

Associated Baptist Press

July 22, 2003 Volume: 03-68

In this issue:

- **Midwestern, Golden Gate seminaries safe for now, but changes still loom**
- **Former roommate charged in murder of Baylor player**
- **Southeastern Seminary names interim, bids Patterson farewell**
- **Campus Crusade founder dies, leaves 'legacy of integrity and bold faith'**
- **Baylor 'family dialogue' reveals deep divisions**
- **Correction**

**Midwestern, Golden Gate seminaries
safe for now, but changes still loom**

By Vicki Brown and Robert Marus

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (ABP) -- Is the Southern Baptist Convention considering selling the valuable property of its two smallest seminaries? Southern Baptist leaders say "no." But they won't rule out the possibility of significant changes in the future for at least one of the schools.

Questions about the fate of Midwestern and Golden Gate Baptist Theological seminaries resurfaced recently, giving renewed life to a persistent rumor that the schools would be eliminated.

During a July 15 meeting of the Missouri Baptist Convention's executive board, prominent Missouri pastor David Baker implored his fellow board members to allocate funds in the state convention's budget for Midwestern Seminary -- in nearby Kansas City -- because "powerful forces" in the SBC were plotting the school's demise.

Baker, pastor of First Baptist Church of Belton, Mo., said he heard an SBC study committee had suggested property at Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., and Midwestern should be sold and that a new seminary should be built in Colorado. Baker said Golden Gate had since been spared but Midwestern is still on the chopping block.

Both schools have much smaller enrollments than the four other Southern Baptist seminaries. Their main campuses also occupy highly valuable pieces of real estate.

Midwestern's few buildings are set in the center of an expansive, tree-covered campus in a desirable residential and commercial area just minutes north of downtown Kansas City. Golden Gate's hillside campus overlooks San Francisco from the posh Marin County suburbs. Rumors of the merger or closure of both seminaries, as well as relocation of their campuses, have been passed around for years.

Seminary and SBC officials said in recent telephone interviews that there are no plans to close the seminaries. However, they noted that SBC leaders have discussed -- but not acted on -- possible changes in the schools.

Both Midwestern President Phil Roberts and SBC Executive Committee chairman Gary Smith acknowledged that a study committee does exist. They explained that in 2002, the Executive Committee set up a task force to examine the seminaries and their effectiveness. "The Executive Committee was concerned about the fact that the seminaries' needs were not being met to the degree we wanted," said Smith, a Texas pastor. He added that the committee has been evaluating all six SBC-owned seminaries.

Roberts acknowledged that a possible merger of Midwestern and Golden Gate was discussed at the committee's meetings. "But they immediately decided it was not a good idea," he said.

Gary Groat, Golden Gate Seminary's chief financial officer, said "there's no chance on earth" that Baker's story is accurate. "That's just another resurgence of that old rumor of merging Midwestern and Golden Gate. That was rebuffed at least a year ago. We have no plans of merging," he continued. "I can assure you that Golden Gate Seminary is committed to California and the West."

"There never was an intention to close Midwestern," added Smith, the Executive Committee chair. But the possibility of changing the form of educational delivery on the Midwestern campus is still being explored, he said.

"There was a meeting in which we discussed the implications if Midwestern became a degree-granting institution ... without the need of a large campus," Smith said. "Those were just discussions.... We were looking at the financial ramifications of re-sizing the seminaries."

Smith sent a letter July 2 to fellow SBC Executive Committee members to dispel rumors of Midwestern's possible closure. He explained the study committee had discussed "the transformation of Midwestern from full-fledged seminary to a regional campus in the Kansas City area as an extension of one of our other Southern Baptist seminaries."

Smith said the study committee will continue to meet and at some point might recommend such changes, but that none are planned for the near future.

Attempts to reach Baker for further comment were unsuccessful. An employee who answered the phone at his Missouri office said he was on vacation.

-30-

Former roommate charged in murder of Baylor player

By ABP staff

CHESTERTOWN, Md. (ABP) -- Former Baylor University basketball player Carlton Dotson was arrested in Maryland and charged July 22 with murdering his teammate and best friend, Patrick Dennehy.

The charge was filed after Dotson contacted police July 20 and asked for counseling, saying he was "hearing voices," Chestertown Police Chief Walter Coryell told reporters. He was transported to a hospital, where he called the FBI.

