

SPRING 2022

UNI NITE



THE UNION UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

Hyran Barefoot

THE TEACHER PRESIDENT

**Union's First Female
Senior Administrator**

**A Moses Figure in Union's
Wilderness Wandering**

**Meet our Alumni
Award Winners**

CELEBRATING
200 YEARS

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Photo by Kristi Woody ('10)

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UNIONITE

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From the President

I sometimes wonder what the founders of Jackson Male Academy – the institution that would one day become Union University – were dreaming and envisioning when they launched their school in 1823 on the remote American frontier. Jackson, its hometown, had just been established the year before, and there was certainly a good bit of optimism.

But, did they have any idea that the academy they were starting would last for 200 years? Could they even fathom that it would educate tens of thousands of people, and that those graduates would make amazing contributions to the world in fields as wide-ranging and diverse as theology, education, the sciences, politics, nursing, business, social work, pharmacy, communications, engineering and many others?

It would be thrilling to go back in time and tell them everything their institution would become. Their reaction, I’m sure, would be priceless.

One thing that strikes me about Union University’s beginnings is how small and humble they were. Union wasn’t a school that began with loads of money or big-time supporters committed to its success. It was begun by people who simply wanted to improve life in their small community. So they did what they could to make that happen – and over the past 200 years, God has blessed their efforts at simply being faithful and turned their school into something they never could have imagined it would be.

There’s a lesson there for all of us, I believe. Most of the time, God doesn’t call us to perform monumental tasks that will change the world. He simply calls us to be faithful, day in and day out, in the small responsibilities of our daily lives. He then takes those small acts of faithfulness and makes more of them than we ever thought possible.

Union’s story over the past 200 years is indeed a story of faithfulness: faithfulness on the part of countless leaders who worked hard to build the university, faithfulness on the part of faculty and staff members who poured out their lives in service to students, faithfulness on the part of alumni who courageously lived out their callings unto the Lord, faithfulness on the part of churches and families and individuals who have shared their resources, often sacrificially, so that students might have the opportunity to study in a Christ-centered university, and most of all, faithfulness on the part of the Lord, who used their efforts to build Union University into what it is today.

A bicentennial is an event certainly worth celebrating. As we do so over the next year, we hope you’ll join with us in giving thanks to the Lord, who has provided for Union time and time again, and who will continue to direct us as we look toward a third century of providing Christ-centered education in service to Church and society.

With Joy,

Samuel W. “Dub” Oliver, Ph.D.



Union names Jeff Palmer as the 2021 Dodd Award recipient for denominational service

Union University named Jeff Palmer, founder and former CEO of Baptist Global Response, as the 2021 M.E. Dodd Award recipient, the highest denominational service award given by the university.



“Through his work as an international missionary, as the director of a global relief organization and now as a transitional pastor for a local church, Jeff’s ministry has been faithful and compassionate and has touched literally millions around the world,” said Todd Brady, vice president for university ministries at Union. “Union University and Southern Baptists are grateful for God’s Work through Jeff Palmer.”

Attaining a bachelor’s degree in biology at Union and a master’s degree in agriculture at Murray State University, Palmer has used his education to serve as an International Mission Board missionary in Southeast Asia for over 20 years. In 2006, Palmer and his wife, Regina, were asked to head the formation of Baptist Global Response, a Southern Baptist international relief and development organization.

He later returned to Nashville, Tenn., and continued in local missions. Palmer helped direct, facilitate and fund compassion ministries in over 70 countries throughout his years of service with BGR.

The M.E. Dodd Denominational Service Award was established 18 years ago in honor of M.E. Dodd, a Union alumnus who served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention pastor’s conference. Dodd was also known as the father of the Cooperative Program, the method by which Southern Baptists pool their resources to fund their mission and ministry efforts.

Local accounting firm establishes endowed scholarship for under-represented accounting students at Union

Alexander Thompson Arnold PLLC, an accounting firm in Jackson, Tenn., has donated \$25,000 to establish the ATA Accounting Minority Endowed Scholarship Fund, an annual scholarship of \$1,000 for under-represented

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Frank Anderson,
Stephen Olford Chair of
Expository Preaching

Union establishes new scholarship for students striving to enter pastoral ministry

First Baptist Church in Loudon, Tenn., has donated over \$45,000 to establish the O.C. Rainwater Scholarship for Union University students striving to enter pastoral ministry.

O.C. Rainwater, a 1934 Union alumnus, was the pastor for First Baptist Church in Loudon for 15 years, and Ann Randle, chairperson of the O.C. Rainwater Scholarship committee and member of the church, said she always valued his strong ethics and godliness.

“He was a true man of God, and it has been a joy being able to carry his name,” Randle said. “We wanted to honor his memory by making sure we were faithful to Baptist education.”

Ray Van Neste, dean for the School of Theology and Missions at Union University, said the primary obstacle for students pursuing a ministry education is the financial burden, so he greatly appreciates churches like First Baptist Church in Loudon for investing in the lives of these students.

“Sometimes, [the financial burden] keeps students from being able to get an education, and other times, it leads them to settling for a lesser substitute,” Van Neste said. “Scholarships like this, which help to support ministerial students, are immensely significant kingdom investments.”

Oliver challenges Union community to demonstrate sacrificial love

A Christian's capacity to love others grows as he or she exercises love, Union University President Samuel W. "Dub" Oliver said Aug. 20.

"The more you love God, the more you are able to love others," Oliver said. "And that outpouring of love for others will cause you to love God all the more."

Oliver's fall 2021 convocation address in G.M. Savage Memorial Chapel on the topic of love was the seventh in a series on the virtuous life. Previous convocation messages by Oliver have covered courage, justice, prudence, temperance, faith and hope. Convocation is a formal chapel service that marks the beginning of the new school year.

"I want to remind us as we begin a new academic year that the virtuous life isn't automatic," Oliver said. "It is developed. It is the fruit of contemplation, experience and practice."

Oliver's message was based on the university's theme verse for the 2021-2022 academic year, 1 Corinthians 13:7: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." In 1 Corinthians 13, Oliver said Paul was describing "agape" love, a self-sacrificing type of love that is not based on feelings but on the will.

"Today, we are urged by the pattern of this world to spend our resources and seek fulfillment in material things, through pleasure and through expressive individualism," Oliver said. "That is not the love that bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things and endures all things. Ultimately, what the Apostle Paul here speaks of is not any one particular virtue or grace, but that which is the root and spring of all virtues and graces, and which to possess is to be both like God and in God."

The full address is available at livestream.com/uu/chapel



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accounting students at Union University. Traci Tyler, chief operations officer at ATA, said as the accounting profession has rapidly become more diverse, the company wanted to create more initiatives to connect with local universities and to promote the continuation of diversity in the workplace.

"We felt like this would be a great way for us to commit to the initiative internally, and we also commit to our communities that we are focused on creating a more diverse environment at ATA," Tyler said.

Union creates new scholarship for TeenPact students

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Union University has announced a new stackable partnership scholarship that will begin in the fall of 2022 in the amount of \$2,000 per year to new, first-time students who are TeenPact alumni.

TeenPact Leadership Schools is a leadership training and discipleship program for 13-to-19-year-old students who learn how to engage in the culture and state government from a Christian worldview. Robbie Graves, assistant vice president for undergraduate admissions, said that TeenPact alumni are exactly the kind of students they want at Union.

"These are students who are actively pursuing their relationship with the Lord, who seek to impact culture and who are well-informed and active citizens," Graves said. "We have some great current Union students who are TeenPact alumni who are making a difference on our campus, and I pray that many more will follow in the days ahead."

Lewis donates majority of pastoral library to Union

Pastor Frank Lewis of First Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn., has donated approximately 2,000 books from his personal library to Union University to be used by students and faculty.

Lewis' collection is expansive, including various Bible commentaries and devotionals as well as books that he inherited from the two pastors who served before him at FBC Nashville.

As part of Union's library, Lewis' collection will be used to help train the next generation of pastors. His collection includes books that had belonged to his mother and books bought with money that his uncle had given him while he was a seminary student.

"What's the possibility that some student from Union is going to write a sermon and preach it in a youth camp, and a kid is going to give their heart to Christ?" Lewis asked. "And it may be from an illustration that was provided by a book that my uncle gave me. That's amazing!"

Lewis, who has been pastor of FBC Nashville since 1997, is not the only FBC Nashville pastor to donate his personal library to Union. Franklin Paschall, who served as the pastor there from 1956-1983, gave his library to Union. Also

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included in this donation was the library of Paschall's predecessor, William Francis Powell, who served from 1921-1956.

"I've had a great relationship with Union," Lewis said. "I've had the privilege of being an R.G. Lee fellow there. I've also had the joy to be able to preach in chapel a couple of times over the years. Both of my children attended Union. Neither of them graduated from Union, but both attended. So it's been, in that sense, just a personal honor to be able to say I'm making a contribution to something that I certainly believe in."

Lewis' gift will join the Paschall-Powell collection, giving Union 100 years' worth of material from FBC Nashville pastors. The intent

is for all of this material to be housed together in archives and special collections on the third floor of the Logos.

Union sends volunteers to help with Waverly flood relief efforts

Following the deadly floods that hit Waverly, Tenn., in August 2021, Union University sent multiple groups of volunteers to assist Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief with flood relief efforts.

One of these students is Kathryn Anne Thierfelder, a sophomore communications and creative writing double major. As she helped remove the ruined flooring from a local resident's house, Thierfelder said she saw much hurt and

need. She felt called to help Waverly flood victims because as a native of Jackson, Tenn., it was important for her to help "those in my own backyard."



Over 40 volunteers from Union helped in Waverly's disaster relief efforts, and Johnny Grimes, volunteer with Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief, said he is thankful for the students' hard work in helping respond to over 215 destroyed homes and properties. Grimes said their help and willingness to serve allowed local volunteers to respond to the need as quickly as possible.

