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Harding School of Theology

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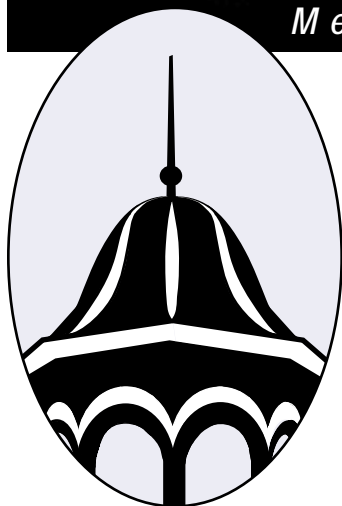
HARDING
UNIVERSITY

The Bridge

Memphis, Tennessee

Harding
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Graduate
School of
Religion

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In Memoriam: Gaylon and Deanna Smith

by Marcella Trevathan, editor

Dr. Gaylon and Deanna Smith's single-engine plane disappeared from the radar screen just north of downtown Memphis on Nov. 3, 2002. Despite lengthy search and rescue efforts, neither their bodies nor the plane have been recovered. The search was called off Nov. 15. A large crowd attended a memorial service held on Nov. 16 at Harding Academy in Memphis.

Mrs. Smith was a member of the Harding University board of directors and an active member of Associated Women for Harding. Dr. Smith, a member of the Memphis Harding Academy board of directors, was a respected obstetrician/gynecologist who delivered more than 9,000 babies during his career.

The Smiths are survived by two sons, Craig Smith of Memphis, and Keith Smith of Little Rock, Ark.; and two grandsons, Cade and Griffin. Dr. Smith also leaves his father, Harry Smith, of Memphis.

Memorials may be sent to Memphis Harding Academy, Harding University, Harding University Graduate School of Religion, or Bailey Station Church of Christ in Collierville, Tenn.

At right is an excerpt of a memorial poem written by Graduate School of Religion student Mary Cunningham.

Their Flight Home to Be with God

*Two saints of God have taken flight
And now they're in Heaven above.
They've left behind their family and friends
Who were blessed so much by their love.*

*In the miracle of birthing babies,
Gaylon would always rejoice.
A child he saw as a gift from God
And not just a matter of choice.*

*Because she knew well how to manage,
From their wealth, they freely could share.*

*Their generous gifts to Harding
Showed a genuine love and care.*

*In our grief, it will help to remember
That one day we'll see them again.
It's just that they've gone on before us
And they'll be there to welcome us in.*

Alumni Note

Dr. Leo H. Powers (D.Min., '94) was honored Dec. 22, 2002, in Somerville, Tenn. Powers has preached for 50 years and has served the Somerville Church of Christ for 17 years. The congregation gathered congratulatory notes for a commemorative volume and surprised Powers at a reception at the church building.

Alumnus of the Year

The officers of the Alumni Association are accepting nominations for the 2003 Alumnus of the Year award. Because the theme for this academic year is "Spiritual Formation," candidates should be those who have excelled in helping people grow spiritually. Nominations should be sent to the dean by Feb. 1.

Library Expansion Fund Grows

As of December 2002, \$320,000 has been pledged or given to the expansion fund. You may participate in this fund by calling Larry Arick at (901) 432-7727 or Jane Tomlinson at (901) 432-7750.

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From the Dean



A Pilgrim's Quest

Over several centuries, "basilica" has evolved from a secular pagan term for the marketplace into a Christian term for a place of worship. But the changes did not stop with a change in usage. Before Constantine's death in A.D. 337, no grave was allowed to be made inside a church. A thousand years later, pilgrims regularly visited tombs in basilicas throughout Europe and the Holy Land.

A Finger of James

In 1384, Lionardo di Niccolo Frescobaldi set out on a pilgrimage from Florence, Italy. His spiritual quest seems remote from anything we experience today. One stop included the Church of St. Helena outside Venice, where the body of Constantine's mother was enshrined, and which he described as "a most beautiful relic." He also reported seeing a big piece of wood from the cross, a finger of James, and three fingers of Constantine!

The Shrines and Bones of James

Saewulf the Saxon visited Jerusalem in 1102, and in his diary describes the chapel of St. James in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This chapel is immediately on the left as one enters the courtyard of the door for the church and is used by the Greek Orthodox today. In 1050, Georgians built the Convent of St. James the Great on the Mount of Olives, which was later acquired by the Armenians. In the southwestern corner of the Old City, just inside Zion Gate, the Armenians have erected an elaborate throne and altar dedicated to James. This Cathedral of St. James claims to have the skull and bones of James in the altar. Armenians built the church in 1118, with the help of the Latin king, Baldwin II, at a time when the Crusaders controlled the city.

The Ossuary of James

Last month, I joined the long line of people at the Royal Ontario Museum to see an artifact from Jerusalem associated with James. The brochure we received as we entered the display began with the question, "Is this the first archaeological link to the existence of Jesus?" A limestone burial box (an ossuary) with an Aramaic inscription — "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus" — sat in a glass case in the middle of a room. (I realized I was not a pilgrim when I wondered what percentage of the admission fees from the thousands of people flowing through the exhibit would go to the antiquities dealer who actually owns the ossuary!) Scholarly debate resembles the discussion regarding the two sites for the tomb of Jesus in Jerusalem — it will be difficult to prove or disprove. Pilgrims seem oblivious to the questions of authenticity.

