BÜLLETIN

Equipping Today's Church Leaders

Volume II, Issue 5

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BULLETIN

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

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.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



An Open Letter to Tennessee Baptists

October, 2003

David S. Dockery Union University, President

The Union University family looks forward for the opportunity to gather with Tennessee Baptists from across this state for the 129th annual convention. As we do so, we celebrate the wonderful relationship we have enjoyed with the churches of the Tennessee Baptist Convention for nearly 130 joyful years.

A Record Enrollment

During these years, Union has grown from a small rural institution to a university with an emerging national profile and a record enrollment this fall of 2809 students. Tennessee Baptist students make up nearly 50% of a student body which overall is more than 65% Baptist. Among the student body this year are well over 300 church related vocation students. At Union University, we are indeed pleased to continue our strong relationship with Tennessee Baptists. As the oldest institution related to the Southern Baptist Convention, Union trustees, administration, faculty and staff are dedicated to academic excellence, profound spiritual devotion, and service to church and society, particularly in our affiliation to the churches of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. This commitment is evidenced in a variety of ways.

Enhancing Our Partnership

It is our hope to strengthen, expand, and enhance Union's relationships with the churches of the TBC. We are thankful for the shared partnership in the Gospel (Phil. 1:3-6) as we labor together for our Lord (1 Cor. 3:9). We are committed to distinctive Christ-centered higher education that will help students learn to think and live Christianly. To that end, Union is seeking to build a faculty of outstanding Christian scholars who demonstrate a love for God and the people of God, who seek to build a community of faith and learning through the love and care of students and colleagues, and who pursue excellence in teaching, research, publication, performance, and other scholarly activity. This guiding vision is shaped by faithfulness to Union's Christ-centered mission grounded in the liberal arts tradition.

Cooperative Program Support

For this vision to continue to expand, Union University must find ways to enlarge the financial resources of the institution. Union University is primarily a tuition-driven institution, with almost 60% of our annual

unrestricted operating budget provided by tuition. The annual budget now exceeds \$38 million. About 6% of this amount annually comes directly through the Cooperative Program gifts of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Our tuition **price** structure is significantly less than the **cost** of educating each full time student. Approximately \$900 per student is provided by these TBC gifts. In an effort to address these needs, Union is developing an overarching strategy for institutional advancement that has included the highly successful \$60 million "Building a Future" Campaign. This campaign, which will fund operational needs, endowment objectives, and the development of the campus master plan, includes, among other things, cultivating strong relationships with the local community, alumni, businesses, foundations, and the Tennessee Baptist Convention, which includes the Church-Scholarship program.

Accessibility and affordability for our students, without sacrificing our deepening commitment to quality and Christ-centered excellence, are among our primary concerns as we carry out our mission each and every semester. Just as our hiring practices call for Union to hire only evangelical Christians who are faithful in local churches, with preference in all fields going to Baptists, so our preference in recruiting students remains focused on our Baptist family, particularly our Tennessee Baptist family.

National Reputation, Regional Focus

Even as Union's national reputation grows, evidenced by our Top Tier ranking for the 7th straight year among Best Universities (Masters) in the South in the 2004 *U.S. News and World Report* listings (as well as other premier recognitions: Templeton Guide, Peterson's Guide, Time/Princeton Review, America's Best College Buys, America's Best Christian Colleges, Peterson's Choose a Christian College) and a student body representing 43 states and over 30 countries, our primary recruiting efforts remain focused on Tennessee Baptist students. Every Tennessee Baptist student receives some form of financial aid at Union—and new students will receive a minimum of \$3,200 of financial aid during their years at Union because of their TBC affiliation.