"I know [this work] is what the Lord would want us to do," Grimes said. "I feel for these [Waverly residents]; I really do feel for them."

Todd Brady, vice president for university ministries, said when Union was in need after a tornado, the local community helped in numerous ways. As a part of the Tennessee community, he said it is important to be good neighbors to those just 80 miles down the road. Brady believes serving those in need is just one way Union community members can strive to love the Lord with all their hearts, souls and minds.

"When we serve others, we are modeling the Jesus who said, 'For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many,'" Brady said.

Union alumnus named national CAEL Learner of the Year

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning named Union alumnus Javier Garcia the 2021 CAEL Learner of the Year — an award that celebrates an adult learner who has overcome multiple barriers to meet his or her educational goals.

At the age of 29, Garcia left alone from his home country and emigrated from Cuba to the United States.

Poe writes second book of C.S. Lewis trilogy



Professor of Faith and Culture at Union. "For this second book, I wanted to tell the story of how his teenage years then influenced his conversion and his career."

Poe outlines three important decades that transformed Lewis' life forever and offers insight into the moments that defined Lewis' early adulthood, career and conversion to Christianity — such as his time studying at the University of Oxford and his friendships with well-known Christians like J.R.R. Tolkien and Dorothy Sayers.

Poe focused on the primary sources of diary entries and letters between Lewis and his colleagues for his book, and he said the detailed diary of Warnie Lewis, Lewis' brother, served as an important tool for his research.

Poe is contracted to write the third volume of Lewis' life, "The Completion of C. S. Lewis: From Bachelor to Widower (1945-1963)" for Crossway Publishing.

Hal Poe's second biography in his trilogy on C.S. Lewis' life, "The Making of C.S. Lewis (1918-1945): From Atheist to Apologist," was published in 2021.

Poe's first book of the trilogy, "Becoming C.S. Lewis (1898-1918): A Biography of Young Jack Lewis," covers an overview of Lewis' early life, childhood interests and experiences. Poe said it is essential to understand Lewis' childhood and teenage years to fully appreciate his work as an adult.

"The first book ends, and [Lewis] is an atheist in World War 1," said Poe, the Charles Colson University

Union MCUTS celebrates 20 years of equipping Christian leaders in Memphis

In 2001, a group dedicated to providing sound theological education to students in the Memphis area chartered the Memphis College of Urban and Theological Studies to be a partner for under-resourced communities. In October 2021, MCUTS celebrated 20 years of its Christ-centered mission in higher education.

Frank Anderson, associate professor of ministry and missions at Union University, said he had the privilege of participating in the program's first concept group in 2000. Striving to provide an accredited theological education, Anderson said MCUTS was built upon raising up Christian leaders in the Memphis area from all segments and influences in the community.

"I think sometimes when we talk about urban theological education, we almost exclusively think of bringing minority students into the theological mainstream," Anderson said. "In envisioning what MCUTS could be, there was actually a bigger thought in mind — training leaders that could address, to the glory of God, many of the urban problems."

While his love for Memphis contributed heavily in his decision to help create MCUTS, Anderson's dedication to this program is personal. As a child, Anderson watched his father work hard to faithfully serve his young family and his church community. Longing for an opportunity to gain a theological education, Anderson's father applied to a Bible college in the area, but based on a land bequest that stipulated no black student could be enrolled as a student, Anderson's father was rejected from admission.

Anderson said he remembers his



MCUTS employees Leon Jones (left), director for recruitment, and Greg Hollified, interim co-dean.

father's disappointment, so when a few men approached him about an idea for an urban theological education center in Memphis almost 10 years after his father's death, Anderson said yes.

"All I could think about was... wow, he really would have appreciated this," Anderson said. "[I said,] 'Now, you have the opportunity to really do something for others that would resemble what he needed.'"

As the program continued to grow, MCUTS merged with Union University in 2019 and expanded its degree offerings to provide entrepreneurial, nonprofit leadership and applied psychology as well as urban theological education.

For MCUTS alumni Andre Manning and Lee Smith, the rich theological training and education they received proved to be invaluable in both their lives.

Smith said MCUTS not only deepened his understanding of the gospel, but it also introduced him to the church's vast history. Learning of the early church's willingness to suffer with Jesus Christ transformed the way Smith continues to lead his church family as the pastor of Greater Experience Community Church in Horn Lake, Miss.

As a leader in nonprofit ministry for 15 years, Manning said studying at MCUTS broadened his knowledge of the gospel mission by introducing him to the academic and historical understanding of Christian theology. Through MCUTS' equipping of local nonprofit leaders, pastors and Christians with sound doctrinal education, Manning said the gospel can reach Memphis communities even more.

"When people see the love, concern and academic rigor that they're exposed to at MCUTS, they have the opportunity to take that back out to their communities," Manning said. "So, they're able to work with people with a little bit more empathy."

As MCUTS admissions counselors, Manning and Smith wholeheartedly believe in the mission of this program, and they feel honored to share its opportunities with more families in Memphis.

"I believe in this role, and I believe in the people here in this program," Smith said. "This is a place where you can find support, where you can find a family unit and where sound teaching is going forward."

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"I spoke very little English and came to live in Middle Tennessee in December 2000 because my brother was already living in Madison," Garcia said. "Freedom and a chance for a better life drew me to the United States."

After becoming a U.S. citizen in 2008, Garcia told his family in Cuba that he wanted to be a police officer. He said they laughed at him, but in 2009, he was hired to work for the Hendersonville Police Department.

Denney Coarsey, a former detective sergeant of the criminal investigations division for the Hendersonville Police Department, introduced Garcia to Union and to the idea of pursuing a college degree. Coarsey taught two courses in the criminal justice concentration at Union University Hendersonville and believed Garcia could greatly benefit from its Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership degree.

Garcia enrolled at Union University Hendersonville in 2014 – working as a full-time police officer, student and parent of two children. In 2019, Garcia graduated summa cum laude and received an Academic Medal of Excellence. He was promoted to the rank of detective, where he continues to serve the Hendersonville community and support his family.



Jeremy Camp shares story behind award-winning film, plays acoustic performance at 2021 Scholarship Banquet

Almost 1,000 donors, students and community members gathered in the Carl Perkins Civic Center on Oct. 19 for Union's 23rd annual Scholarship Banquet with Jeremy Camp. The Grammy-nominated contemporary Christian singer and songwriter performed an acoustic concert for the audience.

Before the concert, Union President Samuel W. "Dub" Oliver hosted a special "Not So Late Show with Dub Oliver," which included various interviews with students and faculty members from the departments of engineering and biology.

Before his performance, Camp joined Oliver for an interview, where he discussed the reality of touring, his family and the story behind the award-winning film, "I Still Believe."

Since the release of "I Still Believe," a movie based on Camp's testimony of losing his wife to cancer, he has heard numerous stories of how God used the film to comfort others in difficult seasons.

"There is a Scripture I love in 2 Corinthians; it says that we're called to comfort others with what we have been comforted," Camp said. "God gave me such a great comfort in that time, and I knew in some way, if I could encourage someone who was going through that pain and suffering, I wanted to do that." 🙏



Curtis releases fifth album, producing a musical journey of Philippians

Dedicated to writing music that is artistically excellent and theologically rich, Cody Curtis, assistant professor of composition and theory at Union University, and his wife, Melody, founded the musical group Psallos in 2012.

Since then, they have crafted musical compositions for various New Testament letters, including Psallos' fifth album, "Philippians," that released in October. Along with "Philippians," the group has written and produced music set to the biblical letters of Romans, Hebrews and Jude.

"[My hope is to] give people musical experiences that teach them more about God and that facilitates worship and to do so in a way that is maybe unconventional at times," Curtis said. "We try to preserve and communicate the overarching story in each album

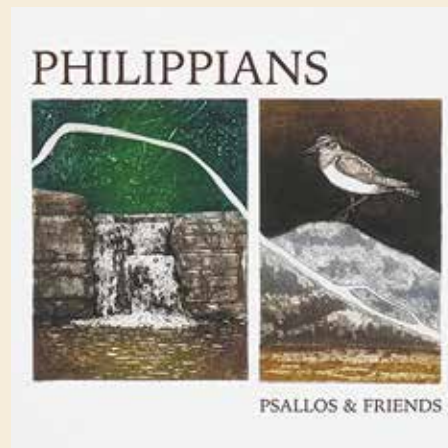
and to do it in a way that is musically interesting."

From bluegrass to hip hop, "Philippians" features a variety of musical styles and compositions that best represent each set of Scripture. Curtis believes the fluidity and flexibility of musical style help communicate the author's intentions for each passage of Scripture, serving both the biblical text and the listener.

Philippians being a "friendship letter," Curtis wanted to portray the warmth and joy from Paul's epistle to the Philippian church.

"There's a familiarity in [Paul's] words, so I thought, 'Let's bring in our friends, partnering in the gospel together to help do what Paul was initially doing in Philippians,'" Curtis said.

Collaborating with other musicians is important to Curtis and the Psallos



mission, which is why Union University students and alumni are featured in every album Psallos has produced. Along with these students and alumni, "Philippians" features musical guests Andrew Peterson, Dennis Parker, Shai Linne and Taylor Leonhardt on their special "Psallos and Friends" album.

To learn more about Psallos and to purchase "Philippians," visit psallos.com 📖

'Transformational' gift to provide multiple scholarships to outstanding humanities students at Union

A major gift will help Union University recruit some of the brightest students in the humanities and social sciences in an effort to train the next generation of Christ-centered teachers and professors.

"The Lifeshape Scholarship will help Union not just to attract students, but to attract the best, most academically-qualified students," said Hunter Baker, dean for Union's College of Arts and Sciences. "It truly is a transformational gift that will be a huge blessing to Union University and its students."