The Aramaic on the ossuary is unique to the time of James, Jesus had a brother named James, and the limestone is from Jerusalem. Beyond that, serious questions emerge. The recent history of the ossuary cannot be verified. The last phrase may have been added later. We may never know for sure, nor do we need to.

The Spiritual Quest of James

I cannot help but think of the words of James as he defined true religion and our spiritual quest: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (1:27). Imagine how the diaries of Middle Ages pilgrims would have read if their journeys had included the orphanages and housing for the elderly in Jerusalem rather than basilicas and bones. Rather than holy sites or relics, our quest continues to be holy living.

— Evertt W. Huffard (dean@hugsr.edu)

Harding's Legendary Lewis Still on the Cutting Edge

by William J. Evans Jr. (M.Div., '89)

It is amazing to witness a retired professor still impassioned with what he has always done. Such is the case with Dr. Jack P. Lewis, professor emeritus of Old Testament at Harding University Graduate School of Religion.

Forty years ago, Lewis presented a paper to the Society of Biblical Literature that persuaded most scholars to abandon the unsubstantiated notion regarding the fixation of the canon at Yavneh (Hebrew for Jamnia). Recently an article he wrote titled "Jamnia after Forty Years" appeared in the 125th anniversary volume of the *Hebrew Union College Annual* (HUCA), one of the foremost repositories

for Jewish scholarship. In it Lewis states, "Nevertheless, the disputed view continues to be met in such basic tools as the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary*, *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, and *The Cambridge History of the Bible*." Following the decades of research by Jacob Neusner, Lewis' paper updates and expands his earlier work. As the HUCA abstract states, "A summary of traditions concerning Yavneh and the concerns of its scholars is offered to make the more obvious that they contain nothing of the closing of the canon at a Council of Jamnia."

The editor of the anniversary



Dr. Jack P. Lewis

edition said the journal received numerous submissions. Their policy is to accept only those articles "judged by critical readers to make a unique contribution to scholarship and to be well-framed, written and argued."

Lewis, 83, was born and raised on a Texas farm. This gentle savant reminds me of a 60-year-old shovel no longer the shape it was when it hung on the wall of the local hardware store. It has been used by its owner to remove weeds and to prepare the soil for seedlings to grow. Recognizing a well-made tool when he sees one, the owner has continued to hone the shovel. Age hasn't diminished its use.

Another article by Lewis on Jamnia is in a book titled *The Canon Debate*. The book, edited by McDonald and Sanders and published by Hendrickson, is predicted to be a standard for years to come.

Prayer Works

by Mark Parker, director of admissions

It began as one of those ideas you have while driving in the car; one of those ideas that you cannot believe took so long to come to you. We have prayed for our future students for more than a year, occasionally dedicating an entire chapel period to praying for the needs I knew about. But this "new idea" was that we actually ask our future students themselves about needs we could take before God in prayer.

At our Graduate School of Religion luncheon at the Harding Lectureships in October 2002, I distributed

prayer request cards. I expected one or two cards from the 75 who attended, but I picked up a dozen requests! I read them and could not believe that people were sharing these things — real requests and needs. Some requested prayers for their personal lives, such as seeking mates and looking for jobs. Many asked for requests for their own health or the health of their friends or family. Some were for mission work and the spiritual endurance of the Harding family. These were real, heart-felt requests.

About a month later, I sent a

letter to our Campus Day visitors with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a prayer request form. Out of 36 letters, we received another dozen requests. One third of our visitors wanted us to pray for them enough to write a card by hand and mail it back to us.

I have learned two things from this experience. First, people have needs that they want addressed in prayer. Surely the practice of seeking requests in a comfortable situation and actively praying for those needs must be a vital part of any Christian organization or

congregation.

Second, I was reminded of the tremendous sacrifice our students make to study here. Every one must give up — in varying degrees — time, money and energy to study here. I knew that, but the prayer requests showed me again how serious our students are about completing the work God has called them to.

Please pray for our future students. And if you have a request, please send it to me at mparker@hugsr.edu. I assure you that our community will go before the Father on your behalf.

Happy New Year
from all of us to all of you

Return Service Requested

A Race for Enrollment

by Larry Arick, director of advancement

The Graduate School of Religion's enrollment is 225 for the 2002-03 school year. This number is the highest in 14 years (with one exception). Two years ago, enrollment was 188. Last year it was 211. The majority of these students receive scholarships from funds raised by the Graduate School Advancement Council.

It is time now to plan for the 4th annual "Run for the Son" 5K Race and 1-Mile Fun Walk. Each year this event grows larger, and we hope this year's race will be no exception. The race will be held on May 3, with many Graduate School students among the participants.

This race is the largest annual fund-raiser for the Graduate School and is a joint effort of the

Associated Women for Harding and the Graduate School Advancement Council. Barbara Taylor is the contact for AWH, and John Redden will coordinate the race again.

An event of this magnitude requires a lot of volunteer hours. Some solicit businesses for "goodie bag" items for the participants.

Others publicize the race at their congregations. Many work the day of the race with registration. Still others work the days before and after the race with various tasks. If you would like to help with this event, please contact me (901) 432-7727 or via e-mail at larick@hugsr.edu.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who supported the Graduate School in 2002 both financially and prayerfully. I also want to thank the many volunteers who donated hours of their time in various activities and fund-raising events. The Graduate School could not exist without your help and support. I hope 2003 will bring you good health and happiness as you work in the Lord's kingdom.



Runners assemble for the 2002 race.