

Trustees of theological schools don't match needs, study says
 By Mark Wingfield
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NEW YORK (ABP) – Trustees of the nation's theological schools, including Baptist seminaries, may be unprepared to meet the biggest challenges of the future, a new study warns.

Barbara Wheeler, president of Auburn Seminary in New York City, surveyed 1,611 trustees of 193 theological schools to get a picture of how they perceive their roles as trustees and what abilities they believe they bring to the task. She also gleaned information on the operation of trustee boards from 208 theological school administrators.

These trustee boards, she reports, do not reflect the ethnic or gender diversity of the nation. More often than not, the trustees are loyal to the institutions but may not have the means or the commitment to support them financially, she adds.

Wheeler discovered theological school trustees are predominantly white, male and older than 60.

The overall percentage of female trustees is raised by the greater diversity found among mainline Protestant institutions. Among evangelical Christian schools, where Baptist seminaries are classified, women account for only 16 percent of trustees on average.

Less than 15 percent of trustees serving the nation's theological schools are non-white. The boards of evangelical denominational schools, on average, include less than 10 percent of members who are non-white.

Independent seminaries, those whose board members are not named by a larger denominational body, are more likely than other schools to have non-white board members.

More than half the nation's theological school trustees are older than 60, and one-fourth are older than 67.

Three-fourths of the trustees earned graduate degrees themselves, many from the institutions they now serve as trustees. Religious professionals exert a strong influence on most trustee boards, accounting for 42 percent of trustees on average. About one-fourth of trustees come from the field of business, and 10 percent are educators.

"The makeup of theological school boards is very different from those of other educational institutions and non-profits, which are much more likely to include leaders from business, non-religious professions and non-religious education," Wheeler noted.

She asked trustees why they believe they were selected to serve on their school's board. The largest block, 35 percent, cited their expertise in church, ministry, denominational or theological matters. The second-largest block, 29 percent, cited their knowledge of business or finance.

The least-important factor in their selection, the trustees reported, was their ability to make a financial gift to the school.

Among trustees of evangelical schools, almost equal weight was given to three areas as important institutional goals for the future. About 20 percent named increasing student enrollment, establishing financial security and maintaining the school's theological tradition.

The problem, Wheeler notes in her analysis, is that while theological schools may have trustees who are happy to be serving, they may not have the trustees they actually need.

The age of most trustee boards should be of concern, she says, because younger board members tend to bring stronger networks of contacts that can help the schools. Further, she adds, "younger people of talent and means

should be invited to consider joining the boards of theological schools before their loyalties are completely absorbed by other organizations."

Trustees appear to be more competent in protecting image and orthodoxy than in helping with long-range planning or giving financially, two of the most pressing needs schools face, Wheeler says.

Only 32 percent of trustees have made provision for their schools in their wills, and nearly every board includes some members who give nothing financially to their schools. Only 15 percent of the nation's theological schools report a 100 percent commitment to giving among trustees.

Wheeler and her coauthor, graduate student Suzanne Nakasian, recommend that schools establish performance standards for trustees and conduct annual evaluations of individual members and of the board as a whole.



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Christian artists among diverse Grammy nominees

By Steve Parolini

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NEW YORK (ABP) – Diversity reigned in the Grammy nominations announced Jan. 7 in New York City.

The musical styles represented in the nominees for mainstream album of the year included rap (Nelly), country (Dixie Chicks), rock (Bruce Springsteen), and jazz (Norah Jones).

The two top Christian music categories also were rife with variety.

Nominees for best rock gospel album include a couple of rock groups (Audio Adrenaline for *Lift*, Third Day for *Come Together*), a guitar-slinging solo rocker (Jennifer Knapp for *The Way I Am*), and a couple of groups whose music is more hip-hop and rap than rock (Tobymac for *Momentum* and Grits for *The Art of Translation*).

Nominees for pop/contemporary gospel album include veteran Kathy Troccoli for *The Heart of Me*, Newsong for *The Christmas Shoes*, newcomer Paul Colman Trio for *New Map of the World*, and – proving there's still a place for "boy bands" in Christian music, if not in the mainstream – True Vibe for *See the Light*.

The inclusion of rockers Jars of Clay in the pop/contemporary gospel category for *The Eleventh Hour* may have some fans wondering just who makes up the nominating committee. (But Jars of Clay won the Grammy in this category in 2000 for *If I Left the Zoo*.)

Nominations in the other gospel categories – such as contemporary soul album, traditional soul gospel album, gospel choir or chorus album, and best Southern, country or bluegrass album – read like genre-appropriate "best of" lists. Perennial favorites such as Commissioned, Fred Hammond, BeBe Winans, Dorothy Norwood, John P. Kee, and the Gaither Vocal Band each picked up a nomination.

Provident Music Group was the clear winner among Christian record companies, with 16 Grammy nominations, including all five in the best pop/contemporary gospel field and Third Day's fourth consecutive nomination for best rock gospel.

"This nomination is an amazing honor for us," said Mac Powell, lead singer for Third Day. "... What an unbelievable way to round out the year."