The gift will provide "last dollar" merit-based scholarships to incoming Union University freshmen majoring in such fields as English, history, languages, political science, theology

and philosophy. A "last dollar" scholarship means that the Lifeshape Scholarship will be applied to students' university costs after all other financial aid is calculated, which will essentially cover all the recipients' tuition.

Dan Griffin, Union's vice president for enrollment management, said such a resource will make a significant difference for students who want to come to Union but may not have the financial resources to do so.

"This generous gift will allow Union to provide significantly more full-tuition scholarships than we are currently providing," Griffin said. "It's difficult to overstate how consequential this is, and it will make a huge difference in our ability to recruit students to Union. We're so thankful for Lifeshape and for the way they are investing in our students."

Baker said the scholarship will ease students' financial burden, making it much easier for them

to attend graduate school after completing their Union education.

"We are trying to train the next generation of Christian professors in the humanities," Baker said. "One of the convictions behind the gift is that there are not enough Christian scholars working in the humanities. We want to see people out there not only getting their Ph.D., but them being the professors training future doctoral students as well."

Dawson releases calculus textbook published by Oxford University Press

Bryan Dawson, university professor of mathematics at Union University, released a textbook, detailing a new calculus mathematical method using infinitesimals.

Dawson's textbook, "Calculus Set Free: Infinitesimals to the Rescue," was published

by Oxford University Press — one of the most prestigious academic presses.

Along with Jason Crawford, associate professor of English, Dawson is the second Union professor in recent years to be published by Oxford University Press. Hunter Baker, dean for the College of Arts and Sciences at Union, says he is deeply proud to call both Crawford and Dawson colleagues.



"Students may not realize how blessed they are to have such professors in the classroom at a teaching institution such as ours," Baker said. "It is truly thrilling to see fellow [Union professors] flourish in this way."

Nine years ago, Dawson decided to explore easier methods for college students to comprehend calculus, which led him to developing new procedures for infinitesimals — infinitely small numbers. After years of publishing academic articles and presentations, Dawson said he finally decided to obey the Lord's calling to write a textbook.

Dauer to lead Union's School of Adult and Professional Studies



Renee Dauer has been named dean for the School of Adult and Professional Studies at Union University.

Dauer has served as campus director for Union University Hendersonville and chair of instruction for SOAPS since 2016.

"It is very gratifying when we see excellent leadership emerge from within the organization," Union University Provost John Netland said. "Dr. Dauer has served the university with distinction both in the classroom and administratively. She is deeply committed to our mission, understands the world of adult education and has a wonderful

vision for developing and strengthening our program offerings to meet the employment and educational needs of our adult student population."

Dauer completed her bachelor's degree in interpersonal communication from Ohio University and earned her master's degree in organizational communication from Western Kentucky University. She earned her Doctor of Education degree in

higher education from Union.

Dauer joined Union in 2010 as associate professor and program director in continuing studies to help launch the university's adult completion program on the Hendersonville campus. Prior to her most recent roles, Dauer served as an adjunct and associate professor at Volunteer State Community College and in various communications positions in the private sector.

College of Pharmacy announces 3.5-year accelerated track



Union University's College of Pharmacy has launched an accelerated track that will allow students to complete their Doctor of Pharmacy degree in three and a half years.

By taking elective courses during the summer months of their first and second professional years, this new track will allow pharmacy students to enter practice sooner while completing the same number

of credit hours as the traditional four-year program. The new track will begin in the fall of 2022.

"We are excited for the flexibility this will allow our students," said Sheila Mitchell, dean of Union's College of Pharmacy. "Not only will our program produce top-quality professionals, it will also enable students to enter the workforce more quickly than other programs." 📖

Shirlene Mercer, families of the 'Freshmen Four' honored at Black Heritage Month Celebration



Union University hosted its annual Black Heritage Month Celebration Feb. 17, sharing

the story of four students at Lane College — the “Freshmen Four” — who organized sit-in protests at a “whites only” lunch counter in Jackson, Tenn.

Union President Samuel W. “Dub” Oliver reminded the audience of the importance of recognizing that “there are heroes among us,” giving honor where honor is due.

Shirlene Mercer, the last living member of the Freshmen Four, received the Bastion of Freedom medal. In her speech, ending with a standing ovation from the audience, she recalled many core memories as a fighter for freedom during the civil rights movement.

“I could take people spitting on me because I would just take a piece of tissue, wipe it off and keep on going,” Mercer said. “A lady slapped me one time, and she said, ‘You can march all you want to, but you’re not ever going to get the chance to eat at the lunch counter.’”

Mercer was introduced by Union student and president of Union’s Black Student Union, Kamaria Transor, who called Mercer a noble participant of public service with a lengthy record as an activist fighting for civil

rights. Mercer, a fervent believer of equality and the importance of lifting everyone’s voices, led weekly anti-crime marches across the city of Jackson for years, leading to significant change and awareness against neighborhood crime across Tennessee.

Along with Mercer, the families of the remaining members of the Freshmen Four were awarded Bastion of Freedom medals.

The late Wesley C. McClure, president emeritus of Lane College, was honored by his wife, Mary McClure, and former student, Michael Jones. The late Ernest Brooks Sr., former president of Jackson-Madison County NAACP, was honored by his son, Ernest Thomas Brooks II, attorney and city councilman of Jackson, Tenn. The late Kimmie Powell Davis, a prominent philanthropist and pastor in West Tennessee, was honored by Barry Chaney, Davis’ successor as the pastor of New Life Christian Center, and Elder Elvis Hollis, Davis’s godson.

The night concluded with vocal performances by Union University Voices of Proclamation and Lane College Concert Choir and a recognition of thanks by Faith Zamamiri-Davis, associate professor of biology at Union University.

“For all of us at Union, I want us to remember the Freshmen Four and to know that they were four flesh-and-blood human beings — brothers and a sister — who stood for freedom at great cost to themselves,” Oliver said. “Let’s not just be satisfied for the progress that’s been made; let’s press on ever to achieve that which we are called to.”

Union to offer increased scholarships for IMB, NAMB missionary students

Beginning in fall 2022, Union will offer its highest financial merit scholarship to all students who are dependents of missionaries through the Southern Baptist Convention’s International Mission Board or North American Mission Board.

Dan Griffin, vice president for enrollment management, said giving children of missionaries more opportunities to attend Union is invaluable.

“Really, the benefits are endless with diversifying our undergraduate population and exposing our current students to other cultures and experiences,” Griffin said.

Children of IMB or NAMB missionaries will receive a Union merit scholarship of \$17,750 and will be eligible to receive any additional Union scholarships, partnerships and grants they are qualified for.

“These families are on the mission field, sacrificing, and many times, they don’t have the financial resources to afford an educational experience at Union,” Griffin said. “So, we created additional scholarship opportunities to assist these families in achieving their educational dreams.”

Rogers releases new book of poetry

Bobby Rogers, professor of English and writer in residence at Union University, said an interest in southern labor history in West Tennessee inspired his new book of poetry, “Shift Work,” that focuses on the influence of economic survival throughout one’s family history.

As a West Tennessee native, Rogers wanted to help keep his family’s story alive by writing a collection of poems that highlight the working classes of the upper south. According to the publisher, Rogers composes portraits of small-town dwellers, “always packing their past with them — an inheritance as ephemeral as vapor, made mostly of memory, even as it was being lived.”

“I try to convince my students that their lives are worth writing about,” Rogers said. Published by LSU Press, one of the nation’s prestigious scholarly publishers, “Shift Work” is available at Amazon.com.



Foubert releases book for parents protecting children from internet pornography

John Foubert, professor and dean of the College of Education at Union University, released a new book to help educate parents on the harm of pornography and to guide them in difficult conversations with children of all ages.

Foubert’s second book, “Protecting Your Children from Internet Pornography,” shows parents how pornography consumption has changed, how it’s affecting their children and what they can do to keep their kids safe.

Foubert, an expert on sexual assault prevention and the dangers of pornography, opens the door for parents to understand the reality of pornography use — how it affects the brain’s anatomy, influences the increase of sexual violence and more. At the end of each chapter, Foubert also gives parents helpful guides on navigating these difficult conversations with children of all ages.



Union University’s student publication wins Best College Magazine

The Cardinal & Cream, Union University’s student online and print publication, was named Best College Magazine for the fourth year during the Southeast Journalism Conference’s annual Best of the South competition.

On March 26, Union University was one of over 30 schools across eight states that participated in the Best of the South competition, including the University of Alabama, University of Tennessee, University of Mississippi and more. Ted Kluck, assistant professor of communication arts and adviser for the Cardinal & Cream, said it is a great honor to see Union students be awarded for such a high achievement while also not compromising their Christ-centered ideals.

“We have become robust at the craft, but at the same time, we have not become less Christian,” Kluck said. “We could curate our content to the culture, but I’m proud of these students who have not wavered on their Christian values.”

Union debate wins national championship and season-long championship awards



Union University’s debate team was named season-long champion for the third consecutive year and the national tournament champion of the International Public Debate Association national tournament for the second consecutive year.

Union ranked first for its season-long debate tournaments — competing against nearly 200 teams and over 1,000 individual competitors this season — and during the 2021-2022 debate championship that took place April 8-11 in Abilene, Texas.

Rebekah Whitaker, assistant professor of communication arts

and director for debate, praised the hard work and resiliency of these students, who have strenuously practiced, researched and competed for hundreds of hours this season. She said while she is proud of the students’ excellence in the tournament, she is proudest of their humility and love during these competitions.

“I had competitors and coaches from other teams repeatedly seek me out to tell me how ethical and high quality our debaters are, and more importantly, that they are also kind, respectful and full of grace,” Whitaker said.



HYRAN BAREFOOT:

THE TEACHER PRESIDENT

BY SUZANNE RHODES

Hyran Barefoot, Union University president emeritus, stands in front of a large, wooden window box that sits right off his back porch. The planter holds hundreds of waxy, green leaves. With his hands pressed together, he patiently explains the nature of his beloved flowers — tuberose. Being early afternoon, the tiny white flowers barely peak through the closed buds. But as night bloomers, they open to their full potential when the sun begins to set.