Tennessee Baptist Ties

A few examples (which are not intended to be exhaustive) that indicate Union's strong ties with Tennessee Baptists and Tennessee Baptist students include:

- All Trustees of the University elected by the TBC
- Faculty and staff (of which 70% of the 400 employees are members of TBC congregations) are invested in the life and work of local churches
- Monthly meetings on the Union campus of the West Tennessee Baptist Pastors' Conference
- Monthly meetings on the Union campus of the West Tennessee Pastors' Wives
- Bi-annual appreciation banquets for West Tennessee Pastors
- Hosting of regular meetings on the Union campus for senior adults from TBC congregations
- Eight weeks of Centrifuge camps
- Summer Pastors School and Senior Adult Conference
- Regular meetings of the West Tennessee Ministers of Music
- God-honoring chapels each Wednesday and Friday with dynamic speakers and wonderful music
- Faithful campus ministry programs
- R. G. Lee Center and its various programs for bi vocational ministry, lay persons, and pastors
- The annual publication of the *Union Pulpit* and the regular publication of the *Union Bulletin*
- Ministerial dependent scholarships
- Church vocation scholarships
- Church matching scholarships
- TBC member scholarships
- Special restricted and endowed scholarships
- Children of Missionaries scholarships
- Co-curricular and continuing education opportunities provided by:
 - -- the Henry Center for Christian Leadership
 - -- the Ryan Center for Biblical Studies
 - --the Hammons Center for Science and the Christian Faith
 - --the Institute for International and Intercultural Studies
- And much more

Union University presents

BAPTIST IDENTITY: IS THERE A FUTURE?

April 5-6, 2004

The most significant conference you can attend for 2004!

Join Baptist pastors and lay workers on the campus of Union University to discuss the future of the Baptist identity.

Featured speakers:

Morris H. Chapman James Leo Garrett, Jr. David S. Dockery Stan Norman Sam Shaw Greg Wills

Cost: \$50/person - includes meals To register call 731.661.5160

The Importance of this Hour

The identity and mission of Union University, the liberal arts based curriculum grounded in a Christian world and life view, the commitment to Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society—these things have never been more important at Union University. The times in which we live call for great resolve, faith, and hope. This is not a time for fear or despair, but a time for confidence in our great God. We accept both the opportunities and stewardship of this hour with a deepened dedication to the high calling that is ours.

Gratitude to Tennessee Baptists

Finally, we want to express our genuine gratitude for the opportunity to work with Tennessee Baptists. We pledge to

continue to do all we can to provide Christ-centered quality education that is affordable and accessible for Tennessee Baptists. In this regard, we are grateful for the faithful Cooperative Program funds received from the Tennessee Baptist convention each and every year, even as we seek to be faithful stewards in all these matters. We urge you to keep Christ-centered higher education a priority among all Tennessee Baptists.

Please know of our desire to continue to strengthen the cherished relationship between Union University and the Tennessee Baptist Convention—for the good of Union University and the glory of God.

Soli Deo Gloria,

David S Pochy

David S. Dockery President

Preaching Points

A one-day conference for church leaders

Featuring:



Dr. David S. Dockery President, Union University

Theme:

"Calvinism, Arminianism & Southern Baptist Evangelism"

Tuesday, January 27, 2004 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

UNION UNIVERSITY Jackson, Tennessee

Registration Fee: \$12 per person (lunch included)

Register online at https://www.edu/forms/conferences/preachingpoints/

For more information call: 731 661-5160

Preaching Points

A one-day conference for church leaders

Featuring:



Dr. Chuck Kelley President, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary



Dr. Jerry Tidwell Author, G.R.O.W.: Outreach Teams That Win

Theme: "Evangelism & Outreach"

Thursday, February 26, 2003 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

UNION UNIVERSITY Jackson, Tennessee

Registration Fee: \$25.00 per person (lunch included)

Register online at https://www.edu/forms/conferences/preachingpoints/

For more information call: 731 661-5160

VALUING



The Value of Christian Education

George H. Guthrie, Ph.D. Benjamin W. Perry Professor of Bible Christian Studies Department Chair

When my wife, Pat, and I moved back to Tennessee thirteen years ago, we had a dream of one day building a house and living in the country—we had watched too many editions of "This Old House" and read too many "Country Home" magazines! Though we, at moments, have considered suing those purveyors of the ideal country life for emotional damage (our projects always take more than an hour and look far less than perfect), we are living the dream on 5.5 acres in Gibson County, and with the dream came a tractor. Mine is a 1952 Ford 8N, with slightly dysfunctional wiring and a sticky lift. Though she has been faithful, I recently had begun to take her for granted—that is, until a part in the distributor broke, shutting down my grass mowing for a couple of weeks. At that point, when I had to do without her, it dawned on me how indispensable that old Ford has become to me.

