



Summer 2021

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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**Retirement of Dr. Dan Williams,
Vice President for Church Relations**



Dan Williams

In February 2001, I sat in a deli in El Dorado, Arkansas and had a conversation with one of the shepherds for the College Avenue Church of Christ. I was interviewing for the position of youth and family minister and he wanted to meet with me personally before we headed back home.

We discussed mutual Harding connections, job expectations, and the benefits of living in south Arkansas. As the conversation came to close he leaned in and said, "You know Dan Williams is one of the best kept secrets in the brotherhood." I did not realize at the time how right he was.

Prior to interviewing for the position, I had never heard of Dan or his ministry. From the first time I met him I could see his passion for the Lord and for the good folks at College Avenue. At the time Dan left in June of 2013 to assume the role of the Vice President of Church Relations at Harding, he had faithfully served College Avenue and the city of El Dorado for almost three decades. I had the honor of working with him for the final 13 years of his tenure. I have likened our partnership to Paul and Timothy or to put a more pop culture spin on it, I was his "Daniel" and he was my "Mr. Miyagi."

From the beginning of our ministry partnership, Dan's expectations were high, and he was intentional about giving me every opportunity to stretch my ministry and mature as a preacher and man of God. I have told many over the years that no one wants to be the guy who follows the guy who was in a ministry context for thirty years- and that is true- unless you have had the privilege of working with that man and learning from him. On the Sunday Dan resigned, the very next announcement was that I would assume the role of preaching minister. The transition was seamless in large part to the spade work done by Dan.

Dr. Williams has been described as a preacher to preachers. Between his small group curriculum circulated to thousands and his "Preacher's Stuff" e-mail that daily ministers to hundreds, he ministers to ministers and serves as a sounding board for those who are struggling with a myriad of spiritual and church-related issues. He is the consummate wordsmith, pulpiteer, counselor, and friend. South Arkansas and the Harding community have been equally blessed by his love for God and his desire to further the Kingdom. As he moves into retirement to spend time with family (especially grandkids) I stand in a long line of men and women who are better servants, ministers, students of the Word, preachers, and listeners because of the ministry of Dr. Dan Williams.

*Dr. Kent Jobe
El Dorado, Arkansas*



UPDATE

The newly restructured [Equip at Harding](#) has had a strong first year as part of the Center for Distance Education in spite of the Covid-19 pandemic. With three options for non-traditional Bible majors to choose—Directors Scholarship on campus, online bachelors of arts in Bible and Ministry, and online certificates—we have attempted to broaden the ways that people can get on-the-job training, retooling, or continuing education in such a way that fits their current needs and long term goals.

1. [Directors Scholars](#). As the next iteration of the Bachelor of Ministry Scholarship, the Directors Scholarship signals the long legacy of godly leadership in each phase of the preacher and ministry programs offered to non-traditional students. Entering into the fall semester of 2020, we had 5 new Directors Scholars who were to join us in Searcy, but with a global pandemic and 4 of the 5 being international students



*Vanessa Ayers,
Director Scholar recipient*

overseas, these 4 were unable to obtain visas to come to the United States. Thankfully, Harding was able to accommodate each one and help the students enter their first year by taking classes online. If everything happens as planned, this next fall we will welcome these 4 students to campus as well as our new scholarship recipients. It will be nice to have everyone together again in Searcy!



(From Left to right: Dakota Moody, Ivy Meredith, and Adrian Ayers, Directors Scholar recipients)

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EQUIP Update

(Continued from page 2)

2. [BA in Bible and Ministry online \(BMAC\)](#). This academic year marks the third year for the BMAC degree, and we are already able to celebrate our first three graduates. **Bonnie Scroggins** completed her BA over the summer. She began her journey with Harding as a traditional age college student but then left for Mexico City to work with the Adventures in Missions (AIM) program. Towards the end of her term with AIM she started exploring ways to finish her Bible degree with Harding. At that time we were just launching our online degree and were happy to help.

