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Summer 2006

The Bridge Summer 2006 Vol. 47 No. 2

Harding School of Theology

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the Bridge

VOLUME 47 ▶ NUMBER 2 ▶ SUMMER 2006

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Harding University
Graduate School of Religion
1000 Cherry Road
Memphis, Tenn. 38117
www.hugsr.edu

A Legacy of Holiness

▶ **Editor's note:** The Harding University Graduate School of Religion community mourned the March 9 death of Annie May Alston Lewis (M.A., 1967). Her life of service to the church and the Graduate School of Religion influenced the school immeasurably. The following article by Don Meredith (M.Th., 1967), head librarian, is excerpted from his comments at her memorial service March 14.

Professionally Annie May Lewis was a librarian and teacher. She graduated from Harding in 1939 with a degree in English and taught in public schools while completing a degree in library science.

Dr. George Benson asked her to come to Harding in 1944 to teach English. In 1947 she became head librarian on the Searcy campus. She spent her summers working toward a master of arts degree, which she completed at the University of Chicago in 1952. Annie May took a leave of absence from 1956 to 1962, then returned as head librarian.

She feared no one when it came to her library advocacy. One of her favorite stories relates her encounter with a Harding faculty member who taught in the graduate Bible program. The head of the graduate program had sent him to the library to choose those books that would be moved from Searcy to the



ANNIE MAY ALSTON LEWIS

new program in Memphis. When Annie May saw him at the card catalog and learned what he was doing, she told him that he should go back to his office. So the Harvard Ph.D. did just that. Two decades after she ran that professor from the library, she married him — Dr. Jack Lewis — in Memphis, just three days short of her 61st birthday.

Annie May worked hard and expected those who worked with her to do the same. She was certainly never hesitant to let you know when you needed to modify your

behavior or attitude. But she was also kind and concerned about her employees, serving as a mentor to several that ultimately became librarians.

In 1962, after several invitations from W. B. West, Annie May agreed to come to Memphis to become librarian at the Graduate School of Religion.

Annie May had accepted a unique position. As the first theological librarian in the churches of Christ, she was entrusted with the responsibility to build from scratch a quality theological collection to support a theological graduate program. She was also the first member of the churches of Christ to join the American Theological Library Association.

To become familiar with the subject area, Annie May took courses at the Graduate School of Religion while working full time as librarian. She received her master's degree in 1967.

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HUGSR

Harding University Graduate School of Religion

Admissions
1-800-680-0809
hgsadmissions@hugsr.edu

Advancement
hgsadvancement@hugsr.edu

The Bridge editor
(901) 761-1358

HUGSR fax
(901) 761-1358

Web site
www.hugsr.edu

Dean's office
dean@hugsr.edu

Registrar's office
registrar@hugsr.edu

Library
hgslib@hugsr.edu

the Bridge Volume 47, Number 2
Summer 2006

The Bridge is published quarterly by Harding University's Graduate School of Religion for alumni, students, prospective students, contributors and friends.

Editor
Mark Parker

Contributors
Allen Black, Evertt W. Huffard, Don Meredith, Mark Parker, James Wood

Photo Credits
Jeff Montgomery, Mark Parker

Newsletter Design
Renee Lewis, Tom Buterbaugh

Harding University Graduate School
of Religion
1000 Cherry Road
Memphis, Tenn. 38117

»»training*ministers*

»»enriching*faith*

»»transforming*leaders*

Dean's Note

The Library Legacy

Although our founding librarian, Annie May Alston Lewis, passed away March 9 after a long illness, her legacy will continue. She tirelessly dedicated herself to providing students, preachers, teachers, missionaries, Christian counselors and historians with the best resources possible. Woven into the fabric of her life was a mission to encourage greater service in the kingdom.