I want to take a few minutes and share my heart with you about the indispensable nature of Christian higher education. As Southern Baptists, we have invested a great deal in education and missions over the past century and a half. Yet, I wonder whether, at times, we take solid, Christ-centered, educational institutions for granted, as if they really do not matter that much in the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Let me mention just four of the many ways we are playing a unique role in advancing the Kingdom through educating young men and women in a distinctly Christian university setting.

1. First, we train students in character and life skills. I have had a number of opportunities in the past ten years to go and teach at the seminary level. Yet, God has allowed me to stay put, and for that I am grateful, for I have felt a student's time in the university is, perhaps, the most formative time in his or her life. Every week, my colleagues and I counsel some of our 200+ Christian Studies students, who are dealing with major life decisions, spiritual crises, or theological questions. We have had them in our homes for round table discussions, or premarital counseling, or simply for fellowship. We mentor them in walking with Christ and loving the church. We teach them to think about their issues and decisions from a biblical perspective and give them very personal attention, the kind of attention they are

unlikely to find at a state university. My family and I have had several students live with us to help them financially. I have rebuked a young man who was manifesting a lack of integrity, prayed with a student who was struggling with assurance of salvation, and married several couples who will spend the rest of their lives together. Yet, this kind of attention is not unique to the Christian Studies Department. All across Union University are professors, men and women deeply devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and mentoring future teachers, doctors and nurses, business people, and scientists to follow Christ in their God-given vocations. A Christian university is a crucible of focused growth in both character and life skills.

2. Second, we train students to know and interpret the Bible. Some fifty years ago, many people in American culture knew the basic stories of the Bible, and even many Bible doctrines. Yet, over the past five decades, biblical literacy has been on a steady decline, both inside and outside the Church. George Lindbeck comments, "The decline of biblical literacy has been abrupt and pervasive. . . The decline affects intellectuals and non-intellectuals, the religious and the non-religious, those inside the churches and those outside, clergy and laity . . ." Illustrating this point, a major Christian university recently gave a 25 question Bible knowledge exam to incoming freshmen who were from church backgrounds.

Here are the results:

- A third could not place in order: Abraham, the Old Testament prophets, the death of Christ, and Pentecost.
- Half could not sequence: Moses in Egypt, Isaac's birth, Saul's death, and Judah's exile
- A third could not identify Matthew as an apostle or locate Paul's journeys in Acts
- Half did not know the Christmas story was in Matthew or that the Passover story was in Exodus.

This picture is sobering to say the least. How will students live by the Word of God, if they do not know it? That is why Union still requires every student to take a Survey of the Old Testament class and Survey of the New Testament. This is important, of course, for our Christian students, but it also has proved important for those who have not yet met Jesus. Several years ago, I had a young basketball player named Eric in my New Testament Survey class. After the portion of the class on the death and resurrection of Christ, Eric came by my office to talk. Both in the class and in the context of a Bible study on campus, he had come to understand the Gospel for the first time. That day, Eric committed his life to Christ. He now serves as the basketball coach of a nearby high school and continues to walk with the Lord, using his influence to mold the lives of his students.

Furthermore, Christian Studies students, 90 percent of whom have never had a class or seminar on how to study the Bible, also are required to take Introduction to Bible Study and Interpretation. Evaluating her experience of the Introduction class last year, a young woman named Alice wrote.

"It's exciting to take a class that requires me to give my full attention to the Word of God. This class has caused a serious conviction concerning how I have so lightly looked at [the Bible]. . . . I am truly thankful to God that I have this opportunity to learn how to properly treat his Word."

