

FELLOWSHIP



DECEMBER 2007

Ginny and Jack Stogner are members of Lakeview Baptist Church in Camden.

Ginny was an Air Force nurse from Onieta, NY, and Jack was a pilot from Camden, SC, when they met and married 63 years ago in Montgomery, AL. Ginny, now 87, retired from a career in nursing and is proud of the fact that an L.P.N. program she set up and ran at the hospital in Camden enjoyed a 100 percent success rate in students passing state boards. Jack, now 88, operated a retail and service business. Their son Michael lives in Greenville and works for the Appalachian Council of Governments. Their daughter Carol Lynn lives in Hillsville, VA, where she is in charge of a school nursing program.



**DON R. STOGNER
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**



Baptist Studies Program at LTSS Stogners establish scholarship to honor son's memory

Don Stogner didn't have the chance to finish what he started. A graduate of Furman University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Don died of cancer before he could start his career in ministry.

To honor his memory and to make it possible for others to realize their call to ministry, Don's parents, Ginny and Jack Stogner, have established the Don R. Stogner Memorial Scholarship at the Baptist Studies Program of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia with gifts of just over \$50,000. It will be awarded for the first time in the fall of 2008 to a Baptist student at LTSS.

"This is our second endowed scholarship directed specifically to Baptist students," said Ginger Barfield, director of the Baptist Studies program. "It will be a huge asset in

recruiting students. We will use proceeds from the capital gains and rely on the principal to be a continuing source of revenue for years to come."

"We feel we have been blessed in every way, spiritually and financially, and we felt that it behooved us as Christians to do something for others," Jack said. "We read about another gift to Lutheran Seminary, talked it over and decided that is what we wanted to do to be helpful to somebody else."

The Baptist Studies Program at Lutheran was established in 2004. "It was exciting to be a part of the Baptist Studies program early on and to get in on the ground floor," Ginny said. "We want to see it grow and develop."

Baptist studies program at Lutheran thriving

The Baptist Studies Program at Lutheran Theological Seminary is for the first time this year officially a part of the overall administration of the seminary itself. The seminary's Board of Trustees voted last spring to move Baptist studies from its "pilot program" status and make it an official part of the seminary.

Seventeen Baptist students are enrolled this year, and now Baptists outnumber Methodists as the largest tradition other than Lutherans on campus.

"Students are developing a community among themselves through monthly lunches and are providing breadth to the campus through their participation in class and community events," said Ginger Barfield, director of the program. "One Baptist student, Andrew Owens, traveled to Gettysburg, PA, in early November for the yearly flag football contest between seminaries!"

Ginger was installed on Nov. 29 as Associate Professor of Baptist Studies and New Testament. She already carried the title of Associate Academic Dean so she is now fully a part of the faculty and administration of the school.

Funds that are contributed to the Baptist Studies program provide direct aid to students and to student events that contribute to the development of relationships among Baptists across the state of SC. "No longer do Baptists have to fund my salary, benefits, or actual program expenses," Ginger said. "What an enormous success this has been in a very short time. This is a great program and things are going quite well."

SC/CBF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Lauren Deer and her prayer partners, the GAs of The Baptist Church of Beaufort. Lauren is a graduate of Clemson University where she helped organize the Cooperative Student Fellowship.

Lauren Deer: Has GAs as her partners

Lauren Deer is in her second year at **Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond**. "My prayer partners are the GAs at the Baptist Church of Beaufort, my home church," she said. "They have also sent me care packages to share with fellow seminarians. I have written them letters and done a presentation, sharing with them about seminary."

Lauren volunteers at an after-school program once a week at Tabernacle Baptist Church; and served as a chaplain intern last year with the Richmond Fire Department.

Ben Lucas: Excited to be a part of LTSS growth

Ben Lucas is finding the \$600 scholarship from SC/CBF each semester comes in very handy to pay for books and other supplies he needs as he prepares for a career in missions through his studies at **Lutheran Seminary**.

"I chose LTSS because the **Baptist Studies Program** is new and trying to grow," he said. "I wanted to be a part of that growth."

Ben is in his second year of a master of divinity program. Beginning in the fall, he will participate in a 12-month internship before returning to LTSS to finish his classes. He expects to graduate in the spring of 2010.

Ben, 28, is a member of Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill, where his family has attended since before he was born. Primary influences on his life were his fourth grade Sunday School teachers, Clark and Jackie Weeks.

Ben loves music, and has been very active in the music ministry at Oakland, singing in choirs, playing handbells, and assisting in children's choirs.

"I believe that my desire for missions has come from the desire for missions that OBC has," he said.