For decades, the L. M. Graves Memorial Library has been a valuable source for research in ministry. First, it is a large collection of 130,000 volumes with more than 2,500 added each year through the careful selection of a well-trained and experienced librarian, Don Meredith. Second, in his or her first semester, every student is trained in using these resources in a class taught by our librarian. (For some excellent research material through our Web site, visit www.hugsr.edu, then click on "Library" and follow the link to "Research Guides.")

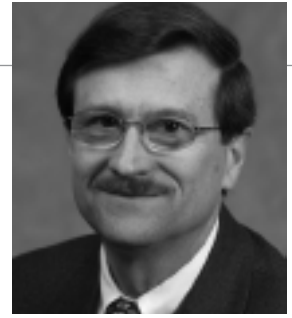
On April 6 we celebrated the completion of the remodeling of the library and the addition of 6,000 square feet. This was a four-year process that began with a fund-raising campaign led by the Library Expansion Committee. That committee included Dr. Dave Phillips (D.Min., 2005, chairman), Larry Arick, Dr. Carisse Berryhill (M.A., 2001), Dr. Tim Hacker, Dr. Jim Howard (M.Th., 1965), Dr. Evertt W. Huffard (M.Th., 1976), Don Meredith, Eddie Miller

(M.Th., 1980), Regina Stevens, Billie Thomason, Jane Tomlinson and Ron Wade (M.A.R., 1988).

The new addition is called the Oliver and Norma Rogers Research Center. I cannot think of two people more suited for this honor. Their life of ministry exemplifies faithful service to the study of the Word, to children's ministry, to campus ministry, and to leadership in the church.

For several decades students like Warren Baldwin, Bobby Lawson, Bill Goade, Leslie Chapman and Joey Gafford were blessed by the hospitality and encouragement of a very special lady, Narcissus Douglas, who lived a few blocks from campus. The only room in the new addition that is designed for small group study will be known as the Narcissus Douglas Group Study Room.

The east tower stands as a symbolic link between the classroom building and the library. It was named Lewis Tower in honor of Dr. Jack P. Lewis, Annie May Lewis and Clyde Lewis. Dr. Lewis began teaching at Harding in 1953 and set the standard for research. He has been one of the largest contributors to the library endowment and one of the greatest servants of its collection. He has authored 403 articles and 34 books. Annie May served as our first librarian from 1962-1983. She built the library from 7,317 to 68,623 volumes and from 82 to 582 journals. Clyde has worked in the library since 1996, giving an estimated 7,000 hours of volunteer service. His assistance



HUFFARD

digitizing our card catalog saved us at least \$150,000. He has processed more than 63,000 data records and 92 drawers of shelf list cards and moved about 100,000 books.

The south tower will be called Alumni Tower in appreciation of the alumni who contributed to the expansion. We have named the office suite of the librarian in honor of Ralph and Maxine Harvey, and the new classroom in honor of Harry and Jan Risinger. This classroom with 15 computers has been the most immediate blessing to students.

The archive room has been named in honor of Paul and June Carter, honoring the chairman of the board of trustees of Harding University at the time the decision was made to expand the library.

Scholarly publications and academic books are not easy to write or get published. One book on a shelf may reflect 10-20 years of hard work, while the one beside it may have taken very little effort or research but became a best seller. Graduate research in Bible or ministry requires both the resources of a good library and the discernment to critique the overwhelming amount of material available to us today.

» Dr. Evertt W. Huffard
(dean@hugsr.edu)

Coffee Theology as Grounds for Church Planting

The story goes something like this: I was in downtown Portland, Ore., sipping on my newly purchased Starbucks beverage, and I gazed across the street to behold . . . another Starbucks. This fact has become a cliché, a joke in the Northwest: There is a Starbucks on every corner and another one across the street.

At this point in my life I had completed my degree in Bible from Cascade College, and I was dreaming about a career in ministry. The thought popped into my head: Why can't churches be like Starbucks? There is such a demand for Starbucks that they can have stores across the street from each other and both locations succeed. Why can't we have churches like that?

