

289

TWO EIGHT & NINE

FALL 2012 | VOL. 32, NO.3



A LEGACY OF  
*Leadership*

COMMEMORATIVE EDITION





## THE PRESIDENTS

Current Grace President  
Dr. Ron Manahan (left),  
Grace's fourth president,  
Dr. John Davis (right) and  
Grace's third president,  
Dr. Homer Kent, Jr.

# *THE GRACE* *to* SURVIVE & THRIVE

1937. Golden Gate Bridge opens. Amelia Earhart disappears at sea. The Hindenburg airship bursts into flames. "Look Magazine" goes on sale. Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Fred Astaire, Bing Crosby, Duke Ellington and Tommy Dorsey are big names in music and entertainment. J. R. R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" is published. The church begins singing "Wherever He Leads I'll Go." Seventy-five years have passed. It's been a long time. I wonder what the next 75 years will bring? But the spring 2013 issue of 2|8|9 will tackle that. For now, the past.

Grace Theological Seminary began in 1937, a period of substantive change between the Great Depression and World War II. The tumult of the Depression was lessening, though unemployment was still high. By 1937 profits and wages were back at 1929 levels. But during the recession of 1937-38 the American economy sank. Industrial production dropped 30 percent. U.S. unemployment (as percent of civilian workforce) increased from 14 percent to 19 percent. It was hardly a time to begin a higher education institution. But Grace Theological Seminary began nonetheless.

Grace began in challenging times, and God's mercy and grace enabled the seminary to take root and grow. Our name "Grace" captures so well the idea why the institution has endured and prospered for these 75 years. It was all God's grace.

Our institutional history, reflected in our upcoming 75th anniversary book, includes numerous adjustments and changes. Grace Theological Seminary moved from Ohio to Indiana (1939) and met in what is now

Mount Memorial Hall. The collegiate division of Grace Theological Seminary (1948) was initiated. The first building, McClain Hall, was constructed in 1951. Additional buildings were added along the way: Lancer Gym and Philathea Hall (1958), Alpha Hall (1964), Beta Hall (1966), Morgan Library (1969), Cooley Science Center (1978), and others. The Prison Education Program was started in (1986). The list goes on. Only by God's grace were these initiatives accomplished. To Him be the glory.

Over the years God drew people to Grace to serve Him. Good faculty cared deeply about students and their learning. Staff members added sorely needed skills. Certain people filled essential administrative roles. People prayed. Donors gave. In spite of our sinfulness, flaws, weaknesses, failings and errors, God did His mighty work among employees and students.

And God drew students. Thousands of them. They were challenged, encouraged, comforted, taught, prayed for and loved. Employees were privileged to be mentors of students. Through these humble circumstances God has done remarkable things, scattering alumni around the globe. Thank God for students. Thank God for alumni.

The spring 2013 issue of 2|8|9 will focus on the next 75 years. Now to the first 75.



*Ronald E. Manahan*

Dr. Ronald E. Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82) | President



## 2 DR. ALVA J. McCLAIN HERALD OF GRACE

Dr. McClain founded Grace Theological Seminary in 1937. Read how McClain, a college drop-out, became Grace Theological Seminary's first president, and although sick for most of his life, passionately proclaimed the Truth in and out of the classroom.



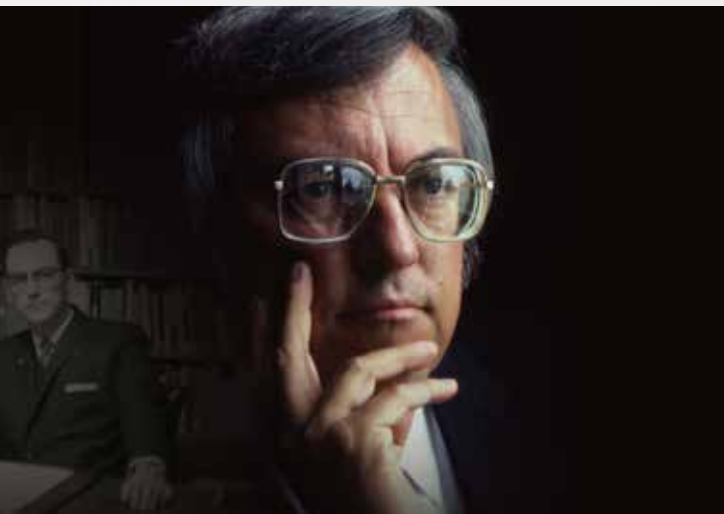
## 7 DR. HERMAN A. HOYT LABORER OF GRACE