Newsong member Eddie Carswell said of the nomination for *The Christmas Shoes*: "It is remarkable to see how God has used this song and record to touch so many people through, not only the music, but also the movie and the book. From day one, I have called *The Christmas Shoes* a 'God thing' and he continues to amaze us."

Christian ideas and artists also were represented in several mainstream music categories. P.O.D. got a nod for best hard rock performance ("*Youth of the Nation*" from *Satellite*). Take 6 was nominated in an R&B category for "*Love's in Need Of Love Today*" from *America – A Tribute to Heroes*. And newcomer Michelle Branch garnered two nominations, for new artist and pop collaboration with vocals.

The 45th Annual Grammy Awards will be presented Feb. 23.

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Yemen hospital in Muslim hands, but IMB says ministry continues

By Greg Warner

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JIBLA, Yemen (ABP) – If the Muslim extremist who attacked Jibla Baptist Hospital Dec. 30 was trying to rid Yemen of that country's most prominent Christian ministry, it might look like he succeeded.

Two days after the gunman killed three American mission workers, the 35-year-old hospital was handed over to the Muslim government of Yemen, which now will decide if it will remain open and who will work there. The hospital has been closed since the shooting. Most of the 13 American mission workers and their families have left Jibla, and many won't return. Despite appearances, those leading the hospital through its most difficult period say the Christian ministry of the hospital will survive.

"There will still be as much ministry here," said Al Lindholm, who is overseeing the transfer of the hospital from its founder and owner, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, to the Yemeni government.

In fact, the hospital's recovery since the shooting has been "miraculous," said Lindholm, the IMB's area business strategy manager. "God has given all of us strength. We have been able to do amazing things."

In the days since the shooting, Lindholm and the five other Baptist workers who remained in Jibla have focused on transferring the 45-bed hospital while reassuring local Yemenis, who have long supported the hospital, that it will indeed reopen. The government has appointed a hospital administrator, is securing funding and is already discussing which staff members to keep – and that could include a few IMB mission doctors, Lindholm said via telephone Jan. 7.

"These deaths have motivated and energized the people of the community to take responsibility for the hospital," said Lindholm, a former hospital worker now based in the capital of Sana'a. "Things are moving fairly rapidly between the ministry of planning and the ministry of health. We've had a visit from a team beginning the inventory and other steps to begin the turnover. Officially it belongs to the ministry of health as of the first of January."

The terrorist attack that killed three American mission workers at Jibla and shocked Christians worldwide was the worst tragedy in the 156-year history of the International Mission Board. Amplifying the tragedy even more is this irony: The Christian hospital, apparently targeted by the Muslim gunman as an affront to Islam, was to be turned over to the Muslim-led government two days after the attack. In fact, the three Southern Baptist workers killed Dec. 30 – administrator William Koehn, physician Martha Myers and purchaser Kathy Gariety – were meeting to prepare for the transfer.

Al Lindholm was supposed to be in the meeting too, and likely would have been the killer's fourth victim if not for a broken-down car. Lindholm was driving from Sana'a for the 8 a.m. meeting, which would have been followed by a 10 a.m. tour of the facility with the Yemeni ministers of planning and health. Lindholm had a minor accident en route and had to return to Sana'a to get another car, making him two hours late.

"I was less than half an hour away when I received the news by mobile phone," he told Associated Baptist Press. "These were my friends. And I wouldn't have minded dying with them, if that was my calling."

Also spared was Daniel Cajuiat, an X-ray technician and IMB volunteer, who was confronted by the gunman while standing in a doorway, but the attacker's semi-automatic rifle ran out of ammunition. Another IMB worker, pharmacist Donald Caswell, earlier was shot twice in the abdomen but is recovering.

The gunman, a suspected al-Qaida terrorist, surrendered to Yemeni officials, who quoted him as saying he killed the Americans "to cleanse his religion and get closer to Allah." Abed Abdul Razak Kamel slipped past hospital security guards with the concealed gun, posing as a father seeking treatment for a sick child.

As the only full-service hospital in the poor area around Jibla, treating 40,000 patients a year, the facility was considered the most prominent Christian ministry in Yemen – and also something of an easy target. "This location is

not very defensible," said Lindholm. "And to do medical work, you can't defend yourself the way you can at an embassy."

There is no known connection between the shooting and the pending transfer of the hospital. But the transfer had been a source of concern in Jibla and tension between some longtime Jibla mission workers and IMB stateside administrators.

Last July the International Mission Board announced it would no longer operate the facility – the last IMB-run hospital – and would shift the emphasis to mobile clinics, which would provide health screenings, nutrition education and basic medical care to more Yemenis. The shift is part of the IMB's new global strategy called New Directions, which moves the IMB away from institution-based ministries such as hospitals and schools to focus more heavily on what leaders call "church-starting movements."

Since Islam is the official religion of Yemen, missionaries and proselytizing are not allowed. The IMB said the hospital's ministry has been limited to "pre-evangelism." But hospital staffers say they often share their faith informally with patients and others when asked.

Last September, the IMB said the People's Charitable Society, a Muslim charity with ties to the Yemeni government, would assume control of the hospital Oct. 1. Jerry Rankin, IMB president, called it "an answer to prayer."