As a result of Dotson's conversation with the FBI, Waco authorities issued a warrant and Chestertown police arrested Dotson. The warrant says he confessed to murder, but news reports say he denies making such a confession.

He appeared before a Kent County, Md., judge July 22 and is being held without bond. He has refused to waive extradition, so a hearing will be held within 30 days to determine if he will be taken back to Texas to stand trial.

The body of Patrick Dennehy has not been found. But NBC affiliates reported July 22 that a body, whose identity has not been confirmed, has been found in an area east of Waco.

An informant's account given in an affidavit to police said Dotson shot Dennehy during an argument while the two were shooting guns in a field north of Waco. Dennehy's family reported him missing June 19 and his Chevrolet SUV was found June 25 in Virginia Beach, Va.

Friends say Dennehy told them he and Dotson obtained guns because they were being threatened. Dennehy's family also claimed their son told coaches he feared for his life, but the Baylor coaching staff denied such claims.

-30-

Southeastern Seminary names interim, bids Patterson farewell

By Steve DeVane

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (ABP) -- Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary named Bart Neal as interim president and heard a farewell from Paige Patterson at a called meeting July 21.

Neal, 63, has been vice president for institutional advancement at Southeastern since 1993.

Patterson, who led the school for the past 11 years, will become president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, the largest of six Southern Baptist seminaries. He is widely credited with helping bring about what supporters call the "conservative resurgence" and critics call the "fundamentalist takeover" in the Southern Baptist Convention.

As part of the strong conservative shift, Southeastern has returned "to biblical Christianity," Patterson told the trustees. He said the school's transformation has been "one of the most miraculous stories of the intervention of God in Christian history."

Patterson thanked trustees for helping move Southeastern from "a seminary known for liberalism and neo-orthodoxy" to a school known for its "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Patterson thanked the Southeastern trustees for hiring him. "Not many would have taken a chance on a person whose reputation was a rabble-rouser, Attila the Hun and all the other things that are said about me," he said.

Patterson will become president of Southwestern Seminary Aug. 1. He asked the Southeastern trustees to pray for Texas, adding he and his wife, Dorothy, will do their part to "see a great revival" come to the state. "If there's a state anywhere that needs a great movement of God, it's my home state of Texas," he said.

Patterson said that Texas, like North Carolina, is only one of about three states where Baptist conservatives have not "overwhelmingly taken the day."

Patterson also asked the trustees to pray for Southwestern. He said people there probably have similar feelings to those at Southeastern when he came 11 years ago. He said they're probably saying, "Oh, my goodness, Attila is coming," and thinking that if he is a fourth as bad as he's portrayed in the media, they should go to their tornado shelters.

Patterson also asked trustees to pray that God will give him wisdom regarding "interpersonal relationships and decisions." He said despite his reputation, it pains him to hurt people.

Trustees voted unanimously to name their highest award the "Paige Patterson Faithful Servant Award." They also named a professorship of women's studies for Dorothy Patterson. The campus center, which is under construction, will be named for the Pattersons.

The trustees decided that their executive committee will serve as the search committee for a new president. Serving will be Timothy Lewis of Troy, Ill., chairman; Jimmy Jacumin, Connelly Springs, N.C.; Jim Goldston, Raleigh, N.C.; Philip Mercer, Columbia, Md.; Ronald Cherry, Dallas; and Mark Harris, Augusta, Ga.

Patterson told trustees that choosing a new president is one of their most important roles. He told them to first make a profile for a new president. "As soon as you've done that, I urge you to throw it away and find God's man," he said. "God's man often doesn't fit the profile."

Neal told trustees his goal as interim president is to "continue the vision" at the school. In an interview after the meeting, Neal said he hopes to help facilitate the work of the faculty, staff and students. "I believe if we all pull together, in many ways, this can be our finest year," he said.

Neal said he will not be a candidate for president. He plans to retire next year.

-30-

Campus Crusade founder dies, leaves 'legacy of integrity, bold faith'

By Hannah Lodwick

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP) -- William R. Bright, a one-time California businessman who founded the world's largest Christian ministry, died July 19 from complications with pulmonary fibrosis. He was 81.