Every evening, the Barefoot household would be filled with their sweet, musty fragrance.

“How does a flower know when to release its scent?” Hyran Barefoot would say teasingly to his wife.

“They just do,” his late wife Joyce would reply to her husband with a knowing smile.

Hyran Barefoot loves tuberose because Joyce Barefoot loved tuberose.

HE WAS ONE OF
THOSE PEOPLE
BORN TO TEACH,
AND HE MADE
SCRIPTURE COME
ALIVE.



Right inside the glass doors that lead to his small backyard garden hang the framed words, “Make it do, wear it out, use it up, do without.” They hang amongst a dozen cross-stitched signs — handmade gifts from different family members. The frames hang just above a refurbished 1900s icebox from Canada, because as a renowned antique collector and restorer, Barefoot remembers and recites the story of each piece of furniture in his house.

In the heat of midafternoon July, Barefoot gently holds the flower’s stem as he brings the blooms closer to his nose, reciting facts about the tuberose as if he were captivating an entire classroom. Though he is only speaking to an audience of two, teaching comes as naturally to him as the tuberose blooms at sunset.

THE LEGACY OF A TEACHER

Bob Agee’s eyes fill with tears when telling of Barefoot’s influence on his life. As a 1960 Union alumnus and president emeritus of Oklahoma Baptist University, Agee has the unique opportunity of remaining dear friends with his professor.

“I often credit [Barefoot] with stirring in me ... a love for learning,” Agee said

emotionally. “He was one of those people born to teach, and he made Scripture come alive.”

As an athlete who would later be inducted into the Union Sports Hall of Fame, Agee said he only considered himself an average student when he attended Union University on a track and field scholarship, but Barefoot possessed a unique personality that recognized potential in his students.

Barefoot challenged and encouraged Agee to be the best student he could be, to work hard and to appreciate the Bible more deeply, which began Agee’s lifelong career in Christian higher education.

“Dr. Barefoot, he just loved his students,” Agee said. “He believed in them and nurtured their love for learning and their love for Scripture.”

Barefoot left Union in 1960 to teach at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, but after two years at the seminary, decided to return to Union University.

“I thought going to the seminary would be a step up in my career, but I never enjoyed it as much as my three years at Union,” Barefoot said in a 1996 Unionite article. “There has always been something about Union’s atmosphere and students that does not exist anywhere else.”

Even as Union president from 1987 to 1996, Barefoot continued to teach classes. When asked his favorite part of teaching while serving as the university president, Barefoot quickly replied with a laugh that it was the ability to choose to teach the classes that had the least amount of grading.

As a renowned scholar, Barefoot influenced students who would later influence biblical scholarship, ministry and Christian academia.

“It’s been a satisfying process to see so many people I knew as students go on to become heads of enterprise, ministry ... even presidents of other Baptist colleges,” Barefoot said in the 1996 Unionite article. “Union’s alumni are proof of this



institution’s quality.”

George Guthrie, professor of New Testament at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia, began his career as a highly sought-after scholar of biblical Greek and New Testament in a classroom at Union University. As one of Barefoot’s former students, Guthrie recalls the unique opportunity to partake in roundtable interpretive discussions as undergraduate students, which would later influence his role as a professor.

“I still remember those discussions 40 years later,” Guthrie said. “It really led me to a love of advanced learning and would eventually lead me to doing Ph. D. work.”

Barefoot was known for his rigorous, excellence-driven teaching that sought to nurture each individual student in his or her learning. Seminary professors noted the quality of “the Barefoot student” when they came from Union.

Guthrie recalled his first day of

intermediate Greek as a seminary student.

The professor asked if anyone in the class was able to read the first chapter of 1 John from the untranslated Greek New Testament. After an extended pause, Guthrie and a fellow Union alumnus looked around the room, realizing they were the only two students raising their hands.

“One of the gifts [Barefoot] gave to us as students was that he pushed us for academic excellence,” Guthrie said.

According to Barefoot, teaching at Union was “almost like you were a pastor to them but in a new and academic way.”

“I’ve always felt that Union’s mission is the same as mine,” Barefoot said in the 1996 Unionite article. “I am able



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LEFT: Barefoot's daughters, June Dark (left) and Judy Thomas pictured holding a photo of parents, Hyran and Joyce Barefoot.

to minister through Union University, although I'm not in the full-time pastorate, and I am able to help young people without being in the classroom full-time."

THE FAMILIARITY OF A TEACHER

As a man who felt just as comfortable in the workshop as he did in the classroom, Barefoot had a knack for buying old, forgotten objects and making them new again. That's why when Barefoot purchased a worn-down house in hopes to fix and sell on the market, his family was not shocked.

"This house is going to send us to Europe," Hyran Barefoot would promise his daughters — Judy, June and Jane.

"Y'all, we won't get past Phoenix," Joyce Barefoot would laugh in reply.

But in the summer of 1971, the Barefoot

family packed up for a six-week trip across Europe. Judy, the eldest daughter, stayed up every night with her dad that summer, studying maps to plot out where they were going to drive the next day. Every day, Judy would sit in the front, navigating, while June, Joyce and Jane squeezed in the backseat of the European car.

While traveling through Belgium, the family needed to rush to the nearest bank before it closed, so Barefoot parked his family on a nearby street and took off through the packed-in buildings, searching for a bank.

As the four ladies sat in the car for what felt like forever, Joyce Barefoot looked at her daughters, shaking her head and said, "He's lost."

Not speaking any of the languages, Barefoot wandered up and down the sidewalks for almost an hour before finally

rounding a corner and spotting his family's car. He walked toward his family with the biggest grin on his face.

"I told you," Joyce said with a laugh as her husband made his way back to the car.

Hyran and Joyce Barefoot had an unspoken love and respect for one another, but it was never void of laughter.

"Mother was silly and playful, and I think she always amused Daddy," June said as she looked at her sister with a smile.

"We just knew they always respected and loved each other in the way he treated her, and she treated him," Judy said.

Joyce Barefoot taught kindergarten for over 30 years, so as a family of educators, academic excellence was understood in the Barefoot household. The love and curiosity of learning was nourished in their home, which led Judy and Jane to follow in their parents' footsteps to serve



Union President, Dub Oliver (left) with Barefoot by the plaque honoring Barefoot's contributions to Union.

as educators themselves.

Being the only Barefoot daughter to attend Union University, Judy recalls taking one of her dad's gospel classes. She sat in the second to back row with her friends as he called attendance every morning.

"Barefoot," said the professor.

"Here," Judy would say, blushing, as all the students turned around to look at her.

The sisters laugh as Judy confesses she was very happy when she made a B in his course. "Something all three of us girls agreed on is that Daddy treats everyone the same," Judy said. "It doesn't matter if you're a student, another professor or a college president, he was always open, honest and respectful of everyone."

Even as a man who held the record for the highest grade point average at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for years, Barefoot never cared about bringing attention to himself. When asked what he was like at home, there is a long pause as the daughters look at one another.

"He was just Daddy, you know?" June replies.

THE MEMORY OF A TEACHER

Union University has been shaped

forever by Hyran Barefoot and his nearly 40 years of service to the university. Being one of the main advocates and initiators for the university's transition to its flourishing north Jackson campus, Barefoot helped position Union for financial stability and growth.

As a strategic, future-directed leader, Barefoot always saw the unrecognized potential of this small, Christian university in West Tennessee, and in many ways, helped Union University become one of the top-notch Christian institutions in the country.

Valuing the mission of excellent education, Barefoot never strayed away from his love for the local church. Serving as an interim pastor for almost 20 years — even while he served at the university — Barefoot knew the purpose of Union University should always be for the advancement of Christ and his kingdom.

On Feb. 7, 2022, Union University dedicated a plaque in the Hyran E. Barefoot Student Union Building in honor of the university's beloved "Teacher President."

As it hangs beside Barefoot's presidential portrait, students are able to walk through the building's doorway,

reminded of the legacy of Hyran E. Barefoot. Despite given numerous leadership opportunities elsewhere, there was always one role that remained ever close to his heart — the purest love of a teacher. 📖

IT DOESN'T MATTER
IF YOU'RE A
STUDENT, ANOTHER
PROFESSOR
OR A COLLEGE
PRESIDENT, HE
WAS ALWAYS OPEN,
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ALMOST FOUR DECADES LATER,

UNION STILL A FAMILY FOR THOMAS

BY TIM ELLSWORTH

Reggie Thomas stepped onto the Union campus in the fall of 1981 as a shy, reserved kid from Huntingdon, Tenn.

The next four years proved to be instrumental in his development and in his ministry in ways Thomas never imagined.

“Union, first of all, was formative for me in social skills,” Thomas said. “I’ve always liked people, but I learned how to interact with people. And the reason for that is there were so many different types of people here at Union. I think being able to interact with a broad array of people prepares you for life.”

Thomas owes his Union experience largely to the persistence of Elizabeth Wingo, a longtime Union recruiter for whom one of the buildings in the Heritage Residence Complex is named. Thomas had felt called to ministry during his sophomore year of high school and had planned to attend a Christian college. He had narrowed his choice down to Union and one other school, but Wingo’s efforts nudged him to Jackson.



“She was relentless,” he said “She would not leave me alone, but she cared deeply about me. So I decided, just based on my relationship with her and the fact that she cared so deeply, to come to Union. And I’m so glad that I did.”

Thomas was one of only a handful of African American students at Union at the time. In that sense, though, the university wasn’t much different than Thomas’ high school experience. He had navigated that well, and he decided he would duplicate that when he came to Union.

“What I’ve learned about race relations, especially if you’re a minority student, you have two choices,” Thomas said. “You can isolate or integrate. I decided I was going to try to integrate. Now, obviously that wasn’t easy. I mean, obviously growing up in West Tennessee there is some systemic racism, and so I did encounter some of that here. It wasn’t widespread. It wasn’t bad. But I just made up my mind that I was going to navigate through that and integrate.”



