



Baptist leaders extend denominational lifeline to Union

Among the first official visitors to campus following the tornado was a delegation of concerned leaders from the Tennessee Baptist Convention. That visit marked the start of a strong and generous lifeline between the denomination and a recovering university campus – a lifeline that made much of Union’s recovery possible.

Led by Union Trustee Morris Chapman, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee gave \$100,000 during its two-day meeting Feb. 18. Chapman’s positions of leadership with the SBC and Union gave him a unique perspective on the crisis. Just before the gift was given, Chapman visited campus for a trustee meeting and was encouraged by what he saw.

“As I drove across the campus on that morning, things had already changed dramatically,” Chapman said. “Much of the debris was already been hauled off. It’s going to be a new day at Union University.”

Just three days later, the TBC’s Executive Board responded with a gift of more than



President Dockery receives a check from SBC Executive Committee Chairman Bill Harrell

\$144,000 for disaster relief, a gift representing all of the entities in TBC life.

“This combined gift from Tennessee Baptist Convention entities, as an expression of grace and care, will help sensitize Tennessee Baptists to prepare to launch our statewide Day of Prayer and Giving for Union, said

TBC Executive Director James Porch. The message from the statewide leadership helped inspire hundreds of local Tennessee congregations to move forward with contributions.

Within weeks, both SBC President Frank Page and TBC President Tom McCoy made visits to Union. While they

were encouraged by the rebuilding process, they were also surprised by the level of destruction they found on campus.

“I’m a little bit shell-shocked as I look around,” Page said during a visit in late February. “It’s unbelievable that this kind of devastation could occur, and yet not one single student lost their life. So for that, we give thanks to the Lord.”

Both Page and McCoy urged congregations to take up special love offerings for Union.

“It is a simple thing that every church can do,” McCoy said. Many churches took up offerings on April 6, a day set aside in Tennessee to pray for Union and provide support.

By the time of that offering, many Southern Baptist entities had already provided examples of sacrificial giving. In addition to the SBC Executive Committee and the entities in Tennessee Baptist life, LifeWay Christian Resources responded with the very first significant gift on Feb. 11, a gift of \$350,000; Each Southern

Baptist seminary made a contribution. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, GuideStone Financial Resources and the Mid-South Baptist Association all gave gifts of \$100,000 or more.

Substantial gifts came in from the North American Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Foundation.

LifeWay’s administration also authorized the formation of employee relief teams to assist Union in disaster relief efforts as Union President David S. Dockery identifies needs. In a phone call to Union University President David S. Dockery broadcast live to all trustees, LifeWay President Thom S. Rainer said, “We want to walk alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ at Union University. We thank God that lives were spared, and we thank God for your incredible leadership. You have stood tall at a time when the pressure would have crushed other leaders.”

Dockery responded, “I am overwhelmed by your kindness and generosity at this critical

President Dockery and Senior Vice President for Church Relations Jerry Tidwell meet with TBC President Tom McCoy (center) and TBC Executive Director James Porch (right)

moment. There has never been a more pressing challenge in Union’s 180-year history. The opportunity to move forward will only take place as Union’s friends become agents of God’s grace in time of need. I thank you, I thank the board, I thank the LifeWay family for an unbelievably kind and generous gift to us at this particular moment.

“We thank you from the depths of our hearts.” ✝



SBC President Frank Page urged churches to become financial partners with Union’s rebuilding effort.

Response across America

On the morning of Feb. 6, the nation awoke to the news that tornadoes had spread across several states, killing more than 50 people; 24 died in Tennessee alone. Although no lives were lost at Union University, some of the most dramatic images of destruction were found on campus, and network news shows were broadcasting live from along Walker Road with the heavily damaged Hurt and Watters complexes as a backdrop.

The stories attracted more than just casual interest.

Willimantic, Connecticut

In a small New England town midway between Boston and New York, Andrew Powaleny was watching live national news coverage of the Tennessee tornado aftermath when he heard an interview with David S. Dockery.

Union's president was praising residence life workers for following emergency procedures and helping to save lives. Powaleny, himself a resident assistant in Occum Hall at Eastern Connecticut State University, said he felt an instant connection with Union after hearing Dockery's comments.

"With the statements (Dockery) made, it was as if Union University had come looking for me," said Powaleny, who had never heard of Union prior to the tornado. "I had to do something."

He went to ECSU President Elsa Nuñez, who pledged administrative help. Next, Powaleny put contribution envelopes in every campus residence hall. He did a live interview of his own on a local radio station, urging townspeople to give to Union's disaster relief fund. His effort attracted the attention of the Hartford Courant, one of Connecticut's leading newspapers.

"All too often people forget about devastation too quickly, put it out of their minds and don't want to hear that bad side of the news," Powaleny said. He helped raise nearly \$5,000 for Union's disaster relief fund.