Fast forward several months. I was accepted into the Graduate School of Religion, but still living in Portland. It occurred to me that I might be able to "pick the brain" of someone at Starbucks. I sent an e-mail to several of the key figures and received a pleasant reply from the senior vice president of retail stores. He was gracious enough to schedule a phone interview with me and answered several of my questions.

There are several areas of overlap between the sales of coffee and the ministry of the word, I discovered in my interview. Here are a few:

- ▶ Every member is vital to

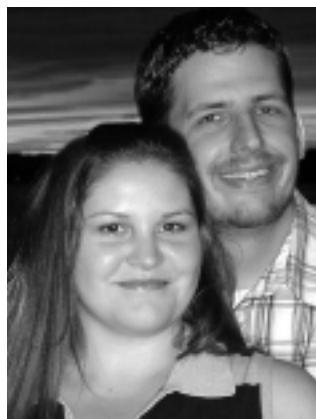
the success of the whole; "we are one body with many parts."

- ▶ The mission statement tells the group what should be done, and the group defines what the mission statement should be.
- ▶ An open and loving community where people are accepted and valued is integral to keeping people.

Not everything will translate over, but a lot of his ideas ring true and can be applied to churches.

Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz explains why they give health benefits and stock options to all employees: Their entire company rests on the work of their lowest employee. His goal is to give the best benefits so he can draw the best people and keep them.

Similarly, in the church the majority of the work needs to happen at the "ground floor," so to speak. It is not the job of the preacher or the elders to make everything happen. People ought to be invited and informally taught by every member of



ANDREA AND JAMES WOOD

the church. There are no special categories for Christians.

The people at Starbucks have made it their business to study people and business and to craft a wildly successful company from their conclusions. Though the "business" is different, people everywhere — whether in the local coffee shop or in the local church — want to feel included, accepted and valued.

Now my wife and I live in Memphis while I study at the Graduate School of Religion. When we first arrived here there were more Starbucks in the Seattle airport than in all of Memphis — truly we were foreigners in a strange land! In the Northwest, there is a Starbucks on every corner; in Memphis it seems as if there is a church on every corner.

Our dream is to move back to Portland to plant churches. Portland is a city where the majority of the people will claim not to be Christian, and a strong minority will be openly antagonistic to Christianity. There are second- and third-generation unbelievers who know nothing about Christianity other than what they see in the media.

God wants to be on every corner in Portland (and every city); he wants to fill people's lives — to transform them. We want to introduce God to these people and these people to God. So, I hope to be able to plant churches like Starbucks.

- ▶ James Wood, 2006-07 Student Association President (jtw78@hotmail.com)



STRAW, BLEW AND ISRAEL

Student Commissioned as Chaplain Candidate

Joshua Blew, master of divinity student, was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Air Force in an April 12 ceremony in Pittman Chapel. The commissioning included pinning on his lieutenant insignia. Blew served in Germany as an airman before coming to the Graduate School of Religion to prepare for chaplaincy. He was sworn in by 2nd Lt. Chris Straw and witnessed by 2nd Lt. Joshua Israel, both of whom are master of divinity students. Blew, Straw and Israel are chaplain candidates.

Student Fellowship Opportunities

Coming Together and new student orientation offer students time to share in the Graduate School of Religion's community life. Coming Together is scheduled for 5 p.m. Aug. 20 in the Hospitality Room. The Student Association hosts the event, which brings students, their families, faculty and staff together for food and fun.

New student orientation sessions will be held at 11 a.m., beginning in Pittman Chapel, on Aug. 21 and Oct. 9. All new students are encouraged to attend; lunch will be provided.

BRIEFS

Hebrew Union Honors Lewis

Dr. Jack Lewis, professor emeritus, was awarded Hebrew Union College's Graduate School Medallion in recognition of his commitment and dedication to a vibrant religious life in his faith community. The award was conferred at graduation ceremonies on the Cincinnati campus May 21.