His efforts to connect with other students worked well, as he grew in confidence and overcame some of his initial shyness. Thomas said he was well accepted and embraced by the entire Union community – students, faculty and administrators. Though he took the initiative to get involved and integrate, the Union community reciprocated, and he said that’s the heart and culture at Union.

Thomas was elected president of his freshman class and re-elected as president of his sophomore class. His junior year, a friend convinced him to run for Student Government Association president. Thomas did, and he won, becoming the first black student in Union’s history to serve as SGA president. He was re-elected to that position during his senior year.

“That was probably one of my highest

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moments here at Union,” he said. “This small-town kid from Huntingdon, Tenn., African American, a predominantly Anglo college. For the student body to have that kind of confidence and respect for me, it was just a moment of elation for me. It was amazing.”

A religion major who double minored in communications and sociology, Thomas went on to earn his Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and his Doctor of Ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. He has served in a variety of ministry positions – pastor, director of missions, church planter, consultant with the Baptist General Convention of Texas and campus director for Gateway Seminary – and is currently the president of PeakePotential in California, a firm that provides organizational consulting, professional development training and professional coaching.

An avid runner, Thomas has competed 39 marathons across the nation. He was the keynote speaker at Union’s December 2021 commencement ceremonies and

used his running experience as the basis for his address, challenging graduates to finish strong.

“Make a decision that you are going to finish the race that the Lord has called you to,” he said in his address. “I want to encourage you to run strong, run well, finish strong and finish well.”

For Thomas, his experience at Union prepared him for the race he is running. The relationships he built, the knowledge he gained, the leadership opportunities the university provided – he’s grateful for all of it.

“I love the fact that when you graduate from Union, you’re still connected,” he said. “I’ve been graduated for 36 years, and I live 1,500 miles away. I still feel like this is my family.” 🏠



Thomas speaking at Union's December 2021 commencement.

Published in time for Christmas

200 YEARS BETWEEN HARDCOVERS

Coming Fall 2022:

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Soldotna, Alaska*



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THE BICENTENNIAL HALL OF HONOR

The purpose of the Union University Bicentennial Hall of Honor is to recognize and honor individuals who have contributed in a significant way to the vision and mission of the university.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Embodies the values (Excellence-driven, Christ-centered, People-focused, Future-directed) and mission (to provide a Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to Church and society) of Union University
- Holds a degree from Union University or worked at Union University or served on the Board of Trustees
- Can be living or deceased
- Whose dedication and achievements have significantly affected the university and should be honored for their contributions
- Supported and advanced the mission through leadership to alumni, students, and/or the community

Please complete your confidential nomination no later than June 30, 2022. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Vaughan in the Office of Institutional Advancement at alumni@uu.edu or **731.661.5050**.



UNION
UNIVERSITY

MAGGIE NELL BREWER UNION'S FIRST FEMALE SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR

LEADING WITH INTEGRITY, PRINCIPLES
AND A LITTLE FUN ALONG THE WAY

BY SARAH GOFF

From her famous “the sap’s rising” speech to a legendary fishing trip to the newly renovated cafeteria named in her honor, the legacy of Maggie Nell Brewer — the university’s first female senior administrator — lives on at Union University. For Brewer, however, the fondest memories of her 30-year Union career were her relationships with students.

“I got to know a lot of really fine students, and I got to know some that were struggling,” Brewer said. “They’re really some of the closest friends you have, sometimes.”





Former dean of students, Maggie Nell Brewer, returned to Union to address the Women's Auxiliary Spring Luncheon on May 23, 2005. (Photo by Morris Abernathy)

She served from 1965 to 1995 at Union University as dean of women, dean of students and vice president for student affairs. Brewer— who holds an honorary doctorate from East Texas Baptist University — served under Union’s 13th and 14th presidents, Robert E. Craig and Hyran Barefoot. Brewer’s responsibilities as vice president included being over student affairs, housing, student activities, food service, health services and overseeing sororities and fraternities, among other things.

“My Union experience was a really good one,” she said. “I had opportunities I probably wouldn’t have had at a state university at the time. I found the men at Union were supportive of my involvement in the program — they were encouragers.”

Carla Sanderson, Union’s provost emerita, served at Union from 1982 to 2014 and was provost for 16 years. She is currently the provost of Chamberlain University. Sanderson was a Union student during Brewer’s tenure and later joined her as a colleague.

“Dr. Brewer’s long, successful career leading student life at Union established strong credibility for women in leadership who followed her,” Sanderson said. “She was a businesswoman and a strategic thinker and modeled for us the multi-faceted responsibilities that come with leading others.”

Brewer said to this day she continues to keep up with and hear from former students. About 10 years ago while attending a Homecoming basketball game, she ran into three alumni who had become a principal, a school disciplinarian and a basketball coach. The men wanted to tell her, “You won’t believe how we

turned out!” she recalled.

“To see students mature and grow up and become outstanding citizens is a real treat,” she said.

Carroll Griffin worked closely with Brewer not only as a colleague but when he was a student serving in the Student Government Association. He began his 36-year career at Union as director of admissions and served most recently as director for marketing enrollment in the School of Adult and Professional Studies before his retirement in 2018.

“You have people at different levels of trust and admiration, and Maggie Nell is really, really high,” he said. “Her love for the Lord has to be at the top [of her legacy at Union], but also a love for doing things the right way.”

One of the things Brewer said she loves about Union University is its principles and Christian value system that affect the whole institution. Brewer’s love of principles and upholding standards is something for which she was known.

DR. BREWER’S LONG, SUCCESSFUL CAREER LEADING STUDENT LIFE AT UNION ESTABLISHED STRONG CREDIBILITY FOR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP WHO FOLLOWED HER.

Each spring, Brewer would notice that when she walked among the dormitories, men and women would be out in shorts and swimsuits soaking up the sun on blankets together. However, public displays of affection were against Union’s rules at the time, and this behavior was not the image they wanted to give people who came on campus, she said.

“I would say, ‘The sap’s rising,’ because the spring trees — the sap is rising, the trees bud out, nature begins to take its course,” she said. “Well, the kids, they had somewhat of the same fever, so I would say, ‘The sap’s rising, you’re going to have to put the brakes on.’ So, it just stuck.”

Her legacy extends to Union’s cafeteria, Brewer Dining Hall, which was renamed in her honor in 2010 and newly remodeled this past winter. During Brewer’s early career, Union received quite a few complaints from students about the food. She did her best to coordinate the students’ wishes and needs with the food service personnel to help the university grow in this area.

“I feel honored to have the dining hall named after me,” she said. “A lot of people I think are more deserving than I am to have their name on a room, but I do appreciate it. I had a lot of good years working with food service.”

Rick Taphorn, vice president for business affairs, said that although the dining hall has undergone slight upgrades over



recent years, a complete renovation was needed to serve Union students well.

“The dining experience is a vital way students build community,” Taphorn said. “With this being Union’s last January term, now was the time for a renovation and an excellent opportunity to renovate a space named after a distinguished administrator who loved and fostered a community with students.”

Though Brewer’s career demonstrated she knew the importance of working hard, “you had to have some fun along the way,” she said. Union’s administrative council held a planning retreat each fall at a cabin on the Tennessee River. Brewer said they would bring along the president’s secretary to have another woman besides her on the trip.

“Dr. Craig had been teasing me about fishing, and I said, ‘Well, we’re going to win the fishing contest when we go on the retreat,’ and he laughed and I did too,” Brewer said.

But before the retreat, Brewer had made a plan: she and her friend went into town, bought three live catfish and brought them back to the cabin. She gave them to the retreat’s cook along with instructions for him to be out “fishing” off the dock and return with the catfish at the time when Brewer knew the group would be walking by.

When the men saw him with the fish, they all rushed to ask where he caught them and then decided to go out and try their luck.

“Every major administrator that we had was down there on that dock except Bob Elliott,” Brewer said with a laugh. “But if they knew anything about fishing, then they’d know that four o’clock in the afternoon with hot sunshine-y weather, there wasn’t going to be any catfish floating around there.”



Brewer Dining Hall’s first week of service after a remodel over winter break 2021

The men ended up fishing off the dock for about half an hour before they figured out what Brewer had done. During the next Board of Trustees meeting, the chairman asked Brewer to give a report on the fishing trip. “‘Til this day, they still remember the fishing story,” she said.

Of course, Brewer also had to deal with some difficult problems in her time at Union, such as student discipline issues. However, she said good support staff and friends in the same profession helped her — “But the Lord [helped] more than anything.”

Sanderson said she sees Brewer as a person of influence and role model of integrity and wisdom in the lives of generations of Union University students.

“No one has ever forgotten Dr. Brewer across their years — her example and the expectations she set live on in thousands who were a part of Union University in her time,” Sanderson said. “I feel a sense of accountability to her even now, in the best kind of way.”

JOHN JETER HURT

A MOSES FIGURE IN UNION'S
WILDERNESS WANDERING

BY SUZANNE RHODES



JAMES BAGGETT,
AUTHOR OF “SO
GREAT A CLOUD OF
WITNESSES,” SAID
HURT WOULD BECOME
A “MOSES FIGURE,”
LEADING UNION OUT
OF THE WILDERNESS

During the nation's largest financial crisis in 1932, John Jeter Hurt made the decision to leave the pastorate of the thriving First Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn., to become president of Union University — an institution on the verge of closing.

In front of the Southern Baptist Convention pastor's conference, he was asked why in the world he would leave such a good church to save a struggling college “head over heels in debt.”

“Well, gentlemen, it's quite easy,” Hurt replied jokingly. “The deacons at FBC Jackson meet once a month, whereas the trustees at Union University only meet twice a year.”

