



**Spring 2016**

*The College of Bible and Ministry of Harding University seeks to lead all students to know, live and share God's Word and to understand, love and serve God's world through and beyond their chosen vocation.*

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## **HARDING BIBLE PROF DIGS THE BIBLE LANDS**

Look carefully across the valley—can you see Samson on his way to visit his fiancé in Timnah? Look again, there is the Ark of the Covenant coming up the valley to Beth-shemesh after the evil Philistines have had it for months! (cf. Judges 15; 1 Sam 6.)

Well, in our imaginations it is easy to reconstruct these scenarios when you are there. The excavations at Tel Beth-shemesh have the excitement to work in the middle of the settings of these and other biblical stories. I have had the privilege to serve as the Field Director of the excavations at Beth-shemesh since 2000, and the fascination has never faded.

There is a special thrill to uncover an artifact from the time of the Judges and realize that you are the first person in 3100 years to touch it! It is like reaching across time and shaking hands with a person who may have known Samson or Samuel.

Archaeology, however, is not just the thrill of these discoveries. Our work has made significant contributions to our understanding of ancient biblical history as well as history preceding the biblical stories of this area.

Among those is the discovery of a bowl from the time of Hezekiah on which the Hebrew word *qodesh* appears (*qodesh* means “holy”). This dovetails with the Bible’s identification of Beth-shemesh as one of Israel’s Levitical towns (Josh 21:16). The narration of the Ark’s return states that the Levites oversaw the custody of the Ark when the Philistines returned it to Israel (1 Sam 6:15).



An overview of the excavation site looking west down the Soreq Valley where the Ark of the Covenant came to Beth-shemesh.

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Our work has uncovered the oldest known ironsmith workshop in the territory of Israel west of the Jordan. Its use dates to the late 10th/early 9th centuries BC, apparently after the Philistines had lost their monopoly on iron working as indicated in 1 Samuel 13:19-21.

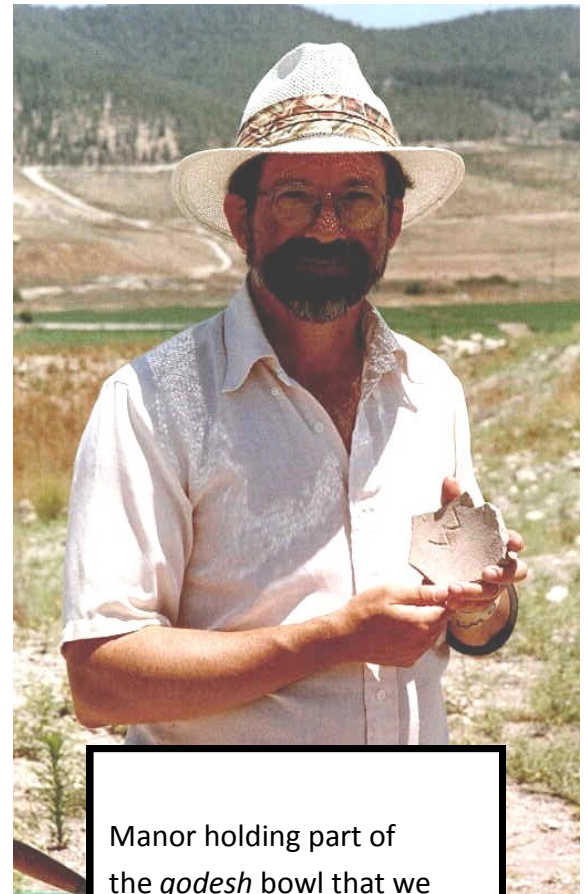
More recently we have uncovered a temple/shrine dating to the period of the Judges. While some would find this discovery disconcerting, since it implies probably an illicit place of worship, it should not surprise us since the book of Judges describes that the Israelites worshiped other gods at sites where God did not approve (cf. Jdg 3:7 et al.). In fairness, we have yet to identify to whom the temple/shrine was dedicated and we still need to uncover the southern half of it, which is part of our goal over the next few seasons. In view of the name of the site—Beth-shemesh (which means “house of the sun”)—I am inclined to think that the structure might be dedicated to the sun god and is a residual presence from the earlier Canaanite populations, but that premise awaits further investigation.

In lower levels, we have located ruins of a devastatingly destroyed palace dating from the middle of the 14th century BC. The finds in this structure include an imported scarab of Amenhotep III (the father of Akhenaten and grandfather of Tutankhamun), an alabaster vase (probably from Egypt), a plaque figurine which reflects Egyptian motifs, and two elegant cups imported from Minoan Crete for which no examples have been found thus far anywhere other than the palace in Knossos Crete

itself. Evidence exists to connect this palace with a queen by the name of Nin-ur-mah-mes; she wrote two letters to the Egyptian monarchy warning it of the presence of marauding bands of people known as the ‘Apiru (probably not to be connected with the Israelites). Evidence from other sites scattered through Canaan reflect destruction levels associated with the ‘Apiru and Beth-shemesh was almost certainly a victim of ‘Apiru aggression.

The work at Tel Beth-shemesh is on-going and Harding University has been privileged to be a part of the project (our next season is scheduled for June 12 – July 7, 2016). Students and faculty have participated through the years and some of our students have gone on to study archaeology at graduate schools and are using their experiences not only in their occupations, but in their congregational settings as well. While my hope is in heaven, I also live in the past lane and I would welcome you to come share both joys.

Contact Dale W. Manor at [dmanor@harding.edu](mailto:dmanor@harding.edu) for more information.



Manor holding part of the *qodesh* bowl that we found in 2000.