Ben earned a degree in biology from Winthrop University.

Bridget Wilson: Youth minister was major influence

For as long as she can remember, church has been a part of Bridget Wilson's life. Bridget is a full-time student at **Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary** and the full-time minister to children and youth at Greenlawn Baptist Church in Columbia.

She began her seminary studies at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary but when she decided to move to Columbia, she was happy to find a seminary that supported her call to ministry.

"The Baptist studies program at LTSS has been wonderful," she said.

"Dr. (Ginger) Barfield has been very supportive and influential in my growth as a theological scholar and as a leader."

Bridget's father was a chaplain in the Air Force. She attended Hampton Baptist Church in Hampton, VA, during her teenage years and felt the call to ministry in the 11th grade. "My youth minister was definitely influential in my spiritual development and his passion for what he did inspires me to this day," she said.

Bridget graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in sociology.

Greg Dover: Will use his scholarship for study in Egypt

Greg Dover is mid-way through his second year of studies at **Wake Forest Divinity School** in Winston-Salem. In the past he has used his SC/CBF funds have help pay for books, but this year the scholarship will help him pay for a ministry immersion trip to Egypt in January.

"A small group of students will observe Christianity in a predominantly Muslim society, and discuss issues such as pluralism," he said.

Greg's goal is to complete a Ph.D., then perhaps work in either the non-profit field or a church setting. "I've still got a lot of vocational discernment to do!" he said

Greg chose to study at Wake because "the faculty are excellent, the school is small, it is connected with a larger university, and it is ecumenical. I'm not just getting a Baptist education, but learning alongside persons of all denominational identities." Greg grew up in First Baptist Church in Greenville and graduated from Furman University with a degree in psychology in 2005. He worked for a time as a behavioral counselor near Philadelphia, and also as an interim youth and singles minister in South Carolina.



Jennifer Chesson: 'One of the hardest things that I have ever done'

Jennifer Chesson is a member of First Baptist Church in Mauldin and a first-year student at **Gardner-Webb School of Divinity**. She was all set with her plans to go to medical school and become a psychiatrist when she realized God had other plans for her life. "I'm not going to say that ever since I have decided to follow God more closely that it has been an easy journey," she said. "It has actually been one of the hardest things that I have ever done and ever committed myself to."

SC/CBF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Full scholarships are \$600 per semester; half scholarships are \$300. Half scholarships are awarded to students attending seminary less than full-time.

FALL 2007

Full Scholarships:

Mary Carol Anderson	BTSR
Martha Ann Callahan	BTSR
Jennifer Chesson	Gardner-Webb
Clayton Davis	McAfee
Lauren Deer	BTSR
Greg Dover	Wake Forest
Allison Hicks	McAfee
Bridget Kokolis	LTSS
Jerry B. Lucas	LTSS
Cody Sanders	McAfee
Bert Sanders	Wake Forest
Lori Strickland	BTSR

Half Scholarships:

Tim Evatt	Erskine
Tricia Kilgore	LTSS
Darren Williams	McAfee
Jessica Williams	McAfee

SPRING 2008

Full Scholarships

Martha Ann Callahan	BTSR
Jennifer Chesson	Gardner-Webb
Clayton Davis	McAfee
Lauren Deer	BTSR
Greg Dover	Wake Forest
Allison Hicks	McAfee
Bridget Kokolis	LTSS
Jerry 'Ben' Lucas	LTSS
Cody Sanders	McAfee
Bert Sanders	Wake Forest
Darren Williams	McAfee
Jessica Williams	McAfee

Half Scholarships

Mary Carol Anderson	BTSR
Tricia Kilgore	LTSS
Lori Strickland	BTSR

One of the constant challenges of college and seminary teachers is the abysmal Biblical ignorance of too many of their adult students entering their classrooms. A pastor friend said that we pastors have not taught our laity as well as we have been taught by our seminary professors. There are many reasons for this. Here are a few of my observations:

Some **unlearning** is usually required before learning takes place. But if someone's parent or favorite teacher or preacher taught them that a thing is true, nostalgia for a beloved mentor may trump truth, science or accuracy. Unlearning something you believe is true is uncomfortable, and people, even Christians, resist discomfort.

Most pastors pick and choose very carefully the areas in which they want to cause conflict, so they let some sleeping dogs lie. Most pastors aren't going to fight your Grandma, since they know that is a fight they will lose.