When Hurt began his tenure as president, the Union University Board of Trustees was ready to declare the school bankrupt, but Hurt's leadership and sacrificial service helped keep the school moving forward.

James Baggett, author of “So Great a Cloud of Witnesses,” said Hurt would become a “Moses figure,” leading Union out of the wilderness during the nation's struggle for survival, and leading Union University out of the wilderness is exactly what Hurt did.

By the time he retired in 1945 — serving as Union president through two national crises — Union University had paid off a quarter million-dollar debt and was officially declared debt-free.

Such provision, however, did not come without sacrifice. Union faculty voted to accept 20 percent pay cuts, and some Union professors took “IOUs” instead of a paycheck until Union was back on stable financial footing.

“Just as God faithfully provided for his people in the wilderness, so God was faithful to provide for Union during these wilderness years under Hurt,” said Justin Wainscott, former pastor of First Baptist Church in Jackson and now assistant professor of Christian ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, during a 2022 Founders' Day address about Hurt. “Those of us who have come after him really do owe him a debt of gratitude for his service to this institution.”



As a witty, people-oriented leader, Hurt built strategic relationships and friendships with people who would later be key in building Union's financial stability — friends such as Benjamin Duke, who co-founded Duke University with his brother; Charles M. Kittle, president of Sears, Roebuck & Co.; and Kenesaw Mountain Landis, the first commissioner of baseball. Hurt also met with Warren B. Harding in the White House and corresponded with Franklin D. Roosevelt while he was president.

Through some of these relationships and the miraculous provision of the Lord, Union received a \$100,000 gift in the height of the Great Depression — a time when few had the ability to give financially.

Unexpected success became a reoccurring theme for Hurt and Union University during these times and would only continue as the world stepped into its second world war.

After the United States entered the war, Union University was converted for military use, helping train navy pilots and army aircrewmembers. While less than 100 civilian students still remained on campus, the majority of students were young men training for the military.

This small, private university in West Tennessee would end up ranking in the top third of all colleges who had students completing advanced training at military

air bases. In fact, one military leader stated in his report that “no institution in all the south handled its program better than Union University.”

Along with military excellence, Union University would defeat unexpected odds in its athletics, competing at the national level. Hurt loved sports, especially football, so it was in his tenure that Union hired coaches who would soon become legendary in the sport. Few know that Paul “Bear” Bryant began his famous coaching career at Union University, helping lead Union's football team to an all-expense invitation to play in Mexico City against the University of Mexico.

The game ended with a Union win of 32-6, leading to an exclusive feature in the New York Times the next day.

Finally, Hurt would propel Union University — a forgotten, almost bankrupt school — toward the top-notch, excellent academics it is now known for today. Under Hurt's leadership, Union was granted the Southern Association of Colleges accreditation, ensuring students received the best quality education.

Hurt's vision for Union University was not led by blind ambition but by faith and trust in a God who would continue to grow Union for the next 100 years. Baggett appropriately labeled Hurt as a Moses figure, leading Union University in the midst of overwhelming uncertainty, but the hero of the Bible — and in Union's



history — has and will always be the Lord.

Moses was never able to enter the promised land, yet he led, instructed and encouraged the generation of Israelites who would experience the Lord's promise firsthand. Hurt never saw what Union University would become, but by God's grace, he helped Union get to where it is today — one of the top Christian institutions in the country.

Union's history has been marked by fearless leaders, humble servants and passionate advocates for excellent Christian education, but far more importantly, Union's history has and will always be characterized by the Lord's divine providence for his people and his university. 📖



MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARDS

21
22

Union University has a long history of producing graduates who excel in their careers, in ministry, in service and in life. Each year at Homecoming, the university presents a number of Meritorious Service Awards to select graduates who have distinguished themselves in a number of ways. Complete biographies are available at uu.edu/alumni/awards/2021.



Alumnus of the Year

Aubrey M. "Roe" Neal ('55)

Presented to a Union University graduate for distinction in his/ her profession, service to mankind, and/or contribution to Union University.

Aubrey "Roe" Monroe Neal, from Marianna, Arkansas, served in World War II before enrolling at Union. He graduated from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, served as a pastor and then entered the Chaplain Corps of the Navy, where he traveled the world and taught the Word of God. He retired after 25 years of service in the Navy and returned to the pastorate.

Outstanding Young Alumnus

Presented to up to three Union University graduates who are age 40 or younger with a record of significant accomplishment in professional life and for service to Union University or the world.

Gray Coyner earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Union and is a principal with Thompson Greenspon, a Northern Virginia CPA firm, where he has served since 2007. He first joined the firm as an intern and was hired as a staff accountant upon graduation from Union. Coyner is responsible for providing accounting, auditing, and tax services to clients engaged in various industries such as construction, nonprofit, closely-held business, and employee benefit plans.

Gray Coyner ('08)



Melissa Kay Lowe ('07)
Elizabethtown, Kentucky



Distinguished Service Award

Danny Sinuefield

Presented to a member of the Union community for distinction in his/her profession, service to mankind, and/or contribution to Union University.

Danny Sinuefield is the harvest field team leader for the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board and the pastor emeritus at Faith Baptist Church in Bartlett, Tenn., where he began serving in 1994. He has been a leader in Southern Baptist life and a joyful participant in the Great Commission by supporting the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board as the author of several key resources and serving as president of both the Tennessee Baptist Pastor's Conference and Tennessee Baptist Convention. He has also been a member of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and recently finished a term as a trustee of Union University. 🏡

Union Family Award

Presented to one family that has a strong tradition of attending Union University, with a minimum of three generations of graduates, and that has been consistently involved with and committed to the university.



The Robert and Martha Jelks Family

In the fall of 1936, Robert Mixon ("Bobby") Jelks arrived on Union's campus from Tylertown, Mississippi, on a scholarship to play football and basketball. He met Martha Moore Frey from Coopertown, Tennessee, and the Jelks family's legacy at Union University was born. It now spans 85 years and four generations.

Bobby and Martha eventually settled in Paris, Tennessee, and started an insurance agency. Bobby served as a Union trustee for 21 years and was elected to Union's Sports Hall of Fame posthumously in 2006. Of their six children (Barbara, Beverly, Bobby, Cindy, Bill and Jennifer), four attended Union and three graduated from Union. They also have several grandchildren and great-grandchildren who are Union graduates or current students. 🏡



G.M. Savage Award

Given to a faculty or staff member for his or her ongoing commitment to Christ-centered education at Union University.

Mark Campbell ('96)

Mark Campbell was named the women's basketball head coach for Union University in 1999 and has compiled a record of 686-108 in his 23 seasons. In 2018-19, he made college basketball history, winning his 600th career game faster than any coach in the history of the sport at any level, men or women. In the summer of 2019, Mark was selected as the head coach for the USA U16 Women's Basketball National Team. His team went undefeated in Chile, winning a gold medal for the USA in the American's Championship Tournament. 🏆

Lest We Forget Award

Presented in recognition of longtime service and contributions to the Union University community.

Commander George Ed Fullerton, Jr. ('52)

Chesapeake, Virginia

Named after Union's 13th president and presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to the university.

Robert E. Craig *Service Award*

Anonymous Recipient

Distinguished *Achievement* Award

Presented to a Union University graduate recognizing significant contributions in areas of profession.



Catherine Scarbrough ('00)

Health Care

Cathie Scarbrough is the associate program director for the Gadsden Regional Family Medicine Residency Program in Gadsden, Alabama, and assistant professor of family medicine for the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Jonathan Kee ('04, '10, '11)

Education

Jonathan Kee, of Huntingdon, Tennessee, is the Director of Schools in Huntingdon and has spent the last 16 years as a public educator in the Huntingdon Special School District.



Thomas Willis ('12)

Arts/Media

Thomas Willis is the director of digital content at EMF, the home of K-LOVE and Air1. He previously served for seven years with the Nashville Predators, revitalizing the team's content strategy and fan experience.

Ricky Clark ('79)

Church Ministry

Ricky Clark is minister of music at First Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and has served in the local church as a minister of music for over 40 years.



Rebecca Wilkes ('96)

Research/Sciences

Rebecca Wilkes is the section head for molecular and virology lab sections at the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Purdue University, where she is also an associate professor in the Department of Comparative Pathobiology.



Tim Henderson ('86)

Humanities

Tim Henderson has been executive director of Humanities Tennessee since December 2012. Prior to that, he had been both director of operations and director of digital programs.

Micky Wolfe ('99)

Athletics

Mickey Wolfe is the director of golf operation at the The Huntsville Country Club in Huntsville, Alabama, and earned membership in the PGA of America in 2002, winning more than 20 tournaments in his professional career.



Stephanie Laffoon ('92)

Not-for-profit

Stephanie Laffoon currently serves as capital campaign manager for the Dream Center of Jackson, Tennessee, a faith-based nonprofit that provides educational, job, and family support opportunities and housing for women who are homeless or going through personal struggles.

Matthew Bleecker ('93)

Business

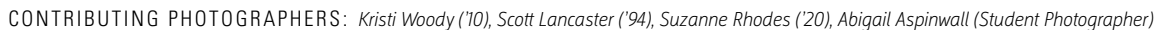


Carma Dennis McGee ('93)

Government/Public Service

Carma Dennis McGee serves as a judge of the Tennessee Court of Appeals. A native of Savannah, Tennessee, she was appointed by Governor Bill Lee and confirmed by the State Legislature in 2019.

PHOTOS FROM THE 21-22 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR

A person wearing a white lab coat is standing in a field. The background is a blurred green field. Overlaid on the image is large, bold text. The words "STAY AND" are in white, and "ADVANCE HERE" is in blue.

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OLD SCHOOL

ALUMNI NEWS

80's | EIGHTIES |

After living on the Chesapeake Bay for 21 years, **Pamela Newbill Davis ('89)** is moving home to Jackson, Tenn. She looks forward to attending many Union University events.