A commemorative scarab of Amenhotep III, celebrating the 30th year of his reign.

# WINGS CONFERENCE REPORT

The 22nd annual Women in God's Service Conference, commonly referred to as WINGS, was held in the conference center at Harding University on February 19-20. This year's theme, "The Sacred Journey," aimed to bring women closer to God by helping them see His hand in their lives. The idea

**2016 Women In God's Service (WINGS) Conference**



behind this came from the work of J. Robert Clinton in his book *The Making of a Leader*. Although it is impossible to complete a process of that depth within a weekend conference, we attempted to begin the reflection process of recognizing where God has worked.

Dr. Elaine Denman of Wichita was our keynote speaker, and Stacy Neely from the Harding University music department led worship. After Dr. Denman shared her timeline in the Friday night keynote session "Knowing Where We Have Been," the attendees were given a chance to reflect on their own timeline in a small group setting. Later that evening, at our annual "Coffeehouse" event entertainment, games and light refreshments were shared over fellowship and laughter.

Saturday we were blessed by two more keynote sessions from Elaine on "Living Where We Are" and "Trusting Where We Will Be," and Stacey continued to lead an uplifting time of singing and praise. We also enjoyed a beautiful brunch in Cone Chapel mid-morning.

Every year we honor women who have served God faithfully with our Legacy of Women in God's Service Award. These women are nominated by their peers and churches. This year's recipient was Dr. Terri Rine. Terri has played a big part in WINGS for many years, and she served churches nationally through her ministry to raise awareness about domestic violence and through her involvement in Spark of Life. We have additional information on our website about the award and how to nominate someone, or you may write [wings@harding.edu](mailto:wings@harding.edu).

This year's conference was a huge success, and attendance was strong. Women came from several surrounding states and many were first-time attendees. Next year's WINGS conference is scheduled for February 24-25, 2017. Our committee is already busy at work planning the program. We hope many of the women at your congregations will be able to join us that weekend. Our aim is to provide a program that provides depth and growth that is uplifting. Feel free to write to the email address mentioned above for more information or if you have any questions.



**Terri Rine, Legacy Award recipient, with family members**

- Dr. Anessa Westbrook, Director

## MID-SOUTH SHEPHERDING CONFERENCE REPORT


More than 250 elders, ministers and spouses attended this year's Mid-South Shepherding Summit at the Pleasant Valley Church of Christ February 26-27. They represented 34 different congregations in Texas, Missouri, Louisiana and Arkansas. Randy Harris spoke four times on "Building a Culture of Discipleship" in our local congregations. Other presenters included Jerry Morgan, an elder for the Southwest Church of Christ in Amarillo, TX (and a member of Harding University's Board of Trustees) who led a session on how elders can model authenticity and transparency as we shepherd the flock. Sally Gary, Founder and Director of CenterPeace based in Dallas, TX spoke on "Ministering to Members Who Experience Same-Sex Attraction."


The annual event includes time for fellowship and for processing what we hear through breakout sessions and panel discussions. For some in our region it is the only time of year that church leaders get to rub shoulders with fellow elders from other congregations.


The Mid-South Shepherding Summit began in 2005. It is organized by a Steering Committee comprised of elders and ministers from around the state of Arkansas and chaired by our own Dr. Monte Cox, Dean of the College of Bible and Ministry. Watch for more information about the next Summit at Pleasant Valley on February 24-25, 2017. If you'd like to be added to the mailing list, send an e-mail to [mcox@harding.edu](mailto:mcox@harding.edu).


## FACULTY NOTES


**Our Bible faculty are serving the kingdom all over the world. Here are some examples:**


 **Dr. Dale Manor** was interviewed by Gordon Govier of "The Book and the Spade," resulting in three podcasts. Govier is contributing archaeological editor to Christianity Today and editor of ARTIFAXmagazine. The podcasts focused on archaeological work in Israel, especially the work at Tel Beth-shemesh. Two other podcast interviews were aired on God-Talk hosted by Doug Thorpe and Andrew Wyant dealing with Old Testament history and historiography. Dr. Manor also hosted special "Archaeology and the Bible" seminar series at Alma Road Church of Christ in Chandler, Arizona, Affirming the Faith Workshop/Lectures in Oklahoma City, in Kemp, Illinois, and at Arnold Church of Christ in Arnold, Missouri.

 **Dr. Kraig Martin**, along with Ryan Byerly, co-authored a paper entitled "Explanationism, Super-Explanationism, Ecclectic Explanationism: Persistent Problems on Both Sides" that was accepted for publication in Logos & Episteme : an International Journal of Epistemology.

 In early April, **Dr. Anessa Westbrook** presented at the Stone-Campbell Journal Conference in Knoxville, TN on "Factors Contributing to Female Recognition of Need for Spiritual Development."

 **Dr. Tim Westbrook** presented at the same conference on "eQuality: Race and the Internet." He also spoke twice at the Association for Christian Distance Education (ACCESS) and Faith-Based Online Learning Directors (FOLD) in March. This event was held on Harding's Searcy campus.

 **Dr. Tim Westbrook** published "Embracing the Mission: A Case Study of Adjunct Faculty Perceptions of Online Problem-Based Learning for Professional Development." in Net: An eJournal of Faith-Based Distance Learning 1 (2015).

 **Dr. Kevin Youngblood** presented a paper at the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies entitled "Addition, Subtraction, and Equivalency: Omissions and Expansions in the LXX of Lamentations." It was held last November in Atlanta, GA. He is currently on Sabbatical working on a commentary on the Book of Lamentations that is under contract with Zondervan.