3. Third, we teach them to think, and to think Christianly. There has never been a time in modern history at which the church was more inundated and more threatened by the seductive philosophies of the age. Students leave university life to go out into a world that will challenge everything they have ever been taught, and they must understand and be able to deal with the cacophony of voices that call them away from Christ and the Church. The answer to this great challenge is not withdrawal from the world, for how will they reach the world for Christ if they withdraw? Rather, the answer is the ability to understand and answer the spirits of the age from a biblical perspective. Speaking of the important role of the Spirit-directed, intellectual life, C. S. Lewis once wrote,

"To be ignorant and simple now—not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground—would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defense but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered.

Consequently, in the halls of Christian universities like Union, students learn about the pervading philosophical systems and religions of the world, and they learn to speak to them, with grace and perspective, from the standpoint of a Christian world view.

4. Fourth, and finally, we train our students to minister to others and to live in Christian community. Here on campus, they learn what it means to live in Christian community with other believers, learning how to encourage and be encouraged, how to enter into dialogue, how to handle conflict, and how to care for the practical needs of others. One of the great moments in my experience at Union came after a devastating tornado hit the campus last year, causing nearly \$1.8 million in damages. Hundreds of cars were shattered, trees were toppled, buildings ravaged, and the grounds thoroughly littered. Yet, in the aftermath, we experienced community. Hundreds of students, professors, staff members, and community friends worked long hours, side-by-side, to clean up the mess. It was a high moment, and one many of those students will never forget.

Furthermore, each year we involve *hundreds* of students and faculty, both inside and outside the Christian Studies

area, in a wide variety of ministry opportunities. They minister to others on campus, in Bible studies, leading worship, and in mentoring relationships. They go to the churches of our area to preach, teach, sing, or to lead youth groups. Our students go into the neighborhoods of our surrounding cities to tutor children, care for the poor, or share the Gospel with the lost. They go on countless "Go Trips," that span the country and the globe, taking the love of Christ to those in other cultures of the world. Such experiences give our students generous opportunities to explore their spiritual gifts and passions, and first-hand experience in building up the Body of Christ. Some of these students will go on to seminary to continue their training and will serve as pastors, missionaries, or teachers around the world. Yet, many others will be corner-stone lay people in hundreds of churches across the country and around the world, lay people who will understand what it means to minister in the name of Christ.

These are just a few of the ways a truly Christian university can play an indispensable training role in the lives of young people. We are seeking to be faithful to the task God has given us to do. Just like my old tractor, we are not perfect, but we are getting an important job done, and we need your prayers and support as we do it. Commenting on the history of Christian university education, a friend recently remarked, "Christians have never had their universities taken away from them by secular culture, they have always given them away." May this never be said of us as Southern Baptists. The stakes simply are too high. There is too much to do towards the advancement of God's Kingdom.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Tara Kitchell
Franklin, TN
Junior
New Song Baptist Church
Major: Learning Foundations

Recently, I went to a professor's office to inquire about an assignment. Forty-five minutes later, I left feeling encouraged and highly motivated both spiritually and academically. Our simple conversation reminded me that the reality of my Union experience has met and surpassed my expectations.

When reflecting on my experience at Union, words cannot describe the blessings I have received from being a part of this Christ-centered institution. Whether it was a divine appointment just before class, a lunch meeting, or a late night in the dorm room, there are countless memories that flood my mind. At this point, I can only glimpse the impact that Union has had on my life and I anticipate seeing how my experience here will affect my future.

INVESTING



Handfuls of Barley

Charles A. Fowler, Ph.D. Vice President for Development and Church Relations

Mark Twain wrote in his book *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), "We picked up one excellent word – a word worth traveling to New Orleans to get; a nice limber, expressive, handy word – 'lagniappe.' They pronounce it lanny-yap. The custom originated in the Spanish quarter of the city. When a child or a servant buys something in a shop – he finishes the operation by saying 'give me something for lagniappe.' The shopman always responds; gives the child a bit of licorice-root. . . ." Lagniappe is something given over and above what is earned. It is a little something extra.