Fresno, California

Pam Schock drove to work at Fresno Pacific University, where she is director of residence life and housing. But she couldn't stop thinking about the call she received the night before from her close friend and former colleague, Kathy Southall.

Schock had been resident director at Hurt from 1999-2004. Moments after the tornado, Southall had called to tell her that all her Union friends were unhurt.

Although she showed up to work, she was distracted.

"Over the next several days I continued to feel like I wanted to and needed to be there to help," said Pam. "Finally, I asked if I could (take a leave of absence) and they allowed me to do that."

Her flight arrived at 4 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 10. It was a day when faculty and staff continued to recover student possessions from the debris. Within a few days, Pam was involved in the work to convert the Old

English Inn to the off campus housing complex now known as The Jett.

In all, her volunteer tour of duty at Union was 10 days. The reconnection was powerful and her efforts were of great service to her former colleagues.

"People asked me there and here what I would have done if I hadn't been able to come to Jackson," Schock said.

"Honestly, I don't know the answer to that."

Dallas, Texas

Students at Criswell College gave \$500 during an offering in a campus chapel service Feb. 7. But that was only a starting point.

The campus radio station, KCBI, hosted a live broadcast the next day, urging listeners to provide disaster relief. Among those at the station was Union alum Kristen Ulmer Cole: "To be in the studio and hear people call in to give their money and hear their response was really touching," Cole said.

In the end, Criswell president Jerry Johnson presented Union with a check for more than \$50,000.

I was (surprised) but I should not have been, because God has limitless resources," Johnson said. "That is what you all believe, that is what we believe, that is what we teach and that is what we pray."

Springfield, Minnesota

Derek Tonn of the company Mapformation had never set foot on Union's campus, but he and several of his designers knew the campus very well. They had worked for several months to help the university develop a new 3-D map.

"I was stunned when I saw just how much devastation occurred to your campus facilities as a result of that tornado," Tonn wrote in an email to the Office of University Communications. "I personally had an encounter with a tornado growing up as a pre-teen in Minnesota in the early 1980s, and that is not an experience that I would wish on anyone. I'm just thankful that no fatalities were reported as a result of the event."

Tonn then offered to redesign the map at no charge to reflect rebuilding. ✚



Churches provide disaster relief

Moments after the tornado, many churches in the Jackson area sent vans to pick up some of the hundreds of students who needed a place to sleep. It was the start of a sustaining and inspiring partnership between congregations and a ravaged campus.

Churches of all sizes are providing financial help and sending work crews to help in the recovery and rebuilding efforts.

A full listing of each church will be provided at a later date, but here are just a few examples of the work church members have done at Union:

First Baptist Church, Camden, Tenn.

Soon after the tornado, the church took up a love offering for three members who are also students at Union. But the giving didn't end with that initial gesture.

On March 12, Pastor Chester Harrison presented a check to Union for \$61,000. That amount represents 11 percent of the congregation's entire annual budget.

The church was given a gift of \$100,000, and following Harrison's leadership decided to give half the money to missions and half to education. Church members voted to give the education portion of \$50,000 to Union for its disaster relief fund. Harrison told Dockery the church "wanted to invest it for eternity, so that generation after generation of students could be blessed by the gift."

"This is an absolutely amazing story. I was moved to tears as they presented the check to us," said Union President David S. Dockery on the day the check was received. "I don't know that we have seen anyone respond with such a sacrifice in response to our needs."

Greater St. Luke Baptist Church, Jackson, Tenn.

Sherry Ingram knew she'd have Feb. 18 off work for President's Day. So she began recruiting some other fellow school teachers and friends at her church to organize a day-long giving drive for Union University.

After a full day of standing in cold weather along Wallace Road outside the church, volunteers collected 12 boxes of toiletries, notebook paper, bottled water and other supplies. The group also collected more than \$400 in cash and an additional \$100 in gift cards.

Christian charity was the primary motivation, but Ingram says it was remembered that Union students provided help to church members when a tornado ripped through Jackson neighborhoods in 2003.

Faith Baptist Church, Bartlett, Tenn.

Pastor Danny Siquefield is a Union trustee, but the church's connection with Union goes far deeper than that association. Church members sponsor the Irwin Hayes Scholarship Fund at Union. This year, 11 students from Faith are attending Union.

"We love Union and want to support it," said Executive Pastor Todd Pendergrass. "We are honored to participate in the recovery."

Faith gave \$50,000 to disaster relief and sent a work crew to campus.

Second Baptist Church, Union City, Tenn.

Pastor Eddie Mallonee watched reports of the destruction at Union with a heavy heart. Not only is he a Union alum, but seven students from his church are students here.

The church voted to give each of those students \$2,000, and then gave the disaster

relief fund an additional \$10,000.

We felt like we had some more income in the checking account the past few months," Mallonee said. "It was impressed upon my heart that we use that to help Union."

Mallonee said when he presented his idea to the church body, it was received and approved with enthusiasm.

Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn.