There is little or no **accountability** within the local church. Seminary professors require that you show up for class and that you read the assignment. If you get the answer wrong, they mark it wrong. Sunday School classes are often occasions of opinion sharing, when even the most biblically illiterate person has the opportunity to dominate, and sometimes does! What is said in some Sunday School classes (and in some sermons) has nothing to do with the Bible or God. I was at a worship service at the beach and heard a big-haired, big-bibled preacher say, "The Bible says..." and then he said something the Bible does not say. Who else in the room knew their Bible well enough to know he was not telling the truth?

Familiar **sound-byte theology** wins almost every argument—even platitudes we may have heard from our favorite political candidate who doesn't go to church! It is easier to remember a bumper sticker than to read and study the entire Bible. Not thinking is always easier than thinking. Being a disciple of Christ means being a student of Christ, and being a student involves work!

Symbolism and figures of speech are always a challenge. Most people who say they believe the Bible is literally true do not actually

believe that. For example, Roman Catholics believe that when Jesus held up the bread at the Last Supper and said, "This is my body," he meant it literally. When they take communion in their church, they believe they are drinking the literal blood and eating the literal body of Jesus. I know of no Baptists who believe that. Even Fundamentalist Baptists do not believe the Bible is literally true. We have not helped Christians understand the Bible when we do not comprehend the complexities of communication, even the words of the Word of God.

Many of the **front-page news issues** of our culture are never mentioned in the Bible, and serious students of the Bible have to extrapolate from a very different culture from very long ago to our present reality. Nothing is in the Bible about nuclear war, tobacco, abortion, eco-tourism, television, the Internet, tax shelters, trombones, international cartels, baseball or plastic. When the Bible deals with the eternally relevant issues of Greed, Faith, Serenity, Pride and Justice, however, shrewd students of the Bible can make application from the old to the new.

Eisegesis is the opposite of Exegesis. Eisegesis is taking meaning into a text from outside sources. Exegesis is letting the text say what it says, even if it makes us uncomfortable or doesn't fit our pre-determined theological or political points of view. An example is the current conversation about "traditional family values." Which Bible are these people reading? Abraham? Jacob? David? Solomon? Are those the values you want in your family? Saying that the Bible says and means something when it obviously does not say or mean that is to be unfaithful to and untruthful about the Bible we claim to adore.

How I long for the laity of our churches (and some of our more inept Baptist pastors) to truly love and hear and submit to the Holy Scriptures which have instructed us in the basics of our faith for thousands of years. According to Philip Bliss, these are "Beautiful Words, Wonderful Words, Wonderful Words of Life."



By Marion Aldridge
Coordinator

Coordinator's
Column

BIBLE
101

Mary Carol Anderson: Advertising was 'spiritually draining'

Mary Carol Anderson is a member of First Baptist Church in Greenville and third year student at **Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond**. She has recently been hired as a Unidiversity Camp intern through July 2008. Before seminary, she worked three years in advertising, a time that she called "spiritually draining" because she could not participate in church activities on the same level as she had for most of her life. Her goal is to work in congregational ministry.

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of South Carolina**

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Merry Christmas

Heart to Heart

OUR SELVES **OUR NEIGHBORS** **OUR WORLD**

A BRIDGE TO UNDERSTANDING

2008 General Assembly
April 26-27
Friday at St. Matthew
Baptist Church
in North Charleston
(home of Metanoia)
Saturday at
Providence Baptist Church
on Daniel Island

**Meet some
of the
students
receiving
SC/CBF
scholarship
assistance**

Clayton Earl Davis grew up in First Baptist Church, Pendleton, and is now a student at **McAfee School of Theology** in Atlanta. He was once in a mentoring relationship with a family affected by HIV. After a while, he said, “I quit doing ministry and started being a true friend.”

Timothy Evatt also grew up in First Baptist Church in Pendleton and is completing his work for a Master of Divinity at **Erskine Theological Seminary**. He says he was given a second chance at life when in 1986 he fell from a tree and became a quadriplegic. In 1990 he earned a Juris Doctor degree and in 2001 began his divinity studies.

Allison Michelle Hicks is a member of First Baptist Church in Aiken now studying at **McAfee**. “I want to pastor because I want to take care of people

through all the different times that life brings,” she said. “I want to teach and disciple so that all people may have a better understanding of how God allows us to be on mission with God.”

Jessica Garland Williams and **Darren Williams** are active members of Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca and students at **McAfee**. “During the first night of a 2006 summer youth camp, the message focused on being in rhythm with God,” Jessica said. “I was trying to make my song God’s song and that was not working anymore. I knew what we were supposed to do, but to do so would be to give up a comfortable lifestyle. I could not resist anymore. My husband and I came back from camp and resigned from our teaching jobs.”