After living as a self-described "happy pagan," Bright became a born-again Christian in 1947. Campus Crusade for Christ evolved as he and his wife, Vonette, sought to bring the gospel to students at UCLA. Campus Crusade now has 26,000 full-time employees and 225,000 volunteers in 191 countries. It has groups aimed at reaching soldiers, entertainers, athletes and diplomats.

"Dr. Bill Bright was one of the most inspiring, innovative, visionary leaders of the Christian faith since its inception," said Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando. "He had the incredible capacity to walk comfortably with kings and presidents as well as with the common man. Dr. Bright leaves a

7/23/03

legacy of integrity and bold faith."

Many people credit the excitement of America's evangelical movement after World War II to Bright and his friend Billy Graham. In 1951, Bright and his wife decided to dedicate all their possessions to reaching non-Christians, and soon after, they created Campus Crusade.

The program celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2001, when Bright handed his presidency over to chosen successor Steve Douglass.

In addition to Campus Crusade, Bright worked furiously on other projects that fulfilled the Great Commission -- Jesus' command to take the gospel throughout the world.

In 1956, Bright wrote a 77-word booklet to explain the gospel message. "The Four Spiritual Laws" remains the most widely distributed religious booklet in history. Workers have translated it into 200 languages for more than 2.5 billion people.

The booklet makes the tenets of Christianity simple: (1) God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life; (2) man is sinful and separated from God, so he can't know and experience God's love; (3) Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin; and (4) we must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord to experience God's love. The booklet lists Bible verses to solidify the foundational statements.

Another of Bright's projects, 'JESUS,' a two-hour film on the life of Jesus, has reached more than 5.1 billion people in more than 800 languages and 234 countries. Funded mostly by a businessman friend of Campus Crusade, the film began in 1978 at a cost of \$6 million. It is the most widely viewed film in history.

Throughout his success, Bright remained true to his initial priorities. In 1996, he donated all of the \$1 million Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion he received to causes for prayer and fasting.

"Now, he has left Orlando for heaven and has left an impression that has not only touched Orlando but lifted the spiritual and moral welfare of the world," Henry said. "You always walked away from time spent with Dr. Bright stepping higher, feeling better and sensing you have been with a man who lived with a sense of the presence of Jesus Christ."

Survivors include his wife, two sons: Zachary, pastor of Divine Savior Presbyterian Church in California, and Bradley, a Campus Crusade staffer; a brother, a sister, and four grandchildren.

-30-

Baylor 'family dialogue' reveals deep divisions

By Marv Knox

WACO, Texas (ABP) -- Billed as a "family dialogue," a July 18 debate between Baylor University leaders and alumni often resembled a family feud.

Partisan applause regularly interrupted the back-and-forth discussion between four school officials and four representatives of the Baylor Alumni Association, which sponsored the two-hour-and-15-minute

7/23/03

event.

Although the dialogue occasionally prompted overtures of reconciliation, the dominant tone revealed deep divisions within what Baylor calls its "family." At one point, an alumni leader urged President Robert Sloan to resign and "let us have Baylor back."

More than 1,000 people -- mostly alumni -- gathered in Baylor's Ferrell Center. They traveled to Waco to address two primary issues -- Sloan's leadership style and the implications of "Baylor 2012," the university's 10-year strategic plan, on students, faculty, finances and the school's essential culture.

The three Baylor topics that captured the greatest amount of public attention in the past year -- a missing basketball player, a regent who had been cleared of charges that she tipped off students about a drug sting, and a weak football program -- weren't discussed.

"Let there be no confusing: This meeting is serious business," Os Chrisman, a Dallas attorney and interim executive vice president of the Alumni Association, said as he welcomed the crowd. "The Alumni Association of Baylor University aims to have a voice in the governing of this university from this day forward. "We're tired of firings. We are tired of contract breakings. We are tired of losing on athletic fields. And we are tired of apologizing for being Baylor alumni."

Regents chair Drayton McLane Jr. stressed: "Baylor University has been a great institution for over a hundred years. Times change." Consequently, he said, the regents instructed the president to develop a strategic plan. "The vision statement is the roadmap ... but it is not mandatory. We can adjust as we go."

The format of the dialogue resembled a presidential debate, with each side given equal time to answer questions related to four topics -- finances, academics, leadership and institutional values.