Grace College & Seminary thrived under Dr. Hoyt's relentless spirit, enrollment exploded and multiple facilities were built. His leadership drove significant growth, but nothing matched his dedication to the Word of God.



## 12 DR. HOMER A. KENT, JR. STEWARD OF GRACE

Under the quiet leadership of Dr. Kent, Grace College & Seminary continued to grow, maintain sound financial footing and equip students to answer God's calling, no matter the direction.



17

## DR. JOHN J. DAVIS GUARDIAN OF GRACE

Dr. Davis' leadership saw Grace College & Seminary through one of its toughest decades. Read how his commitment to Grace's mission and his multiple giftings made him the right man for the job.



22

## 2011-12 FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Take a look at Grace's 2011-12 financial performance and consider celebrating Grace College & Seminary's 75th anniversary by donating a gift in honor of one of the past presidents.



289

## TWO EIGHT & NINE

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Volume 32 | Number 3

### Institutional Mission

Grace is an evangelical Christian community of higher education which applies biblical values in strengthening character, sharpening competence and preparing for service.

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Opinions expressed by individuals in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Grace College & Seminary. Grace College & Seminary reserves the right to edit alum note submissions.

### On The Cover

Grace President Dr. Ron Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82) holding a photo of Dr. Alva J. McClain, founder of Grace Theological Seminary.

### What's In A Name?

Two Eight & Nine references Ephesians 2: 8-9, the verses upon which Grace College & Seminary were founded. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast."

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INSIDE



# *DR. ALVA J.* HERALD OF GRACE *McCLAIN*

THE RUNNER • THE NEW MAN • THE DEFINER • THE TEACHER • THE GIANT • THE HERALD

*by* ANDREW JONES (BA 11)

## THE RUNNER

The story of Grace College and Theological Seminary begins, not with an inspiration, but a collision. Not with a theologian, but an athlete.

In 1909, Alva Jay McClain — known by close friends as “Mick” — was a swift-swinging batter and a particularly fast runner. When he began college classes at the University of Washington, nearly 200 miles from his home in Sunnyside, Wash., he didn’t care much for studying. He joined the football team, became quarterback, scored big. All things considered, his future was made.

Until the collision. One day “Mick” was on the cusp of sliding into first base for a close single. But something went wrong. Dust flew, bodies slammed, and in a fraction of a moment, McClain’s sports career was over. A spike on the first baseman’s cleat had done severe damage to the young runner’s shinbone. He went to the hospital. A type of blood poisoning developed, one of the first signs of a lifelong physical weakness.

When the leg healed, he dropped out of college and began working in the orchard business with his father. It seemed to be his only option. He was only 20.

## THE NEW MAN

Only God can take an athletic 20-year-old with no clear path ahead of him and change him into a seminary president. McClain is now celebrated for the things that came to fruition because of his devotion to God’s grace and truth. But it was not always that way.

His pursuit of that idea began later in life than one might expect of such a man. He didn’t claim faith in Christ until two years after the baseball accident and subsequent illness.

It was a prophecy conference at his home church (led by Louis S. Bauman who would later become McClain’s mentor and colleague at Ashland College) that led McClain to Christ and ultimately a career in biblical studies and teaching. In quick succession he attended The Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Xenia Theological Seminary in Xenia, Ohio, as well as Occidental College in L.A. In fourteen years he had earned his B.A. and his Th.M., and in 1918 he was ordained. He served at First Brethren Church of Philadelphia as senior pastor, joining the faculty of Ashland College as a professor of theology soon after.