90's | NINETIES |

Anthony Neal Kirk ('96) achieved his 500th career softball victory during the 2021 spring season. He led Itawamba Community College to a third consecutive MACCC state championship, a No. 5 national ranking in the final NJCAA poll and collected his third consecutive state coach of the year award.

Melissa Mann Bean ('96) published an art journal and sketchbook for elementary age kids, "Words of Art." She hopes to help parents, teachers and homeschool groups further their children's art education.

Keith Beutler ('97) professor of history at Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, Mo, published a book, "George Washington's Hair: How Early Americans Remembered the Founders."

00's | TWO THOUSANDS |



Rebecca Jones ('00) adopted her daughter, Harmony Grace Jones, on April 20, 2021.

Justin Phillips ('00) completed his first year as the executive editor for "The Other Journal" and published his first book, "Know Your

Place: Helping White, Southern Evangelicals Cope with the End of The(ir) World."

Paul Richey ('02) graduated from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2021 with his Doctor of Evangelism.

Stephen Brian Kee ('05) helps people living with special needs live a successful and happy life, so they can live a life they have always dreamed of living.



Joseph Carlen ('07) has been promoted to assistant vice president, allocations and special projects accounting manager at AllianceBernstein, a global investment and asset management firm based in Nashville, Tenn.

In 2020, **Joshua Matthew Hall ('07)** earned his Doctor of Biology from Auburn University and now serves as assistant professor of vertebrate physiology at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tenn.

Jacqueline Vollat ('07) published a children's book, "An Animal's Day Off," and has donated over 300 books to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

Heather Kapavik Cadenhead ('08) is now a regular columnist for the Murfreesboro Voice.

10's | TWENTY TENS |



Mason G. English ('15, '19) began his training in neurological

surgery at the University of Louisville in July 2021.

Sarah Helton ('14) launched her own coaching business this past year, where she serves as a life coach for high school and college women. She would also love to be a resource for moms of teenage daughters.

Ward Howard ('15) successfully completed his Doctor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

Emily (Winters) Wright ('14) is currently an English teacher at Halls High School in Halls, Tenn. She also has three historical Christian fiction novels in publication: "Trial of Strength," "Trial by Fire" and "Trial of Courage."

Matthew Bentley ('15) of the University of Colorado Boulder's environmental engineering program, has been awarded an AAAS



Science and Technology Policy Fellowship with a placement at the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance.

Holly Grace Chumney ('19, '21) is a college access counselor at Hardin County High School in



Savannah, Tenn. She is grateful for Union, where she was surrounded by professors who helped deepen her faith.



Jacob Landfield ('15) has accepted a position to protect the groundwaters and natural

areas within the southeast portion of Florida. His current work primarily involves fuel tank inspections, reporting and compliance assistance.

20's | TWENTY TWENTIES |

Victoria Marie Hendrix ('21) was accepted into her second master's program through the University of Denver's Master of Social Work, where she will specialize in mental health and trauma.

Marriages

Megan March ('10)



married Nikolaj Bourguignon on Oct. 31, 2020, in Mechelen, Belgium.

Abby Ross ('02) married Rick Dickey at Harvest Church of Southern Ill. on July 24, 2021. Abby teaches pre-K at Maple Grove Elementary in Joppa, Illinois. Rick is the general manager of Chick-Fil-A in Paducah, Ky. They are living in Paducah.



Jenaye Lee Merida ('15) married Misael Merida on May 31, 2021.

Births

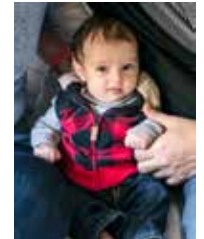
Jacob "Jay" Gregory English was born to **Mason English ('15)** and **Allie Durham English ('14)** on Nov. 29, 2020.



Isaiah Tumaini Kamugisha Kagaruki was born to **David Kagaruki ('20)** and **Tiffany Kagaruki ('21)** on Feb. 17, 2022.



Jonathan Fulton Tracy was born Aug. 26, 2021, to **Cam Tracy ('93)** and **Breanne Oldham Tracy ('03, '06)**.



THE 24TH ANNUAL

SCHOLARSHIP Banquet



FEATURING

DANNY GOKEY AND NATALIE GRANT

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

DONNA VANLIERE

Join us for the 24th annual Scholarship Banquet
Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2022

Featuring an interview with author, Donna VanLiere, and Christmas concert with Danny Gokey and Natalie Grant, the banquet will celebrate the generous donors who have made a Christ-centered education at Union possible for so many students.



For more information,

call the Office of Institutional Advancement at 731.661.5050 or visit

uu.edu/events/scholarshipbanquet



UNION UNIVERSITY

Memoriam

William “Bill” Adcock, Jr. (‘92), died on July 30, 2021, at the age of 86. He founded a jean manufacturing company, was named the national CEO of the Year by “The Bobbin” magazine in 1990 and served as a United Nations delegate, representing business and labor. He served for more than 20 years as a member of Union’s Board of Trustees and was named Trustee Emeritus. He also was a member of the Union Foundation Board. He and his wife Mary established three endowed scholarships at Union.

Bettye L. Baker (‘71), died on May 1, 2021, at the age of 71. She retired from a long career in nursing while serving alongside her husband in the ministry.

Lisa Lynn Blackburn (‘82), at the age of 61, died on Dec.11, 2021. She worked in retail sales for many years.

Joy Lane Blair (‘58), died in Georgetown, Washington, D.C., on Jan. 5, 2022, at the age of 86. Running the Blair House Antiques shop in Georgetown for over 40 years, she used her shop to minister to others, especially helping

countless homeless citizens in her community.

LaVerne Powell Boone (‘45), in Jackson, Tenn., died at the age of 97 on Dec. 4, 2021. She worked in Washington, D.C. for the FBI before moving back to Jackson to work for Southern Trailways Bus Lines and Mitchell’s Furniture Store.

Kimberly Jo Brasfield (‘83), died on March 11, 2022, at the age of 63. She was a former special education teacher with the Dyer County School System and member of Rehoboth United Methodist Church.

William Baylus “Billy” Clemmons (‘53), in Jackson, Tenn., died at the age of 91 on April 22, 2021. He served in the Marine Corps and was the longest serving member of First Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn.

Clark Hill Cowart (‘87), died on Nov. 24, 2021, at the age of 79. He was one of the founders and first chairman of the board of Jackson Christian School. He also started what is now Cowart Reese Sargent, CPAs, where he served as a business adviser for over 40 years.

Joseph DiMarco (‘84), in Jackson, Tenn., died on Feb. 23, 2022, at the age of 71. He served in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard, and he was a long-time member of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

Elizabeth “Beti” Dugard (‘61), died on Dec. 7, 2020, at the age of 81. She spent her life teaching, serving as an art and history teacher as well as a counselor.

John “Bud” Dancy

John “Bud” Dancy (‘59), died at the age of 84 on Aug. 1, 2021. Upon graduating from Union with a journalism degree, he served as a news anchor for NBC News for nearly 30 years. He served three times as a foreign correspondent, based in Berlin, London and Moscow, for NBC News. Dancy received four national Emmys and was the first television correspondent to receive the prestigious Everett McKinley Dirksen Award. After his retirement from journalism, he taught classes at George Washington University, Brigham Young University and Duke University. 🏠



Karen Duvall (‘85), at the age of 58, died on Dec. 14, 2020. She worked in children’s ministry for many years before beginning her own nonprofit organization to help teach English to the Hispanic community.

Florence Elliott (‘59), of Indianapolis, Ind., died on Dec. 15, 2021, at the age of 92. She served in ministry alongside her husband, R.G. “Bob” Elliott. She later became a kindergarten teacher at West Jackson Baptist Church.

Sheila Rhodes Emerson (‘64), of Jackson, Tenn., died on Feb. 20, 2022. Her teaching career took her across the state of Tennessee. One of her lasting memories was learning about different cultures with her father in Brazil.

Angela Ferguson (‘18), age 54, died on June 22, 2021. She served in ministry with her husband for

many years. She later established Paraclete Enterprises, where she desired to work with women who were underserved and unheard.

Jean Carlisle Fitts (‘49), died on June 18, 2021, at the age of 93. After completing her doctorate at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, she served as an International Mission Board missionary with her husband in Costa Rica, Peru and Mexico. She retired from the faculty of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis.

Stephen Warren Forrester (‘99), at the age of 45, died on Oct. 20, 2021, in Nassau, Bahamas. As an active member and deacon at Somerville First Baptist Church, he served with several mission trips and with the youth. He worked in the appraisal industry for many years.

Memoriam

Betty Joe Gass, of Alamo, Tenn., died on July 28, 2021, at the age of 88. A Union donor, she traveled around the world with her husband, who served in the Navy for over 30 years. She returned to Jackson, Tenn., upon her husband’s retirement, where she worked as his legal secretary for 10 years.

Pamela Ann Landers George (‘93), of Jackson, Tenn., died on Feb. 24, 2022 at the age of 61. She served as a registered nurse in home health care and was a passionate advocate for breast cancer awareness and her “pink sisters.”

Sue Lain Graves (‘62), died at the age of 81 on Oct. 25, 2021. She served as a teacher and musical director for many years. She was active in the civil rights movement and participated in public protests on several occasions, even during her first pregnancy.

James Gill Haak (‘72), died on Feb. 22, 2021 at the age of 71 in his home of Trenton, Tenn.

Christopher “Gray” Graham Hamilton (‘19), at the age of 24, died on Dec. 14, 2021. At Union University, he founded the pre-professional medical organization and played baseball. He was a second-year dental student at the University of Tennessee Center for Health Science.

Laura Harris (‘49), died on Nov. 1, 2021, at the age of 94. After relocating to Nashville, she worked as a legislative reporter and clerk for the Senate of the General Assembly of the state of Tennessee for 30 years.