The church sent two large busloads of workers to campus to complete some difficult work. One crew helped recover books from the R.C. Ryan Center in Jennings Hall, in an area near where the roof was torn away from the building. The team carried hundreds of books down stairways and prepared them for storage or restoration. The second team did cleanup work in parking lots littered with shattered glass and other debris from wrecked vehicles.

The church also presented Union with a check for \$100,000.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Bradford, Tenn.

The church contributed \$5,000 to Union's disaster relief fund, an amount that represents more than 3 percent of the church's total budget.

"In God's economy, that's the biggest gift to date," Union President David S. Dockery said of the Mt. Pleasant gift during a Feb. 27 campus visit from Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page, who urged churches of all sizes to become involved.

"A special love offering, taken at the church's timing and discretion would be most appreciated," Page said. "And I call for that." ✠

Other schools respond to Union's needs

Within hours of the tornado strike, schools across the nation were offering work crews and collecting contributions to benefit students and the recovery effort. This partial list of responses is alphabetized and shows the geographic diversity of the response.

Special "Thank You" to

- Belmont University
- Samford University
- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

- Ansgar College, Kristiansand, Norway
- Asbury College
- Auburn University
- Azusa Pacific University
- Baptist College for Health Sciences
- Belhaven University
- Bethel College
- Bethel University (MN)
- Blue Mountain College
- Calvin College
- Campbell University
- Campbellsville University
- Carson-Newman College
- Cedarville University
- Christian Brothers University
- College of the Ozarks
- College Success Program
- Corban College
- Council for Christian Colleges and Universities
- Covenant College
- Cox College
- Criswell College

- Dallas Baptist University
- Dallas Theological Seminary
- Dordt College
- Eastern Connecticut State University
- Freed-Hardeman University
- Geneva College
- Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary
- Gordon College
- Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- Grace College
- Grove City College
- Gustavus Adolphus College – MN
- Harrison Chilhowee Academy
- Hannibal-LaGrange College (MO)
- Hampton University
- Houston Baptist University
- Huntington University
- Indiana Wesleyan
- International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities
- Jackson State Community College
- Jackson Christian School
- Jackson-Madison County Schools
- John Brown University
- Judson College (AL)
- Judson University (IL)
- LaGrange College
- Lambuth University
- Lane College
- Lee University
- Lincoln Memorial University
- Lipscomb University
- Mercer University
- Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Milligan College
- Mississippi College
- Moody Bible Institute
- New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
- Northern Illinois University
- Oklahoma Baptist University
- Oral Roberts University

- Ouachita Baptist University
- Palm Beach Atlantic University
- Palm Beach Community College
- Point Loma Nazarene (CA)
- Redeemer College (Canada)
- Regent University
- Rhodes College
- Rush University
- Seattle Pacific University
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Southern Nazarene
- Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Southwest Baptist University (MO)
- Spring Arbor College
- State of Tennessee Board of Regents
- Stetson University
- Taylor University
- The Master's College (Calif.)
- Tennessee Baptist Children's Home
- Toccoa Falls College
- Trevecca Nazarene University
- Trinity Christian Academy
- Trinity International University
- Union College (KY)
- Union College (NY)
- University of Alabama
- University of Colorado-Boulder
- University of Houston-Clear Lake
- University of Memphis
- University of Missouri
- University of Mobile
- University of Tennessee-Martin
- University of Tennessee-Memphis
- University of Virginia Law School
- University of Washington
- University School of Jackson
- Virginia Intermont College
- Virginia Tech
- Wheaton College
- Whitworth College (WA) ✠