Each of us can reflect on experiences in our lives in which we unexpectedly received blessings we knew we had not earned. This knowledge may have made them difficult to accept at times, but always made the gift more meaningful. There is an account in Ruth 2 of just such an occasion. This beautiful story details Boaz's instructions to those gathering his harvest to drop handfuls of barley for Ruth as she gleaned the fields behind them. Her work and sacrifice did not change from other trips to the field, yet her returns were larger. One might refer to these extra, undeserved handfuls of barley as lagniappe. In Ruth's case, the extra portions were immediately obvious. I imagine she felt that either those harvesting were not doing their jobs very well or she had found special favor with Boaz. She was able to recognize his generosity to her. Because of his care, her loyalty and fondness for him grew.

Most of our students and their families make great sacrifices to cover the expenses that accompany their study here. They recognize that though tuition is higher than public universities, the educational experience is worth the additional expense. The reasons for choosing Union vary for every family, including factors such as a faculty and staff comprised of committed Christians who are actively involved in local churches, a student to faculty ratio of 12 to 1, a learning community permeated by a Biblical world view, a faculty committed to excellence, a school that is unapologetically Christian and unashamedly Baptist and a commitment to help students love God with both their hearts and minds.

God is using the faculty and staff of Union University to equip tomorrow's leaders to serve their churches and communities as change agents for Christ. Graduates leave with competencies and skills developed under the tutelage of a stellar faculty and committed to expressing these skills through service characterized by Christ-centered excellence. These skills are grounded in a conviction to engage every area of life through the lens of their personal faith. This educational model is a Union distinctive. We offer an authentic Christian education, shaped by our belief that all Truth is God's Truth and that His Word is relevant to all of life. This solid foundation beneath our educational plans inspires true intellectual inquiry and character development. We have committed ourselves to the belief that students need more than simply knowledge and opportunity to be successful. Both are important, but success in God's economy is fundamentally determined by our willingness to be Kingdom-focused, to hold fast to the Word of God, and to live life for the Glory of God. This is a radically different philosophy of education than that which pervades higher education across our country and one which must be preserved in order to adequately meet the challenges of our culture.

This article is my attempt to help you see that the story recorded in Ruth 2 is played over and over again at Union. While there are times, like Ruth's, when the generosity of others is evident, many times it is not. Our students, like Ruth, are working diligently to gather a harvest that will allow them to feed their minds and spirits through a Christian education. They are making great sacrifices to be here. The stress at times can be overwhelming, yet they persevere. Many of them wonder how they will meet all the financial obligations that accompany their education. While the price they pay seems large, it still does not reflect the total cost of their education. The actual out-of-pocket expenses for most families are significantly less than the actual cost for full-time tuition. Because of the faithfulness of many Boaz's, the "sticker price" for a Union education is reduced by approximately \$3,000. These monies represent direct financial support from the Cooperative Program, alumni, friends and corporate/foundation partners. Then, in an effort to maintain affordability, the "sticker price" is discounted on average by an additional 30% through student financial aid. This models an interesting business plan. We compute our actual costs for educating full-time students, reduce that by about \$3,000 off the top then discount it on average an additional 30% through financial aid. This model serves our ministry well solely because of the financial support received from a host of friends. God sends Boaz's to drop "handfuls of barley" to benefit our students and advance the Kingdom work that takes place here. These generous people do not look for direct financial returns on their investments. They give to impact the lives

of students. Students have done nothing to earn these investments. These are gifts of grace. They supplement and multiply the hard work, faithful stewardship and sacrifice of the students and their families.

Union University has an important mission that provides meaning and focus to all the work that takes place here. Our mission reads:

"Union University provides Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society."

This mission statement is complemented with an Identity Statement that clearly positions us and provides necessary context to our work. It reads:

"Union University is an academic community, affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, equipping persons to think Christianly and serve faithfully in ways consistent with its core values of being Christ-centered, people-focused, excellence driven, and future-directed. These values shape its identity as an institution which prioritizes liberal arts based undergraduate education enhanced by professional and graduate programs. The academic community is composed of quality faculty, staff, and students working together in a caring, grace-filled environment conducive to the development of character, servant leadership, and cultural engagement."