Convocation Date Set

Convocation is slated for Aug. 28. The annual event brings together students, faculty, staff and friends for a time of worship and fellowship. Additionally, the event will inaugurate the 2006-07 theme.

Course Schedule Online

The course schedule for 2006-07 is now available under "Academics" at www.hugsr.edu. Eighty courses fill out the new school year, giving students four format options:

- ▶ Weekly courses meet once a week.
- ▶ Monthly courses meet three weekends during the semester.
- ▶ Intensive courses meet on campus for one week.
- ▶ Online courses meet online.

Meredith Recognized for Service

Don Meredith, head librarian, was presented the Distinguished Christian Service Award by Pepperdine University on May 2 during the university lectures. The award acknowledges his service to the Harding Graduate School community and church leaders nationwide, as well as his leadership as an elder at the church of Christ at White Station in Memphis.

Faculty/Staff

The Code vs. The Christ

Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* is an amazing phenomenon. It has been at or near the top of the New York Times bestseller list for more than three years. The movie release will undoubtedly



BLACK

expose millions more to Brown's thriller and its anti-Christian ideas. I found the book quite engaging and entertaining, but also deeply disturbing. I'll tell you why.

The book, of course, is a novel, and might be easily dismissed as pure fiction. But page one has the heading "FACT" and at the bottom reads, "All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate." The descriptions that relate to the New Testament are certainly not accurate. Many of the most offensive ideas for Christianity are found in chapter 55. I will summarize the crucial points.

The Da Vinci Code promotes a conspiracy theory approach to the history of early Christianity that undermines the reliability of the Gospels and the deity of Jesus. It maintains that until the time of Constantine and the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325) Jesus was viewed as a

mere mortal, and as many as 80 gospels circulated that generally described him as a mere human being. At Nicea it was decided that Jesus was divine. Constantine sought to eradicate the gospels that viewed Jesus as human and canonized the four that view him as divine.

The true story according to *The Da Vinci Code* is that a purely human Jesus married Mary Magdalene and fathered a daughter who was born after his death while Mary was in hiding in Gaul (modern France). Jesus, "the original feminist," had actually intended for Mary Magdalene to lead his church, but his apos-

Brown's two apocryphal gospels are flimsy evidence for the supposed marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. And, of course, Christianity would be useless as a set of metaphors based on fabrications.

les did not carry out his will.

The book also claims that orthodox Christianity was developed by borrowing ideas from pagan religions. The way *The Da Vinci Code* ultimately deals with all of these strikes against Christianity is to claim that "every faith in the world is based on fabrication" (341) and "those who truly understand their faiths understand the stories are metaphorical" (342). So we should not be too concerned that our faith rests on erroneous ideas.

The Da Vinci Code's claims are all wrong headed. Christianity's claim that Jesus was divine is found in its foundation documents (e.g., John 1:1). At most there were about two dozen gospels produced in the first three centuries. Our four Gospels were widely accepted by the second half of the second century (e.g., Irenaeus, the Muratorian Canon). Brown's two apocryphal gospels are flimsy evidence for the supposed marriage of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. And, of course, Christianity would be useless as a set of metaphors based on fabrications. "If Christ has not been raised, [our] faith is futile" (1 Corinthians 15:17).

You can find some great help replying to *The Da Vinci Code* in the books by Darrell Bock (*Breaking the Da Vinci Code*, Nelson, 2004) and

Ben Witherington (*The Gospel Code*, InterVarsity, 2004) and in the following online sources:

- ▶ www.thedavincialogue.com/index.cfm
- ▶ www.christianitytoday.com/history/special/davincicode.html
- ▶ www.tektonics.org/davincicrude.htm
- ▶ www.denverseminary.edu/dj/articles/2004/0200/0202.php

▶ Dr. Allen Black (M.Th., 1980), professor of New Testament (ablack@hugsr.edu)

Rogers Research Center Dedicated

The Oliver and Norma Rogers Research Center was dedicated April 6. The ceremony featured the couple as honored guests. Speakers included Dr. David B. Burks, president of Harding University; Sherman Rogers; Dr. Everett W. Huffard, dean/executive director; and Shelby County Mayor AC Wharton.