**THE ATHLETE** / Alva J. McClain swings for the fences.

**McCLAIN** *Herald of Grace*

All this time he maintained a reputation for being quiet and calm in his everyday mannerisms. Unlike the days of his youth, nothing really riled him anymore. Nothing, that is, barring a mishandling of the Truth.

He was impatient with mystery. He was impatient with messiness. He was impatient with ambiguity. He was impatient with a lack of boundaries. He wanted things to be defined.

Few things could bring out the fighter in McClain like an opportunity to uphold and defend God's Word.

## THE DEFINER

On April 24, 1930, McClain made the following proposition to a Brethren think tank: "[The ministers of the Brethren Church] should be confirmed in [their]

beliefs and so fortified that they will be able to propagate them in competition with those of an opposite belief. This can be done only in our own seminary."

In his days as a Bible teacher at Ashland, McClain had got his wish for a seminary. History never tells us whether he regretted the idea or not, but the torrent of dissension that surrounded that school for Brethren ministers was certainly unprecedented.

There can hardly be a discussion of McClain's seminary and its split from Ashland that does not involve a sense of confusion, frustration and near despair. Nobody could agree on how the school was to be run, and both sides of the argument made considerable blunders. But the simple fact stands: McClain refused to compromise on matters of biblical truth. And he refused to let

posterity suffer because no one had taken to task the sloppy modernism that he believed was creeping into Ashland's values.

So he fought. Long and hard. Throwing tactical punches made of ironclad systematic reasoning, biting the Brethren's bullet where he believed he needed to, like on the day he was fired from Ashland.

After the fight, a group of men sat in conference at a table on the top floor of the Free Methodist Publishing House, now Grace's Mount Memorial Hall, praying that God would do a mighty work through Grace Theological Seminary. Among them was McClain: Sore and weakened from the contention, but a hero of Truth.

## THE TEACHER

Ron Henry (BA 58, BD 62), one of McClain's students, remembers the classes with him. He would come in after all the students had gathered and sit down quietly. Then he would open his mouth. And everything would be silent but for the impassioned words of Dr. McClain. He moved skillfully from point to point, taking the most complex of theological matters and turning them into clear, beautiful pictures of what it meant to be saved by grace.

McClain served the fledgling institution as president for 25 years (1937-62) never backing down on his allegiance to Jesus, his Lord. Students seeking to get a glimpse of



**FIRST-FRUIT** / The students and faculty at the opening of Grace Theological Seminary in the fall of 1937 at Akron, Ohio's First Brethren Church.

the big picture that McClain lived in every day studied and even served the school under him. It became the epitome of the place he had wanted it to be: a haven for the Truth and a training ground for the eager. The school had its inevitable winters; conflicts, disagreements, foibles and the like. But McClain always believed in God's ability to complete a good work in that which He had started.

## THE GIANT

One day in 1967, McClain (now almost 80 years old) expressed a disappointment to his friend Lester Pifer (ThDip 47, BTh 50, DD 74), then the leader of Grace Brethren Home Missions and a close friend of McClain's. "He was very concerned because he couldn't drive anymore," remembers Pifer, "and he wanted to go up to Chicago for the dedication of the New Scofield Bible ... [because] he was one of the editors."

Pifer, moved at his aging mentor's plight, offered to drive him to the big city.

"You know I'll have to take my wheelchair?" McClain told Pifer.

"I'll take care of that, Dr. McClain," was Pifer's response. He went to the retired Grace College & Seminary president's house, loaded the wheelchair into the trunk and carried the elderly man to his car. Pifer and his wife along with Mrs. Josephine McClain all drove to Chicago that day.



**NEW SCOFIELD BIBLE** / Dr. Alva J. McClain (bottom right) with the editorial committee of The New Scofield Reference Bible.

During a prayer meeting, Pifer, inspired by the gravity of the moment, took the only picture taken at that prestigious assembly. In the photograph, gathered among other great men who had given their lives and minds to the study and preaching of God's word, "Mick," a slender, elderly gentleman, sits in his wheelchair. "It was shortly after that he passed away," says Pifer, ending his narrative with a simple, "I loved Dr. McClain."