Kansas tornado victims reach out to Union

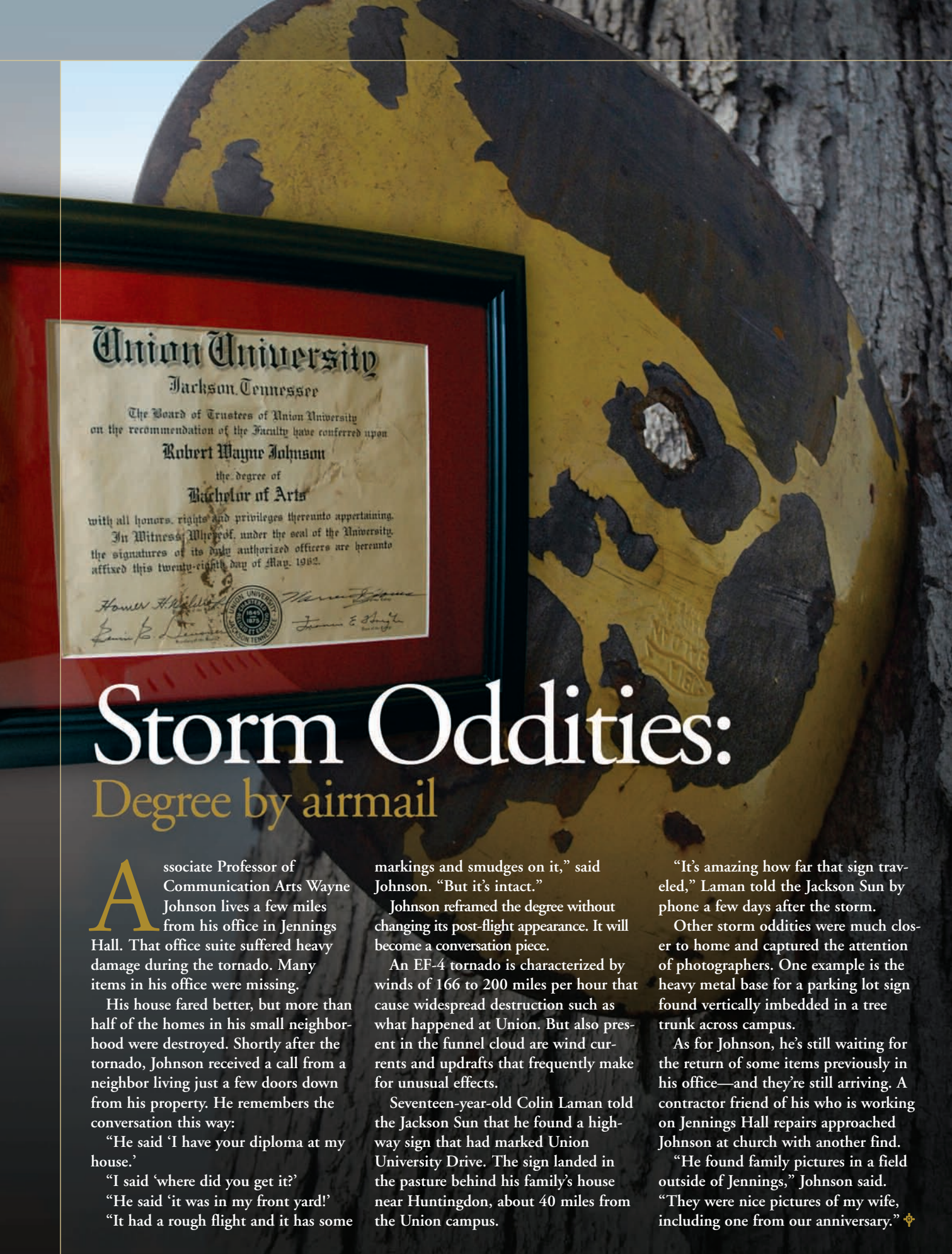
Young students in Greensburg, Kan. don't have to learn about tornadoes in news accounts or textbooks. In May 2007, they got a first-hand look at the destructive power of funnel clouds.

A tornado ripped through the community of 1,600, which is 110 miles west of Wichita, destroying an estimated 95% of the city and killing 11 people. The severity of the losses prompted a national outpouring of support, and provided a lesson in giving that school children in Greensburg have applied to Union University.

A junior high school teacher organized a

few modest fund raisers for Tennessee tornado victims after watching television accounts of the destruction. A "change war" pitted classes against one another in friendly competition, but soon spread to elementary school students, too. The total amount raised surpassed \$5,000, of which nearly \$2300 was earmarked for Union's disaster relief fund.

"The students wanted to 'pass on' some of the blessings that have been given to them," said teacher Josh Dellenbach. "I was very impressed with the reactions of the students and their generosity." ✠



Storm Oddities:

Degree by airmail

Associate Professor of Communication Arts Wayne Johnson lives a few miles from his office in Jennings Hall. That office suite suffered heavy damage during the tornado. Many items in his office were missing.

His house fared better, but more than half of the homes in his small neighborhood were destroyed. Shortly after the tornado, Johnson received a call from a neighbor living just a few doors down from his property. He remembers the conversation this way:

“He said ‘I have your diploma at my house.’
“I said ‘where did you get it?’
“He said ‘it was in my front yard!’
“It had a rough flight and it has some

markings and smudges on it,” said Johnson. “But it’s intact.”

Johnson reframed the degree without changing its post-flight appearance. It will become a conversation piece.

An EF-4 tornado is characterized by winds of 166 to 200 miles per hour that cause widespread destruction such as what happened at Union. But also present in the funnel cloud are wind currents and updrafts that frequently make for unusual effects.

Seventeen-year-old Colin Laman told the Jackson Sun that he found a highway sign that had marked Union University Drive. The sign landed in the pasture behind his family’s house near Huntingdon, about 40 miles from the Union campus.

“It’s amazing how far that sign traveled,” Laman told the Jackson Sun by phone a few days after the storm.

Other storm oddities were much closer to home and captured the attention of photographers. One example is the heavy metal base for a parking lot sign found vertically imbedded in a tree trunk across campus.

As for Johnson, he’s still waiting for the return of some items previously in his office—and they’re still arriving. A contractor friend of his who is working on Jennings Hall repairs approached Johnson at church with another find.