Concerning Baylor's financial status, David Brooks, chief financial officer, said the school launched Baylor 2012 during a difficult financial time. "Despite that, the university has continued to excel," he said. The university completed the 2002-03 fiscal year with a surplus of \$1.3 million in its operating budget. "In the short run and the long run, Baylor University, contrary to what some people are saying, is in very fine shape."

Responding for the alumni, Kent Reynolds, a certified public accountant from Waco and son of retired Baylor President Herbert Reynolds, said the university's financial model was based on a booming economy that "would encourage large donations and allow families to afford very large tuition increases." The economic downturn reversed those expectations, he said.

In order to meet enrollment expectations, he charged, Baylor has accepted hundreds of incoming students who do not meet the university's admission standards, which could "completely change the complexion of the student body."

President Sloan responded that Baylor has dramatically reduced its percentage of those "provisional students" during his presidency. But, he added, the percentage likely will rise from 4.7 percent to 12 percent to 13 percent next year at the request of regents.

Brooks acknowledged Baylor transferred \$4 million from reserves in order to produce the \$1.3 million surplus for 2002-03, but such a procedure is not unprecedented at Baylor, he added.

Brooks also defended the recent tuition increases -- from \$11,370 to \$16,750 in two years -- because Baylor's tuition had fallen far behind its peer universities. "We needed a one-time shift to occur," he said, and then subsequent increases should be in the 6 percent to 7 percent range.

7/23/03

Brooks noted the new "flat tuition" model has enabled the university to double the amount of scholarship funding available. But, Reynolds countered, that means Baylor is "asking [full-tuition] students to pay [for] other students. And that's wrong."

Alumni representative Jim Patton raised the issue of the faculty's trust in the administration. "Less than 30 percent of tenured faculty feel there is an atmosphere of trust at Baylor and agree with Baylor's direction," he said, referring to a recent survey by the administration. "There appears to be a deep division between tenured faculty and administration."

Faculty feel their input regarding university governance has been ignored and legitimate concerns minimized, claimed Patton, who also is chair-elect of Baylor's Faculty Senate. The faculty question the implementation of Baylor 2012, not the vision itself, he said. They also feel their role in faculty hiring has been minimized and strong candidates have been rejected by the administration for obscure reasons, he said.

Baylor Provost David Jeffrey acknowledged he shares Patton's concerns. "The divides are considerable, and they represent here at Baylor a genuine occasion for concern," said Jeffrey, who began as provost this summer.

Sloan said the fact the university conducted the faculty survey shows the administration's intent to respond to the issues. Administrators plan to establish specific strategies to meet the needs, he said.

Jeffrey pledged to "spend a lot of time talking and listening" with the faculty. "What we need to do in the university is create a true Christian intellectual community in which the active practice of the Christian virtues of patience and kindness and attention to each other really become the lifeblood of how we approach the business of growing and getting ahead," he said.

In a recent letter to alumni, Sloan acknowledged the administration had "made some missteps along the way." Asked in the forum to elaborate, he focused on communication. Among "communication issues" he cited are the low morale of older faculty and misunderstanding of the new emphasis placed on research.

"There no doubt have been many missteps along the way," Sloan added later. "There will be many more tomorrow. But I have a single ambition for Baylor University: That we are a university that takes seriously the confession, 'Jesus Christ is Lord.' And when we make that confession, we seek to work out all the implications of that confession, for everything related to academic excellence and nurturing our students."

McLane, the regents chair, cited two factors the regents did not take into account when 2012 was launched. "I don't think any of us comprehended how bold it really was," he said, "and so the change has been pretty dramatic in a number of areas." Second, he said, "the economy changed on us just as we were getting into this."

Glenn Biggs, a San Antonio businessman representing alumni, said Sloan's administration has "serious flaws." He cited a string of at least a dozen leadership traits, implying Sloan is not proficient in them. "In my judgment, that's the big gap in this administration," said Biggs, a former regents chair.

"I accept that and will work very hard to improve as a leader," Sloan said.

Asked if the administration and regents would adjust or reconsider the long-range plan in light of the financial circumstances, McLane said, "Absolutely." "The regents are responsible for seeing that we are fiscally sound."