The research center is a 6,100-square-foot addition, bringing the total square footage of the L.M. Graves Memorial Library to more than 21,000. Containing approximately 134,000 volumes, it is the largest theological library in the Mid-South and among church of Christ schools.

The archive contains a collection of Restoration Movement books and periodicals, including reports from missionaries, miscellaneous papers and bulletins from people and institutions associated with churches of Christ; and 200 books in 16 languages translated or written by members of the church. The archive also contains the personal papers of S.P. Pittman, John Allen Clark, Earl West and E.H. Ijams. The online catalog contains more than 95 percent of the collection and is searchable through the Internet.

Oliver and Norma Rogers have dedicated their lives to the Gospel through full-time ministry in two congregations, serving for more than

50 years in Chicago and Bloomington, Ind.

Their transformation into spiritual leaders grew out of a commitment to being students of the word and devotion to equipping others for service. Study and mentoring formed the cornerstone of their ministry, attributes they developed and honed while Oliver took some of the first graduate classes offered by the Graduate School of Religion in 1953. He served two years in the U.S. Army in Japan and Korea and attended David Lipscomb University before earning his bachelor's and master's degrees from Harding.

In 1969, the Rogers family moved to Bloomington, Ind., where Oliver served as a minister with North Central Church of Christ until his retirement in 1995.

Norma graduated from Harding in 1955 and later earned a master's degree from Northern Illinois University. She served as secretary to the

superintendent of schools in West Chicago for three years, taught elementary school for 11 years, and served as director of reading and language arts for Monroe County Schools, retiring in 1998.

Today, they are active members at North Central, where Oliver serves as an elder.



Oliver Rogers addresses students in the Rogers Research Center classroom.

Make Summer Scholarships Happen

Each summer the Advancement Office raises approximately \$40,000 to fund scholarships for summer students. To find out how you can support students training for ministry, please contact Larry Arick at (901) 761-1356 or larick@hugsr.edu.

Oliver and Norma Rogers are honored as the new Research Center named for them is dedicated April 6.



NORMA, OLIVER AND SHERMAN ROGERS

BRIEFS

Why did you come to the Graduate School of Religion?

"I was seeking deeper answers to my questions of faith. I felt comfortable with the Graduate School of Religion because my parents are both graduates, and they were well prepared for a lifetime of ministry and service."

▶ James Holston, Conway, Ark.
Master of Arts in Christian Ministry student

"I wanted to study the Bible, and my professors in undergraduate school recommended the Graduate School of Religion. I had friends here, and I wanted to be with people who share my heart for ministry."

▶ Joseph Choi, Taegu, Korea
Master of Arts student

"I was interested in the counseling program, but I wanted a Christian perspective."

▶ Kathy Norsworthy, Collierville, Tenn.
Master of Arts in Counseling student

"The professors care not only about your education, but also your spiritual formation and your work with churches."

▶ Jonathan Teel, Lepanto, Ark.
Master of Divinity student



HOLSTON



CHOI



NORSWORTHY



TEEL

Admissions

Finding Excellence in Graduate Theological Education

There are many great options for students seeking advanced training for ministry. How are prospective students to evaluate the schools they are exploring? Here are some tips that may help prospective students focus on the quality of the program they select.