But the October deadline, and a second one, came and went with no word from the IMB or the government about the transfer. So hospital officials informed the government Dec. 12 that they would begin shutting down the facility, ending all surgeries by Dec. 26 and closing the hospital Dec. 31.

On Dec. 15 many of the hospital's 180 local employees and other residents, fearful of lost jobs, marched in protest to a local government office.

"Interestingly, our administrator, Bill Koehn, had 'Baptist' painted out of the sign at the front of the hospital," said Australian surgeon Ken Clezy, "and this seems to have at last convinced local people that the Southern Baptists meant business when they said they were getting out." Koehn, who was scheduled to retire soon, had mixed feelings about the transfer to the Muslim group, Clezy said.

In mid-December, another Christian organization – the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society – was approached by hospital workers and others about taking over the facility. A proposal was drafted and application with the government begun. But David Harrison, EMMS chairman, told ABP the group's "expression of interest" didn't get very far.

Surprisingly, on Dec. 22, the IMB informed the staff that the transfer to the People's Charitable Society was indeed going to take place after all. A meeting was scheduled with government officials for 10 a.m. Monday, Dec. 30, at the hospital compound.

The meeting, of course, never took place.

In the months before her death, Kathy Gariety, the hospital's purchasing agent for 10 years, worked behind the scenes to try to keep the facility in the hands of Christians.

In an email interview, she said the IMB's press releases about the transfer "made it sound like everything is just fine and all the [IMB mission workers] are happy and pleased, when that is just not the case." She questioned whether the government would follow through and keep the hospital open. "Even our local employees believe this is a bad idea, that within a year the hospital will be stripped of all supplies and then closed."

"Somehow, I feel that the everyday SBC contributor needs to know just what is going on and that the way we do missions is changing, and not all of us believe it is for the best," she wrote. "... I am embarrassed by the IMB, when so many others can see the positive side of keeping the hospital as a Christian beacon...."

John Brady, the IMB's director for North Africa and the Middle East, did not respond to questions about the hospital

transfer.

Several days after the shooting Ken Clezy, the Australian surgeon, said he too is doubtful the hospital will survive. "We have lost so many staff because of all the months of uncertainty that there is no way the place can be kept open."

"My own feeling is that Jibla is finished, but I may be wrong," said Clezy, who had made plans to leave Yemen before the shooting. "It will certainly take some time to get going again, with the best will from everybody."

Al Lindholm is more optimistic. The hospital will open as soon as possible, he said, although no one is sure when. "Pledges have been made at the highest level of the government." The rapid progress is "exciting," he added. "We're already seeing stability return to the staff."

Lindholm said the government probably will hire back most of the Yemeni employees, who made up about 80 percent of the previous 220-member staff. And the government is open to hiring non-Yemeni workers, including American mission doctors, he said. "They're very willing to have American personnel."

That could include IMB doctors, he added. "But not many, because some have already taken other assignments. But we will have a few. Certainly volunteers are welcome."

The IMB says new medical personnel have not been applying for the Yemen hospital in recent years. "Our problem is not being able to provide the personnel," Lindholm said. "We have had requests in for quite some time."

But Jibla workers report the IMB has discouraged several applicants from taking assignments at the hospital. Likewise, they say, current Jibla workers were encouraged to take other assignments in Yemen or elsewhere in the effort to shift focus away from the hospital.

Before the shooting, seven of the 13 IMB mission workers planned to transfer elsewhere in Yemen or out of the country. Two were returning home. And four wanted to stay at the hospital, but that included Myers and Gariety, who were killed. Only one IMB doctor – surgeon Judy Williams – is available to stay, and no nurses or technicians. Of the four non-IMB doctors, only one is available to stay.

Lindholm said the Yemeni ministry of health "will work with us to decide what doctors will stay." Meanwhile, he added, the IMB personnel "are watching to see where they fit in."

The IMB says they will continue to provide hospital workers, paid and volunteer, if requested by the government. "They can stay as long as they want to stay," Lindholm added. "They could finish their careers here, as long as it remains viable. But we're not sure if there will be positions."

Lindholm said the late-December suggestion that the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society take over the hospital, keeping it in Christian hands, was impractical, since the organization has limited resources and no experience in Yemen. The EMMS owns and operates a successful Arab-staffed hospital in Nazareth and is involved with other medical ministries worldwide.

Both Lindholm and EMMS's Harrison said the Scotland-based organization could have a role in providing future personnel to the Jibla hospital. "Their role might be the framework of a coalition [of health organizations]," Lindholm said. "The ministry of health probably would welcome that."

On Jan. 6, one week after the shooting, almost all the remaining hospital staffers took a walk into the city of Jibla. Lindholm said they sat with local residents, talked to them, received condolences and offered assurances that the hospital would reopen. "The people were very open, very friendly, very conciliatory. They were saying, 'Please don't leave.'"

Although the hospital – and the IMB's role in Yemen – will be forever changed, Lindholm says Christian ministry in Jibla and Yemen will survive.

"The outreach that has occurred to date is still effective. There will still be as much ministry here. We're changing modes of ministry, but we are not changing the methods."

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