The diminutive and frail founder of Grace College and Theological Seminary used to say to his classes, "It is too bad that just when a man gets to the place where he knows a few things, he grows weak and dies." Ironical for a man who knew and did so much. Ironical because, by the time he died in 1968, that sickly theologian was undoubtedly a giant of the faith.

## THE HERALD

McClain wrote prolifically as he grew older, though he published very little. His magnum opus, "The Greatness of the Kingdom," is one of those books where it's hard to see the author in your head. The writer speaks of a universal plan, a massive God, a victorious King and a great Kingdom on history's horizon. You would never have guessed that a man, wheelchair-bound, cringing at that old baseball wound, would have seen life as being so grand and glorious in light of its Creator.

"Nothing like this has ever happened before," he said in his last chapel sermon at the school he had founded. "In all the ages of human history past, no age was ever like the one in which we live today. Grace — the grace of God in Christ — is on the throne!" \*

JANUARY 20, 1953

Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes the 34th President of the United States

MARCH 26, 1953

Jonas Salk announces a successful polio vaccination

JANUARY 20, 1961

John F. Kennedy becomes the 35th President of the United States

AUGUST 13, 1961

East Germany begins construction on Berlin Wall

McCLAIN

*Herald of Grace*



## THE EXAMPLE

McClain historian, history professor and dean of Grace's School of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Mark Norris (C 04) wrote a chapter in "The Activist Impulse" on McClain's influence in the crosshatching of evangelicalism and the Anabaptist tradition. Norris continues to research Grace's first president and the lasting effects he had on the school and on Christianity in America.

"When I saw the human side of Alva J. McClain, I began to relate to him more. The same man who loved baseball as a youth also developed a new systematized theology for the Brethren. He was a brilliant, resolute man and a remarkable progressive given his context. He once wrote that the new statement of faith he composed for the seminary could never be changed, stern stuff for a man whose background did not even claim a specific foundational creed.

"Because he and his generation were so focused in purpose, they were able to open Grace Theological Seminary during one of the worst times in U.S. history, and they did this without even charging tuition.

"Though a quiet, reserved, sickly man of diminutive stature, McClain commanded respect when he walked into a room, and his students still remember him fondly for his ability to sift through complicated biblical passages, presenting them with clarity and conviction. I value his example as much as I was fascinated by his role in evangelical history."

AUGUST 30, 1951

Dedication of McClain Hall

APRIL 8, 1958

Dedication of Philathea Hall and Lancer Gym



# *DR. HERMAN A.* *HOYT*

THE DISSENTER • THE RIGHT-HAND MAN • THE OPPOSITE • THE RECORD-BREAKER • THE DOER • THE STORM-CHASER

## LABORER OF GRACE

*by* ANDREW JONES (BA 11)

HOYT *Laborer of Grace*

## THE DISSENTER

On June 4, 1937, two professors were fired from Ashland College and Theological Seminary. They had been given the choice to resign or be dismissed on grounds that, at the time, were not altogether clear. They chose dismissal. Quietly, but not without a plan, they took their leave.

Two nights before, on June 2, a prayer meeting convened at the home of Dr. J. C. Beal. The two professors were in attendance. They knew that their imperiled jobs were threatening to cause a significant rift in the Brethren Church. But rift or not, they couldn't tolerate the watering down of truth that they believed was becoming epidemic at Ashland.

Alva J. McClain and Herman Hoyt (BD 50, ThM 39, ThD 46) along with an assembly of theologians, pastors and evangelists made two choices at the close of that prayer meeting: first, to establish a seminary that would be faithful to resolute biblical truths that defined their vision of Christian higher education. Second, to separate from Ashland for good.

Hoyt and McClain went home that summer night with the future looming over them like the gargantuan dust storms that had battered the U.S. prairielands just the year before, storms that left devastation in their wake.

## THE RIGHT-HAND MAN

Ron Henry (BA 58, BD 62), a former history professor at Grace and dean of admissions for 36 years, is keen to remember the adversity into which the seminary was born. "History tells us that the year 1937 was the worst year of the depression," says Henry. "I can't think of a worse time to start a school in a town where these men didn't even live. They stepped out in faith, and God honored it."