Richard Gould came to Harding with only a handful of classes from his previous college experience, and in just two and a half short years, not only did Rich complete his BA but he also was accepted to and began his master of divinity degree at Harding School of Theology. **Brian Devereaux** was also one of the first enrollees to the BMAC degree, and we are so proud of how Brian worked through the program and successfully reached his goals.

All three students are married, have jobs, and have personal lives to balance with their studies. All three completed online and out of state. It's such a blessing for us in Equip to be able to join these and many others on their academic journeys.

3. [Certificates in Christian Ministry and Biblical Studies](#). The certificate program is the Center for Distance Education's longest standing program offering. Designed for continuing education, students from around the world are joining the Harding community to extend their knowledge and skills through online courses taught by Harding faculty.

This year we were pleased to see **Magaia Iaronha** complete his Certificate in Christian Ministry all while remaining in his home country Mozambique. **Donna Gloe** from Springfield, Missouri, has not only completed her Certificate in Biblical Studies but also has decided to keep taking courses from Harding online. We are also pleased to celebrate with [Vanessa Ayers](#) for completing her Certificate in Christian Ministry. Vanessa's husband, **Adrian**, is finishing up his bachelor of divinity degree at Harding through Equip and has already begun taking classes at Harding School of Theology. They are both from Trinidad and Tobago.

It's truly a blessing to celebrate the accomplishments of each of our students. Not only do we share in their academic journey, but we feel connected to their ministries as our lives intersect during these years of study while also in ministry.

If you would like more information about [Equip at Harding](#), please email Dr. Tim Westbrook at twestbrook@harding.edu or call the Center for Distance Education at 501-279-5290.

IN MEMORIAM

September 20, 1935 - January 24, 2021



Dr. Van Tate

Van Tate, a former Kenyan missionary and Bible and missions professor here at Harding University from 1976 to 1996, went home to be with the Lord on January 24 after a 13-year journey with Alzheimer's. He leaves behind his wife of 64 years, Jean Tate. All four of their daughters graduated from HU along with 3 of their husbands. Susan Harrington (Larry), Lori Shelton (Jim), Ann Neal (Eddie), and Jill Wood (Michael).

Dr. Shawn Daggett writes: "Van and his wife, Jean, served as some of the first missionaries in Nairobi, Kenya. He also used his degree in anthropology to promote and teach missions at Harding University where he also served as director of the Missions Prepare program. In his retirement he and his wife served as mid-term missionaries in places like Vlorë, Albania and Szolnok, Hungary. He was committed to making missions the focus of the local church and

served in the missions ministry and as an elder of the Cloverdale church of Christ. He was a mentor and frequent visitor to us when we served in Italy and I shall miss him dearly."

Dr. Tim Westbrook adds: "Van was a mentor, teacher, and friend to me and Anessa. No doubt he is enjoying his heavenly reward. Thank God for men and women like Van Tate!"

Memorials can be made to the Van and Jean Tate Endowed Scholarship Fund at HU; the Alzheimer's Association, Arkansas Chapter, P O Box 96011, Washington DC, 20090-6011, or the charity of your choice.

FACULTY NOTES

Our Bible faculty are serving the kingdom all over the world.

Here are some examples:

- **Andrew Braxter**— Harding University's Director of Church Outreach, spoke on "Preaching From Job" at the Third Annual Harding University Conference on Preaching on February 16.
- **Dr. Anessa Westbrook**— completed the training in teaching course from the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and earned ACUE's Certificate in Effective College Instruction.
- **Dr. Tim Westbrook** co-edited a book titled *Teaching and Learning in the Age of Covid19: Faith-Based—Online and Emergency Remote*, eds. Sebastian Mahfood, Timothy Westbrook, and Victorial Dunnam. En Route Books, St. Louis, 2021. He co-authored an article with Alea Sweeting entitled "Stronger Together: A Faith Inspired Resistance to Racism in Higher Education," in the *Journal of Graduate Education Research*. Dr. Westbrook also contributed two chapters in "An Investigation into the Implications of Dewey's 'Learning Situation' for Online Education," and "eQuity: Considering 'Otherness' in the Online Classroom." His presentations include one with Bridget Powell at the Stone-Campbell Journal Conference on "Where Do We Go From Here? Online and Remote Teaching in the Age of Covid 19." He also presented with John Mark Warnick, Laza J. Razafimanjato, Cheri Smith, Becki Street, and Xiaoqi Jiang at the Arkansas Association for the Assessment of Collegiate Learning on "Technology in Response to the Pandemic."
- **Dr. Alan Howell** — Published: "Apocalypse, Authority, and Allegiance: Interpreting Symbols and Revelation in Mozambique" with Garrett Best in *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* (March 2021). "Swapping Drinking Songs for Spiritual Songs: Skolia and Possession in Ephesians 5 and Mozambique" in *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, vol. 37, no.3-4 (Fall/Winter 2020), 161-169. "Book Review of - Honor, Shame, and the Gospel: Reframing Our Message and Ministry" in *Themelios*, vol. 46, no. 1 (April 2021), 246-248.

INVINCIBLE!

COURAGEOUS FAITH IN TROUBLED TIMES



A STUDY OF THE
BOOK OF DANIEL

HARDING UNIVERSITY'S 97TH
ANNUAL BIBLE LECTURESHIP
SEPTEMBER 27-30 2020

It was their darkest hour. God's covenant people were experiencing more than a crisis – it was a full-blown catastrophe. Their kingdom had been crushed by the mighty Babylonian army. Jerusalem was destroyed. Most galling of all, their holy temple, which symbolized the dwelling place of God Himself, was burned by Nebuchadnezzar. And when he took the sacred temple furnishings and triumphantly carted them off as trophies for the treasure house of his own god in Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar was making an arrogant boast: "My god won, and yours lost!"

That's why, when the best and brightest of the young men of Judah were deported to far-away Babylon, it must have been spiritually disorienting. After all, they found themselves immersed in an alien culture: given Babylonian names, indoctrinated into a Babylonian worldview, expected to worship Babylonian gods. The promises of the Hebrew God suddenly seemed a distant memory, while the power of the Babylonian gods appeared overwhelming.

Yet out of that darkest of hours shines one of the brightest beams of hope – the story of Daniel and his companions provides some of the greatest examples of courageous faith in troubled times. Their steadfastness was rewarded again and again, as God rescued them from the executioner's ax, from a fiery furnace, and from the lions' den. Not only that, the book of Daniel goes on to reveal a breathtaking prophetic message: "*The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed*" (2:44), an "*eternal kingdom*" (4:3, 5:34, 7:14, 7:18). The kingdoms of men rise and fall – great empires go from rule to ruin – but God's kingdom is invincible!

God's people today likewise live in troubled times, as we find ourselves in an increasingly alien culture. Headlines proclaim the decline of faith. Enemies of Christianity are growing more and more aggressive. Our government is unsettled, and our culture is in a downward spiral. In these darkening days we need to hear anew the message of the book of Daniel:

"There is a God in heaven" (2:28)

"The Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men" (4:17, 4:32, 5:21)

With the 2020 Harding Bible Lectureship we affirm that our God is still in heaven, He is still sovereign over history, and his kingdom is invincible! May that confidence enable us, like Daniel, to live faithfully and courageously in troubled times.

We invite you to plan on joining us September 26-29, 2021 for the 98th annual Harding Bible Lectureship.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Uplift I, and II

June 19-24, 2021
June 26-July 1, 2021

98th Annual Bible Lectureship **“INVINCIBLE! Courageous Faith in Troubled Times”**

A Study of the book of Daniel
Sept. 26-29, 2021

Abundant Living Retreat

October 11-14, 2021

Homecoming

October 21—23, 2021

4th Annual Harding Preaching Conference

“Courageous Preaching in Critical Times”

February 15, 2022

BLOOM Conference

(formerly W.I.N.G.S.)

“Unveiled”

February 18-19, 2022

Spring Sing

April 14—16, 2022

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