“He found family pictures in a field outside of Jennings,” Johnson said. “They were nice pictures of my wife, including one from our anniversary.” ❖



Tornado creates service learning opportunities

Sophomore Elizabeth Wood and the Cardinal & Cream staff contributed to this report.

Officially, class was not in session at Union University from Feb. 6-19. Unofficially, many students spent that time in the classroom of practical experience.

Journalism students covered the biggest story of their young careers. Social work and nursing students found opportunities to serve the victims and their school.

“After the storm hit, we had to put our nursing skills into immediate action,” said Candace Cross, a senior nursing major. “It was neat how we

were all able to find each other in the midst of the destruction and work together as a team, offering one another moral support.”

Kayla Clay, a sophomore social work major, helped organize recovered student possessions in the small gym.

“Just being there to help was such a humbling experience,” Clay said. “It helped me as a social work major to know how traumatic experiences affect people in many ways.”

Communications professors Michael

Chute and Jim Veneman quickly set up a makeshift newsroom in the Office of University Communications and filed stories distributed through the university, Baptist Press, and even YouTube.com.

“I learned a lot about videography, photography, writing and editing through this process,” said Matthew Kuchem, a sophomore majoring in political science and broadcasting. “I am passionate about Union University and was glad I had the opportunity to write stories from the inside.” ❖



Bagging and Recovery:

Salvaging student possessions with volunteer labor

Claire Yates ('09) and Kimberly Wilkinson ('08) contributed to this story.



Many students in the Hurt and Watters complexes were evacuated from their rooms with only the clothing on their backs. Some didn't even have shoes on.

Within 48 hours, some were allowed to return briefly to retrieve a few essential items. Many others could only wait for word on what—if anything—had been recovered from their ravaged rooms.

Enter dozens of faculty and staff volunteers.

They began working Feb. 7 to recover belongings from damaged dormitories on campus. They saved all types of belongings, from clothes to small refrigerators. Ben Dockery, director of campus ministries, said the bagging effort ran very smoothly.

Union physics professor Bill Nettles said he knew of one instance in which a student saw a structural engineer crawling among the debris, and said, "You're right next to my room. Could you go in my room and see if there is a purse sitting on the table?" The engineer went in the room and came out holding up the purse. The woman was overjoyed.

"The thing that has stood out to me most is that everyone has such a servant attitude – wanting to be here and help. Everyone just wants to serve," Nettles said. "It sums up the idea of blessing."

Faculty and staff were charged with bagging students' belongings and then transporting those items to designated areas. After the student items were separated into individual rooms, students came to one of Union's two gymnasiums and Fesmire Field House to claim their belongings.

"The reason things have gone so smoothly is because there are many people who have stepped up," Ben Dockery said. "(The teams) are extremely organized and detailed."

Alumna Stacy Storey, campus ministries coordinator, helped recover students' personal effects among the destroyed dormitories.

"I've found passports, notes, rings, a lot of jewelry, a lot of electronics, guitars," Storey said. "I'm surprised by the randomness of what's messed up and what's not. For instance, I walked into one room and there was a book opened on a desk and a

box of Triscuits right next to it, but the whole window right above it had been blown in. The stuff hadn't even moved.

"Some things are completely gone and then other rooms look like (students) just left their desk – which they probably did. Seeing the damage, it has just been shocking."

Students were clearly moved when they realized faculty and staff had waded through debris in cold weather, often working against deadlines imposed by darkness or incoming bad weather.

"I think it's going to bring the students and faculty closer," said Stephen Capps, a freshman Christian studies major. "It already has."

Nic Spalviero, a sophomore Christian studies major, said he didn't expect to see much of what was in his room as he prepared to return to campus.

"They emailed me and told me they got twelve bags out of my room," Spalviero said. "I'm pretty sure as of right now that I haven't lost one thing."

"I really appreciate that they did something like that. It's amazing." ✦



Demolition:

26 million pounds in five days

Students who returned to campus to assess damage to their cars and rooms got one last look at what had been the Hurt and Watters complexes.

Some pointed to bathtubs where they had sought refuge. Others looked at the rubble without saying a word.

Crews from Hutcherson Metals, Inc. and Dement Construction carried out the preparation work, demolition and removal of debris.

Hutcherson Metals crews had to remove all appliances, hot water heaters, HVAC units and a lot of the stairwells from the

wreckage. This eliminated disposal hazards at the landfill.

By Tuesday, Feb. 12, the \$500,000 job demolishing the remains of Hurt and Watters had begun. Lighting trees were installed so the crews could work into the night.

Dement crews hauled away debris from the Hurt and Watters demolition – 16 buildings in all – in just five days. When all the weight of those truckloads is combined, it totaled more than 26.4 million pounds (13,200 tons) of debris.