"People do not give money in a controversy," warned Biggs. "The more you polarize ... the friends of Baylor, the more difficult it is to raise money."

Brooks, Baylor's CFO, noted the school's endowment regained \$65 million in market value in the last three months to near \$600 million. "We will live within our means," he said. "As the CFO of this institution, you can take that to the bank."

Responding to complaints the administration is giving too much scrutiny to the religious commitment of potential faculty, Provost Jeffrey said Baylor follows "to the letter" the interview process outlined in 1988 by former president Reynolds. Interviewees are given "the most fair possible hearings," he said. About 50 percent of Baylor's faculty hires are Baptist and others come from "all manner of denominations," Jeffrey added. "I have never been in such a wonderfully high-common-denominator ecumenical environment as I've experienced here at Baylor."

Patton, whose teaching career spans both the Reynolds and Sloan administrations, countered, "The type of questioning and tone of questioning has changed considerably in the last few years." He called for making the interview process more courteous, warning, "If we don't ... we will pay our dues."

Both Sloan and McLane said the administration will be held accountable for the way personnel are treated.

"Baylor University should operate by the highest principles of Christian commitment and relationship," Sloan said. "... That is a very deep commitment of my heart, and I believe it's a commitment that's heartfelt by every member of my administration.

"Have we made mistakes? Of course," he continued. "Have there been people who would have claims that they have not been fairly treated? Of course. It's a large and complex organization. It's our job to listen and to respond."

Biggs insisted the key leadership issue is credibility. "An issue of this kind is not going to go away," he said. "There is a great and wide growing expansion of people who are concerned about the values of Baylor and how they are being implemented."

The harshest criticism of Sloan was delivered by Bette McCall Miller, a teacher from Dallas and daughter of former Baylor president Abner McCall. She said Sloan's administration represents "a complete and forceful overthrow of an established system."

"The values of Baylor University have changed significantly in the last few years," she said, noting Sloan had not once used the word "Baptist" to describe the university. "Robert is changing the definition of what Christianity means at Baylor."

While Sloan "is not a fundamentalist," she said, his operation of the university is from "a page off the fundamentalist handbook." She said when fundamentalists such as Bob Jones, Jerry Falwell, Oral Roberts and W.A. Criswell wanted universities to match their visions, they went out and started them.

"President Sloan, I just make a teacher's salary, but I will be first to donate if you will go found one of your own and let us have Baylor back," Miller said.

Jeffrey immediately insisted he answer on Sloan's behalf, "because when a person has been effectively slandered, they should not be obliged to answer."

"People are using the word 'fundamentalist' in ways that I simply cannot comprehend," the provost said. "Fundamentalists do not hire Catholics and Jews and members of diverse mainline denominations. Fundamentalists do not embark upon a bold intellectual initiative of the caliber that Baylor has embarked upon. They are anti-intellectual. They are parochial. They want to close in around themselves and to resist change at all costs. That is not the Baylor that I recognize. It is not the Baylor that Robert Sloan represents. And it is not the Baylor that Robert Sloan has attracted so many fine people to admire."

Jeffrey said Baylor needs to maintain a rigorous focus on the integration of faith and life, including questioning prospective faculty about how faith and their academic disciplines intersect. Some people may be passionate about their faith but "have made no thoughtful engagement of their faith in any way, who exhibit in fact a kind of mindless piety," he said. "That kind of failure to think about things is a particular deficiency in university professors."

"It is incumbent upon us to take great care to ensure that there's an intellectual caliber to the expression of matters of Christian faith, consistent with Baylor's historic commitment to these issues."

-30-

CORRECTION:

There is an error in the July 17 ABP story, "British leader Blair tells Congress Iraq war, ideals of liberty justified." Due to an editing mistake, the fifth and sixth paragraphs created a misleading implication about a comment Blair made. They should be replaced with the following paragraph:

The enthusiastic reception Blair received from Congress was in stark contrast to the criticism he has been receiving in Great Britain. He has been subject to intense criticism over the war, especially recent revelations that he and Bush relied on questionable intelligence about Iraq's nuclear capabilities in building their case for war. When members of Congress applauded wildly for Blair, he quipped, "That's more than I deserve, and more than I'm used to, quite frankly." Lawmakers responded with laughter and more applause.