- ▶ **EXPECTATIONS.** Are you looking for transformation or merely information? Graduate ministry training not only gives more understanding, but also shapes the heart of the minister to know God deeply and communicate his love passionately.
- ▶ **FACULTY.** Graduate education is adult education. The goals are different from undergraduate school, so the faculty is experienced at teaching graduate students. Professors are involved both in academic research and the life of the church. They have excellent academic credentials in the area they teach and have successful ministry experience.
- ▶ **COMMUNITY.** Graduate students are their

own resource for peer learning. Are fellow students challenging you and supporting you to excellence in ministry? How is community built at the school? Is it a place for you to develop lifelong relationships?

- ▶ **RESOURCES.** Excellent education requires sufficient faculty, staff, library and infrastructure. Since graduate school by definition involves research, the school needs to be able to support your research interests. If you are doing distance learning, how will you be supported academically?
- ▶ **ACCESSIBILITY.** Your graduate program will likely require flexibility as your family and ministry needs change. Does the program offer enough courses in enough formats to take your needs into account?
- ▶ **REPUTATION.** Does the school open up new opportunities for you? Are the school's alumni leaders who exemplify the best in visionary leadership? How does the school's graduate program reflect their mission to the church?

Legacy *continued from Page 1*

Annie May developed a course in the late 1960s for all students at the Graduate School of Religion to improve their writing and research skills. Because of her work, the Graduate School of Religion is still one of the few seminaries that offer such a required course.

Annie May taught ladies' classes at the church of Christ at White Station for many years. Those who attended these classes can testify to her teaching skills, to the amount of preparation she put into these classes, and to how she blessed their lives through her teaching.

Annie May loved the Bible and felt that it should be the center of any Sunday school class. She studied and read the Bible and instilled in oth-

ers a love for it and a desire to study it. As many of the ladies who sat with her recently know, she frequently asked them to read from the Bible, particularly the Psalms. Through her teaching and mentoring, Annie May developed a multitude of daughters of faith.

Annie May encouraged anyone she felt needed it. For many years she sent out a regular newsletter to missionaries and also sent them cards.

She did not spend money on what most of us would call the finer things of life. Her idea of a fancy meal out was a Wendy's hamburger and maybe some pistachio almond ice cream. She was content to live frugally and send her money to people and institutions she felt need-

ed it.

Many of you have been recipients of her hospitality that included good food and fellowship offered to every conceivable category of people. As one friend observed, "Annie May had a great capacity to love," and that love knew no social, ethnic, racial or educational bounds.

Truly Annie May embodied the statement she once made: "Where there's need, try to fill it, because you belong to the Lord."

In an article titled "Heaven" in the White Station bulletin in February 2004, Annie May related a story of her choice to pay a surprise visit home her first year in college rather than take a trip to Washington,

continued on Page 7

Annie May Lewis Named Alumna of the Year

On April 6 Annie May Lewis became the first person to receive the alumnus/alumna of the year award from the Graduate School of Religion for the second time. For the last few years this award has been presented to the alumnus who best characterizes the theme of the year. This year's theme was "The Holiness of God," and the alumni council felt Annie May certainly demonstrated holy living reflective of God's holiness.

Her husband, Dr. Jack P. Lewis, accepted the posthumous award.

Four speakers reflected on her life and the influence she had on generations of church leaders: Dr. Harold Hazelip, Randy Harris (M.Th., 1983), Don Meredith (M.Th. 1967), and Christine Parker (MAC, 2002). The comments from Hazelip, Harris and Parker are excerpted here.

HAROLD HAZELIP

I've never known a more loving person and tender spirit than Annie May. I owe two things to her. First, she

changed the direction of my life. I came here to preach and teach; that's all I ever intended to do. When Dr. West retired, I became Annie May's candidate for dean. I owe the administrative experience in my life, both at Lipscomb and Harding, to Annie May. Second, when I got an assignment for a lectureship, I took it to her and three or four days later she would call and say, "Your books are ready." She was a wonderful researcher and a wonderful person.

RANDY HARRIS

The way I understand holiness in people is that you are separated from the world to God. It has something to do with being devoted to God in the old sense of "devote" which is "destroy." I guess as much as any person I have ever known, Annie May was willing to be totally used up in the causes of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. In that way she epitomizes holiness.