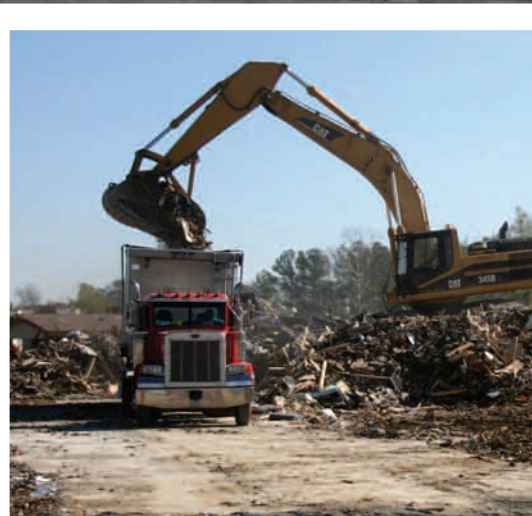
That figure does not include dozens of

trucks, vans and cars that were totaled during the tornado. Jason Tipton, director of development, was among those who coordinated the evaluation of vehicle damage and the removal of that wreckage.

“I did a walk around campus and counted more than 250 cars that were totaled,” Tipton said.

In places, large piles of wrecked cars and trucks were found amid other building debris.

“There were cars underneath cars. A couple of times I wasn’t sure how many were piled up,” Tipton said. ✦



Union basketball:

Finding a place to play

Union basketball teams had been scheduled to play important conference games just two days after the tornado.

Trevecca Nazarene University was scheduled to visit Fred DeLay gymnasium, but the floor was needed to organize and store student possessions recovered from the tornado-damaged residence life area. Extra days are built into both the men's and women's schedules in the event of bad weather or other problems, so the Trevecca game was rescheduled for Feb. 25.

The number of dates for rescheduling is limited, and Union's teams also had a Feb. 11 date at home against Cumberland (Tenn.) University.

The solution? Play both "home"

games at Jackson Christian School.

Union personnel ran the clock and the scoreboard. Volunteers from Jackson Christian took care of the concessions.

In the early going, the undefeated and top-ranked Lady Bulldogs needed to shake off some rust from the seven-day break, but went on to post a 92-75 win. They were 23-0 at that point, equaling a school record for consecutive wins.

Union was led by Kaitlin Dudley with 20 points. Lindsey Flynn, who returned to the gym where she played her high school basketball, drained a three pointer late in the game. It brought a roaring cheer from the Union fans and her former JCS classmates.

The Lady Bulldogs attracted national news coverage from ESPN.com, which devoted its

"Page 2" section to the story of the tornado and the team's success on the court.

The Union men followed with a hard-fought contest that went down to the final seconds. The No. 24 Cumberland men took a 62-61 lead with just :12 remaining on the clock, then hit a pair of free throws to take a 64-61 decision. There were nine ties and 16 lead changes in the game.

Both teams returned to The Fred on Feb. 21 and posted wins over Freed-Hardeman University. Union backers gave visiting fans from FHU a standing ovation after President Dockery announced before the men's game that crews from the school had been on Union's campus doing volunteer work each day since Feb. 8. ♦

Blogs lead communication efforts in aftermath of tornado

Early on the morning of Feb. 6, one of the hosts of national morning show "Fox and Friends" asked their correspondent at Union a tough question: How could parents, students and the outside world follow developments and announcements at the University?

Under normal conditions, Union's Web site, www.uu.edu, would be the place for posting such information. At that moment, the Web site was down because of power outages.

But a solution was in place, even at that early hour: uuemergency.com.

Union Web Development Agent Cam Tracy established the site on the blogspot.com service just a few hours after the tornado hit campus. The very first post Feb. 6 was a letter from President Dockery to students and par-

ents. The message was so well received that Dockery continued posting a "daily message from the president" until Feb 17, and then weekly, thereafter.

Computing Services used a generator to restore power to the Union Web site just one day after the tornado—a quick recovery under trying circumstances. But the uuemergency.com blog site continued to be popular with students and parents because information was easy to find and focused on the aftermath.

Power outages also prompted the use of so-called social Web sites such as Facebook.com. Immediately after the tornado touchdown, student services volunteers used Facebook in lieu of the university's inaccessible data management software to contact parents, many of whom had not made contact with

their children at that time.

In addition, some of the first prayer requests and personal accounts of what happened were posted on Facebook.

Within two days, [uuemergency](http://uuemergency.com) became [uurecovery](http://uurecovery.com), and when ground was broken for the new residence life complex, [uurebuilding](http://uurebuilding.com) was born.

The innovative approach drew national attention from communication experts. Among those who noticed was Michelle P. B. Ferrier, a digital media specialist who moderates a blog for the prestigious Poynter Institute, known worldwide as a resource for present and future journalists.

"Media organizations might consider dusting off those emergency preparedness plans... to include how and when to use current technologies -- using Union University as a guide," Ferrier wrote. ♦





From hotel to residence life complex:

The making of The Jett

Transforming the Old English Inn into an off-campus residence life complex was a herculean task that had to be accomplished in less than one week.