The significance of both our Mission and Identity Statements comes from seeing them expressed in and through the lives of faculty, staff and students. Union exists to advance Kingdom causes through the ministry of Christian education for the Glory of God.

There are many experiences in my life for which I am abundantly thankful. One of those is the privilege of having attended Union University. God used the faculty and staff to leave an incredible impression on my life. I did not come from a wealthy family and I worked hard to cover expenses. My family and I all made enormous sacrifices so I could attend, and as I reflect on that time, there are no regrets for any of the sacrifices. There is no way to place a price tag on the influence this place has had on my life. As thankful as I am, it was not until God called me back to Union to serve that I realized how much of my education was covered before I ever got the first tuition invoice. This gives me even more reason to be thankful, because God provided for needs before I even realized I had them. Without this support, I would not have been able to attend. It is lagniappe in reverse. I got my "little something extra" before the sale rather than after. Through the generosity of many Boaz's, there were many "handfuls of barley" dropped to ensure that my work reaped more than I deserved but enough to secure a place for me at Union University so that God could prepare me for a life of service to Him. He truly is good, all the time.

The same scenario still occurs. A record number of students are enrolled at Union this fall, and every one of

them is making sacrifices to be here. Like all of our faculty and staff, I am thankful God has entrusted them to us. We pledge to offer them our best. But neither we nor the students can accomplish this momentous task without the help of others. For every Boaz who leaves behind a few extra bundles, for every generous soul who gives these students some lagniappe, we are profoundly and eternally grateful.

Union University
Alumni & Friends Gathering
November 11, 2003
5:00 p.m.
Coburn Dining Room
For reservation information
call 1-800-338-6644

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Cary Penrose Cordova, TN Bellevue Baptist Church Junior Major: Christian Studies

Union University has been my home for the past two years. It is amazing to see all the ways God has His hand on this university. From other students, my professors, and the faculty, I have learned what it truly means to be a Christian and live out my faith.

Union has provided me many opportunities to use my gifts and talents in the ministry. There have been numerous activities such as Disciple Nows, revival weekends, and retreats that God has allowed me to attend. I feel that I am being well equipped and accurately trained for the ministry.



Rachel Wood Crossville, TN Pine Eden Baptist Church Junior Major: Nursing

When I became a Junior in high school, I knew that I needed to look for a college to attend. I wanted to attend a Christian university so I did my research and discovered Union. God called me to Union University and has blessed me in ways I never imagined.

I came to Union as a Nursing major and stuck to it! Now, as a Junior in college, I am experiencing what I really came to Union to do and that was to be a nurse. My teachers are approachable and want me to become the best nurse that I can be. I have the advantage of enhancing my Christian faith while learning.



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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Greetings from Union University! I trust all is well with you and your ministry. The opportunity that we have to serve Christ through the local church is a great blessing. His promise to us as we delight in the law of the Lord, and meditate day and night on His law is found in Psalm 1:3. It reads, He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf

does not whither, Whatever he does prospers. I pray you are experiencing this in your life and ministry.

This is a special issue of the *Bulletin*. It is our effort to engage with you in a conversation about the value of a Christian education and the important role that it plays in Tennessee Baptist life. Union University is the oldest institution associated with the Southern Baptist Convention. We have been providing a consistent witness through the ministry of Christian education since 1823 for the Glory of God. We are an important part of the Tennessee Baptist family that literally reaches across this country and around the world for the cause of Christ. Our students come to us this year from 44 states and 36 countries.

This worldwide reach is made possible because we have such a strong foundation at home as represented by the fact that approximately 50% of our students come from churches in the Tennessee Baptist Convention. So while we are departing from our normal format for this publication, this issue is still consistent with our purpose to equip church leaders. Union University desires to graduate students committed to love God with both their minds and hearts, to know His Word, and to understand that we exist for the Glory of God and therefore should offer nothing less than our best.

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

For His Glory,

Charles A. Fowler, Ph.D.

Vice President for Development and

Church Relations