Charles Robert Perkins

Charles Robert Perkins passed away in Nashville, Tenn., at the age of 85. He was a respected attorney and government official throughout his professional career for over 60 years in Memphis and Shelby County, Tennessee. He served on the Union Board of Trustees. 🏠

Catherine Watkins Henderson (‘53), on Nov. 2, 2021, died in Collierville, Tenn., at the age of 90. She taught primary education for over 40 years and served as the president of the VFW Club Post 5066 Women’s Auxiliary.

Susan Hendrix (‘67), died surrounded by family on July 3, 2021, at the age of 74.

Johnny Lynn Hill (‘74), died in Memphis University Hospital from complications of heart bypass surgery on May 1, 2020. He retired as office manager for Friends for Life.

David Holmes (‘84), died after a battle with COVID-19 on July 27, 2021, at the age of 63. Dedicated to serving in the ministry, he worked in

various roles at First Baptist Church of Lexington, Tenn., for 29 years.

William Carlos “Bill” Jackson (‘60), died peacefully on Jan. 6, 2021. He served in various ministry roles, including positions as founding executive director of the Decatur Cooperative Ministry and as president of the Georgia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

David Jones (‘80), after a battle with cancer, died on May 26, 2021, at the age of 64. She graduated from Union with a degree in sociology and from Tennessee State University with a master’s degree in English literature.

Janice Good Jones (‘64), died on Aug. 19, 2020, at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Mo.. She helped establish the Educare program that trained preschool children’s teachers across the Cape Girardeau, Mo., area.

Connie Kelley (‘94), at the age of 49, died in Waverly, Tenn., on Aug. 15, 2021. After graduating from Union, she served in various roles, including numerous years on the 911 board.

Elizabeth Roberts King (‘41), died on Dec. 2, 2020, two months after celebrating her 100th birthday. She served as a teacher and librarian in Jackson, Tenn. until she retired.

Barclay Newman

Barclay Newman (‘53) died on Dec. 7, 2020, at the age of 89. After years of traveling throughout Asia as a United Bible Society translation consultant, one of his greatest achievements was the translation of the Contemporary English Version of the Bible. In 1992, Newman received the Outstanding Achievement Award from Union University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. 🏠



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Memoriam

William “Polk” Glover

William “Polk” Glover (‘61), a longtime member of the Union Board of Trustees, died on Aug. 9, 2021, at the age of 83. Following college, he returned to Obion to begin his life of community service and farming career, eventually taking over management of Glover Farming Co. Glover was inducted into Union’s 21st Century Society and received the Distinguished Service Award and Union Family Legacy Award. 🇺🇸



R.L. “Buddy” Patey (‘49), died on April 23, 2021. He served Jackson, Tenn., in various roles, including vice mayor of Jackson and commissioner of education. He received the “Warrior of the Struggle Citation” and “Gallery of Legends” honors from the Jackson-Madison County NAACP chapter.

Gertrude “Trudy” Phillips (‘53), of Humboldt, Tenn., died on Nov. 26, 2021, at the age of 92. She was an active member of Linden First United Methodist Church, and nothing brought her more joy than teaching children how to read.

Linda Powers (‘86), passed away on May 2, 2021, at the age of 78.

Mima Susan “Suzy” Powers (‘85), died peacefully surrounded by family on Dec. 20, 2021, at the age of 69. She served as a nurse her whole career and retired as a registered nurse for West Tennessee Healthcare.

Linda Roberts Robbins (‘63), died Feb. 1, 2021, at the age of 78. After graduating from Union, she influenced numerous students as a math teacher for over 40 years.

Barbara Sajda (‘65), on Nov. 22, 2021, died at the age of 78. After graduating from Union, she spent many years teaching at Calumet High School.

Harriet Schroader (‘60), died July 13, 2021, in Decatur, Ga., at the age of 83. She practiced as a locum tenens for many years in hospitals throughout the South. She was an intern in the emergency room at Memphis Hospital the day Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

Charles Maitland Seward (‘65), of Jackson, Tenn., died at the age of 78 on Oct. 14, 2021. Charles proudly served and retired from the Navy as a commander and was a Vietnam veteran.

Cynthia Erin Bourne Coulston Simmons (‘05), at the age of 38, died in Memphis, Tenn., on June 3, 2021. She was a faithful member of Cross Roads Baptist Church, where she served as a children’s teacher for nearly 13 years and a dedicated pastor’s wife for seven years.

Jean Hick Sorrell (‘48), died peacefully on July 20, 2021, at her residence in Brownsville, Tenn. She was very active in church life, serving alongside her husband at churches in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Bobby Lee Sykes (‘53), a few days after celebrating his 90th birthday, died on July 15, 2021. Bobby retired from GM&O Railroad in 1992 and farmed from his early years until September of 2020.

Cynthia Ann Vogt (‘80), of Humboldt, Tenn., died on Jan. 4, 2022, at the age of 73. She taught math at Chester County Jr. High School for 30 years, retiring in 2012.

David E. Walker (‘65), died on Sept. 14, 2021. After graduating from Union, he served as pastor of various churches for over 40 years and worked for Century/Magnetek.

Donald “Don” Webb (‘42), at the age of 100, died in Jackson, Tenn., on Feb. 6, 2022. As a World War II veteran, he traveled to Omaha Beach, where he served near La Haye-du-Puits on the Cherbourg Peninsula until VE Day. After the war, he practiced dentistry for 42 years

Ann Bray Boston

Ann Bray Boston (‘58), passed away on Oct. 15, 2021, in Tullahoma, Tenn. She was an all-star basketball player at New Albany High School and attended Union, where she met the love of her life, Rev. Raymond “Buddy” Boston. Ann served on Union’s Board of Trustees. 🇺🇸



and taught Sunday school up until his death.

Adam Randal Wilson (‘08), at the age of 38, passed away on March 9, 2022.

Sammie Lynn Wilson (‘69), died on Nov. 14, 2021, at the age of 75. He worked for Sylvania and Reelfoot Packing Co. and as a private investigator before he retired from Hot Shot Express as a truck driver.

Ruth Page Woodall (‘77), of Madison, Tenn., died at the age of 69 on Jan. 7, 2022. As a passionate educator, she served as a high school chemistry teacher and founder of the nonprofit Tennessee Scholars.

Faculty/Staff

Janice Ann Baldwin, wife of longtime Union chemistry professor Charles Baldwin, died April 11, 2022, at age 80. A native of Houston Texas, she taught science and math for 48 years until her retirement in 2012, including several years at University School of Jackson.

Glenna Hartley, of Independence, Mo., died at the age of 90 on Aug. 3, 2021. She served alongside her husband, supporting church and collegiate music ministry, including Union

University’s music department. Additionally, she served as a registered dietician at Western State Hospital in Bolivar, Tenn.

Betty Carla Jacobs (‘73), of Jackson, Tenn., died on Oct. 20, 2021, at the age of 70. After serving as an elementary teacher and International Mission Board missionary in Paraguay, she served as the dean of library science at Union and then at Franklin College.

Paul Woodford (‘62), retired pastor of Lewisburg (Tenn.) First Baptist Church, died on Aug. 8, 2021. While serving various churches throughout Tennessee, he also taught speech communications and theater arts at Union.

Donald Robert “Don” Morris



Donald Robert “Don” Morris (‘62) died Feb. 19, 2022, at age 85. Morris was a longtime Union staff member and golf coach. He was born in Dyersburg, Tenn., and served in the Air Force after graduating from high school before earning his Bachelor of Music degree from Union in clarinet performance. He played golf at Union and won the Volunteer State Athletic Conference individual golf championship in 1961.

Morris started working for Union in January of 1969 as an admissions counselor. He then worked as a financial aid officer for three years before being named the director of financial aid and then assistant vice president of financial aid.

He coached the Bulldogs golf team from 1973 until his retirement in 1998. He returned as coach from 2001-2006 and again in 2015-2016. All told, Morris spent 32 years as men’s golf coach and one year as women’s golf coach. He was inducted into the inaugural class of the Union Sports Hall of Fame in 2006.

Morris was an active member and deacon of First Baptist Church in Jackson where he played in the church orchestra. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Pat Holland Morris, and three sons – Bob Morris and wife Teresa, Mel Morris, and Andy Morris and wife Charity, in addition to eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. 🇺🇸



CELEBRATE 200 YEARS WITH US!

Union University will be celebrating its bicentennial birthday this year, and we cannot imagine a celebration without you! You are invited to join us as we kick off this monumental occasion on Family Weekend. Please save the date for these events.

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

10:00 a.m. - Chapel - GM Savage Memorial Chapel

- Join us for a special chapel service highlighting Union's relationship with the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board.

6:00 p.m. - Bicentennial Celebration - Carl Perkins Civic Center

- An evening of celebration with alumni and current students praising God for His provision. Special performances by Proclamation Reunion Choir and Union Stage Band alumni.
Reserved Dinner Tickets: \$25 each.
Balcony Tickets: Complimentary

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

8:00 a.m. - Buster's Bicentennial 5K Dash

- Lace-up your running (or walking) shoes and participate in an on-campus 5K. *Registration Cost TBD*

4:00 p.m. - Faculty and Staff Reception

- Be a part of our come-and-go reception to honor our Bicentennial Hall of Honor recipients, faculty, and staff, both past and present.

5:00 p.m. - Stage Band Reunion Performance

- Join us on the Great Lawn and listen to classics by artists such as Chicago; Blood, Sweat & Tears; and more performed by our Stage Band alumni.

7:00 p.m. - David Crowder Concert on the Great Lawn

- Three-time GMA Dove Award winner, David Crowder, will lead us in a night of praise and worship to God for His provision through the past 200 years and the years to come.

8:30 p.m. - Fireworks on the Great Lawn

- Union will kick off our year-long Bicentennial Celebration with a bang!



UNION UNIVERSITY

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Final Frame

Student leaders pose with the Buster mascot on Move-in Day, September 22, 2021.

photo by Kristi Woody ('10)



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