In most rooms, an average of 22 items had to be removed, including beds and other heavy furniture.

"That's about 2,000 mattresses, box springs, bed frames, side tables, glass furniture tops, ice buckets, coffee makers, lamps and paintings," said Arts and Sciences Dean Gene Fant, who helped organize and finish the effort.

Fant said crews and trucks were supplied by The Pictsweet Company and volunteers from Englewood Baptist Church. Together, they managed to move out the material in only seven hours.

The next step: finding a company that could supply residence life furniture for up to 300 students and ship it to The Jett in time for installation. The vendor, Indianapolis-based University Loft, had furniture ready to ship and committed to meeting the tight deadline.

With just four days to go before students started arriving, the move-in work began.

"Union's baseball and basketball teams began the hard work with gusto," said Fant, "and were soon joined by a few foot-

ball and soccer players from Lambuth, along with a couple of vans from Freed-Hardeman University and Asbury (Ky.) College. Belmont University students joined us (the next day), as did crews from Macy's in Jackson and First Baptist Church, Paducah."

Lambuth soccer players said they felt a special connection to the project after learning that Union freshman soccer player David Wilson had been seriously injured during the tornado.

"We're keeping David in our thoughts and prayers," said Austin White, a freshman soccer player at Lambuth. "Everybody comes together whenever something happens like this."

"You all have a big need," said Freed-Hardeman Associate Marketing Professor Rich Brown, who brought a group of volunteers from his campus. "I think if we had a big need, you all would come and help us. It's just the right thing to do."

Fant said volunteer crews from Englewood worked both days as furniture assemblers.

"We almost were overwhelmed with hands at several points, which was necessary to unload and assemble six tractor-trailer loads of material," Fant said. "We off-loaded, assembled, and placed about 100,000 pounds (50 tons) of freight into the rooms on Friday and Saturday (Feb. 15-16).

"The vendors from University Loft were just blown away by the hard work of the athletes in particular, who carried incredible amounts of furniture on Friday."

A recycler even donated trucks to haul away packing materials.

By noon on Saturday, Feb. 16, Fant said all that remained to be done was the installation of about 50 light bulbs and a post-move cleaning of each room prior to student arrival Feb. 19.

Fant credits David Taylor from Englewood for securing literally hundreds of volunteers.

"We tried to keep track of the names and numbers, but there was no way," Fant said. "I would guess that at several points we had more than 100 volunteers on the property at a time, probably peaking at about 140."

Fant said he and the volunteers enjoyed the hard work.

"I am the sorest I've been in many a year, I must say, but it was a blast to work on this project," Fant said.

"As I walked my final inspection of the rooms, I was glad to know that so many students will have such a wonderful home for the rest of the semester. It's exciting indeed."

But Fant added one final thought at that moment:

"I have to admit, I am ready to go back to being the dean on Monday!" ♦





Campus-wide chapel service **restarts** spring semester

By Brittany Howerton ('08)

Responding correctly to challenges and difficulties can result in a fresh and total dependence upon God, Union University President David S. Dockery said the night before classes resumed following the tornado.

"Out of the rubble across this campus I am praying that we will see renewal in the lives of dozens, and hundreds, of students, staff, faculty, administrators and trustees," Dockery said.

Dockery addressed a standing-room-only crowd of about 1,500 people who gathered in the G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel. The service featured singing, Scripture reading, prayer and a devotional address from Dockery.

"Blessed Be Your Name," echoed throughout the chapel as students, faculty members and others in the Union community gathered to praise the God who spared the Union body from death.

Dockery noted that this is a time for students to start anew as they, once again, begin university life at Union.

"The Miller Tower clock that has not

moved for 336 hours will move again as we start afresh," Dockery said in his greeting to the gathered body. "We start afresh because of God's grace, his providence and the hard work and determination of his people."

Provost Carla Sanderson expressed words of care and devotion over Union's situation through prayer.

"O Lord, thank you for providing a place of refuge in the rubble," Sanderson prayed. "A perfect and strong refuge that saved our loved ones from death."

Although the tornado that caused about \$40 million in damages left many devastated and displaced, Dockery said the Union family continues to push forward with hope in God's sovereignty and provisions.

"It is hard to imagine 14 days ago where we stand," Dockery said. "But by God's grace, we are here tonight to enjoy one another's fellowship, to reconnect together and to focus on the God who has sustained us."

Dockery said that although many students may desire to return to life at Union as it was prior to the storm, he said looking

forward in faith would provide sustenance despite the difficulty.

"For some of us, Feb. 5 has resulted in much confusion, causing us to struggle deeply with our faith," Dockery said. "But faith is not free from complexity nor is it free from challenge."

Dockery used Psalm 84 to relate Union's past and future to the prayers of the psalmist, who longed for the place where he had met the living God. He emphasized to Union students that it was the psalmist's displacement from that special location that created within him a longing for God and the things of God.

