not overlook those in our pews who are suffering. Most of the pain caused by 9/11 was publicly expressed. Too often, the pain experienced by those in our churches remains private. Corporate worship provides a wonderful opportunity to bring perspective and healing to those experiencing the pains that accompany life this side of heaven. As we discussed in the previous issue of the *Bulletin*, worship is that special time when we get to corporately encounter Almighty God. These times can be so useful in helping hurting people to lift their eyes from the despair and uncertainty of their particular situation and focus on the God of healing and hope, because He transcends the pain of life.

God is so gracious to allow you and me to serve as His instruments to build and equip His Church. I pray He uses this publication to be a blessing to your ministry.

For His Glory,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles A. Fowler".

Charles A. Fowler

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