I don't think I know anybody less influenced by contemporary culture, in the best sense of that idea, than Dr. Jack and Annie May. They

are both frugal and generous. I've known those who are hospitable to the lowly. And I've known those who are able to be hospitable to the mighty. But I've never known anyone who is able to be hospitable to both in exactly the same way.

Holiness has to do with being separated and devoted to the work of God. In the best sense of the term, Annie May epitomizes that for me.

CHRISTINE PARKER

I did not know Annie May long. Rather, I was more of a witness to Annie May's life. As a witness, I was blessed to hear her stories, to watch as she loved and was loved by others, to be told of her endless good deeds.

Women and men sat at her feet for decades and drank deeply from the well of God's holiness in Annie May. And now, I sit at their feet, drinking deeply of the same well. All because Annie May heeded God's holy calling and taught others to do the same — and now they teach me. And so God's holiness has been handed down, so to speak, to my generation.



Dr. Jack Lewis accepts the Alumna of the Year Award honoring his late wife, Annie May. Presenting is Dr. Everett Huffard.



HAZELIP



HARRIS



PARKER

Legacy *continued from Page 6*

D.C. The following paragraph from that article assures us that she has realized what she hoped for:

On occasion I return to my hometown for visits with cousins and close neighbors, but the people for whom I made those very frequent trips are no

longer there. The house still stands, and the memories are still there, but those who made the memories have already gone home. I look forward to an association with them that won't include any goodbyes.

► Don L. Meredith
(dmeredith@hugsr.edu)



MEREDITH

One Glorious Day

We referred to it tongue-in-cheek as “The Day of Glory.” On April 6, Harding University Graduate School of Religion was home to five significant events: The sub-committee of the Board of Trustees that oversees the Graduate School met; the Rogers Research Center was dedicated; 30 prospective students previewed campus; the Ministry Forum was held; and the alumni dinner was hosted.

The entire day went off beautifully. But the day was more significant than the sum of its events because it offered us key reminders about our mission.

This campus is our home, and this community is our context. Shelby County Mayor AC Wharton spoke at the dedication and reminded us that our school is one dedicated to teaching morality. We are, therefore, an important element in the culture of Memphis as an urban center.

A cloud of witnesses surrounds us. As friends and supporters gathered for the dedi-

cation of the library, we saw the support of the university board and administration, generous donors, and those who pray regularly for our work. We are edified by the breadth and depth of encouragement we received.

Ministry is our passion. We produce preachers, teachers, youth ministers, campus ministers, counselors, missionaries and church planters. The Ministry Forum reminded us that theology is immanently practical. Our training, then, enriches front-line ministry.

Academic excellence is our focus. The renovated library and new research center are beautiful additions to our campus, but not mere decorations. Our commitment to providing the resources our students need drives what we do.

We are transforming leaders. The word “transforming” is both an adjective and a verb for us. We play a leadership role within churches of Christ, setting the bar high by transforming ministry leaders who think deeply, minister compassionately and serve boldly.

In one conversation with prospective students, I saw a change take place that — if for no other reason — made the day worthwhile. Students spoke with faculty, toured the library, and listened at the Ministry Forum. During the course of the day, more and more students realized that the experience at Harding Graduate School of Religion is not like any of their undergraduate experiences. The students came to understand to some degree that our focus on ministry and abundance of resources can provide them with skills, perspectives and a community of leaders that will support them throughout their ministry.

Ministry will not get any easier in the future. As with all worthwhile endeavors, those who lead best and longest will be well trained. If Harding University Graduate School of Religion can develop focused, enduring ministers, then to God be the glory.

▶ *Mark Parker*
(mparker@hugsr.edu)

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GRADUATE SCHOOL of RELIGION
1000 Cherry Road
Memphis, TN 38117

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