"It may well be that our current situation may result in a new yearning and hunger for God and the things of God for many of us here tonight, Dockery said.

The university president identified two things that students can know: that like the psalmist, they must go through their own "valley of tears," but that through the difficulties "the one, true, living God is both good and faithful." ❖



Classes resume amid changes

Taylor Worley greeted his New Testament Survey students Feb. 20 by writing a three word message on the chalkboard: “We live again!”

His was among the first morning classes at Union following a ten-day suspension of instruction in wake of the tornado.

Worley – and many other instructors that day – told classes that they would not just pick up where they left off Feb. 5. He wanted them to spend some time reflecting about how the tornado, the losses and the messages coming from Union after the storm would affect the future.

“We want to see what’s happened to us,” Worley told the class. “Judge it, interpret it, analyze it through the lens of faith.”

A new schedule had to be devised to make up the lost days while keeping the previous May 17 graduation date. So a modified spring course schedule went into effect on Feb. 20.

Monday and Wednesday classes that previously met for 50 minutes went to the 75-minute schedule used for Tuesday/Thursday classes. Selected Friday classes were also expanded to the 75-minute schedule. Other Friday sessions were left at 50 minutes to accommodate an abbreviated chapel schedule.

Many students lost textbooks and class notes in the rubble. Faculty members revised lesson plans with the textbook deficiencies in mind, and made arrangements to circulate class notes that had survived the tornado.

Students also had to adjust to a series of new classroom assignments. All classes that met in Jennings Hall had to be relocated. ✦

Seniors grateful for on-time graduation

At the age most young people are starting high school, Matthew Dawson was a freshman at Union University. This year, he graduates with a bachelor’s degree in mathematics.

As an 18-year-old, he accepted a full scholarship from Louisiana State University and fielded similar offers from graduate programs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Tulane University and the University of Tennessee.

Senior Renee Emerson recently accepted the top creative writing fellowship for the highly competitive Master of Fine Arts program at Boston University.

Senior Katie Watson has been accepted into M.A. programs in linguistics at Georgetown University and Purdue University.

Matthew, Renee and Katie are among many Union seniors with impressive plans after graduation. But all of their plans started with the assumption of a May graduation from Union. A delay of that graduation until later in the spring or summer could have created serious problems for students that are graduate school-bound.

“I had to reassure Matthew,” said Bryan Dawson, Matthew’s father and a professor of mathematics at Union. “He was getting pretty nervous.”

Emerson had a number of applications out prior to Feb. 5, and heard from

Boston University after the storm. She says she was confident Union would take care of the seniors, but she didn’t know how it would play out.

“I really thought we’d go into the summer or graduate late or not have spring break,” said Emerson. “I’m glad that we’ve been able to meet in classes and everything is on time.”

“I received decisions back from the schools beginning a few days after the tornado hit Union,” Watson said. “So I am very thankful not to have been significantly delayed by the tornado.”

“When I was walking around with President Dockery moments after the tornado hit, one of the things we talked about was our need to start classes as soon as possible,” said Arts and Sciences Dean Gene Fant.

“In the days that followed, we made it a priority to make sure everyone would be able to graduate on time.”

Deans and faculty advisers can name dozens of other students who are already deep in the application process or already accepted. Among them: Blake Waggoner, who will study Aerospace Engineering at the University of Washington; and Nathan Brewer, who has been accepted to study physics at Vanderbilt University and the University of South Carolina. ✦

Tornado damage expedites opening of campus coffee shop

By Heidi Steinrock ('09) and Megan McMurry ('09)

Barefoot’s Joe, Union’s redone student lounge, had its grand opening March 1 with students, faculty and staff members attending to celebrate the new coffee shop as a symbol of campus unity.

“It’s a very special night at Union University at the dedication of Barefoot’s Joe, which is the coolest place on campus, that’s for sure,” Union President David S. Dockery said. “We dedicate this building for its use and enjoyment that all we do will be to the honor and glory of Jesus Christ.”

Hyran Barefoot, former Union presi-

dent and namesake for the lounge, and his wife Joyce mingled with students and addressed the crowd. An avid coffee drinker himself, he spoke about an additional benefit of the lounge.

“Who said the storm couldn’t blow in something marvelous and good like this wonderful place for students to hang out?” Barefoot said.

“I know grades will just shoot up now,” he joked.

The idea for a coffee shop on campus began last semester, and gained momentum after the tornado because both the Hurt and Watters commons areas were

destroyed. Dean of Students Kimberly Thornbury recognized the immediate need for students to meet and fellowship.

Remodeling began Feb. 11, and a team of students, staff members and others worked 16-hour days to complete the project as soon as possible.

Barefoot’s Joe will serve coffee and tea for a dollar, and flavored syrups can be added for 50 cents. During the week, the coffee shop will be open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., and at nights on the weekend. Students can add money on their Dawg Tag at Union Station, and can swipe their card at the lounge. ✦