With the notes from their teaching years at Ashland and a passion for a Christ-centered, fundamentally biblical education, the founders of Grace began a long and tenuous journey "to know Christ and make Him known," as the clarion call of their mission stated.

It was a haphazard project, not doomed to fail but certainly not guaranteed to work. In fact, the odds were stacked against it financially as classes were all but free. But it grew slowly, and by the time McClain had been replaced as president by Hoyt in 1962, there were 102 seminary students, this up from approximately 40 when the school started 25 years before.

When the time came for McClain's leadership to become a background instrument, there was hardly any question as to who would pick up where he left off.

"The task of serving as McClain's right-hand man was one which Hoyt performed admirably," writes Ronald Clutter in his history of the seminary. "No superior could expect more devoted support from a subordinate ... ." On those days when the aging president's health would keep him bound to his bed, it was Hoyt who would employ his robust, hard-working attitude to keep the school alive and healthy.

## THE OPPOSITE

"Dr. Hoyt's personality was quite different from Dr. McClain's," remembers Bill Male (BD 55), who was a student under both and eventually dean of the college. Male is one of many to remember that Grace's second president was somewhat hardboiled in his approach to just about anything. Students and colleagues alike recall his sternness, his "rugged constitution" as Clutter put it. Tales abound of passionately pounded tables, abrasive encounters, brash dismissals, elevated confrontations and the like. Hoyt was hardly a personality to be trifled with and, when things weren't as he'd expected or ordained them to be, it was hardly pleasant.

But Male also remembers a rarely seen compassionate side of Hoyt. "I remember sitting in with him during disciplinary situations with students. After he had dismissed a student, he'd say to him, 'We have two relationships. The first has just

MARCH 8, 1965

First U.S. combat troops  
arrive in Vietnam

ended. But we are still brothers in Christ. And as your brother, I will do anything I can to help you along in life.”

Dr. Jared Burkholder, associate professor of history at Grace and a close observer of evangelicalism’s development as it relates to the Brethren movement, submits that Hoyt and others were concerned and directly in opposition to the way society was headed. “The mission that he saw the school having [was] to give an education that was an alternative ... from secular or worldly learning.” It was the 60s, after all. Hoyt had seen the devastation that divisiveness could cause. The Ashland split was still fresh in his mind. He would not let this fledgling institution fall prey to corrosion from the inside.

So he was rough. A taskmaster in the minds of some. But he was nothing if not completely dedicated to the authority of the Word of God and to Grace.

## THE RECORD-BREAKER

The numbers and achievements speak for themselves. While Hoyt was president (1962-76):

- The seminary increased by 200.
- The college increased by 258.
- Two dormitories were built along with a dining hall.



**A TIME OF GROWTH** / Dr. Hoyt looks over the expansion plans for Grace College & Seminary.

- *Morgan Library and Learning Center was built in the downhill shadow of McClain Hall.*
- *Regional accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools was earned.*
- *He traveled over 50,000 miles annually in a nationwide fundraising effort.*

During his lifetime he wrote hundreds of articles on Brethren history, modern controversies, biblical nuances and much more. He published nearly a dozen

full length works on biblical subjects that challenged his era and gave thorough, thoughtful analyses of otherwise confusing portions of Scripture.

In a word, he was completely undaunted. “He was a guy who could work on an absolute minimum of sleep,” says Male who often accompanied Hoyt on his fundraising tours. “He could be out traveling ... get back at two or three o’clock in the morning and then teach at seven-thirty the next morning. He was very healthy and strong.” A man with seemingly limitless energy and a man of endless vision.

1966

Dedication of Beta Hall,  
first men's residence hall

## HOYT *Laborer of Grace*

### THE DOER

Both before and after his presidency, Hoyt was an active participant in overseeing and tending to the new Brethren scene that emerged after the Ashland schism. While he was assisting McClain as secretary of the seminary, he became president of what was to one day become the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (FGBC). And through his involvement with church publications came the establishment of the Brethren Missionary Herald Company of which he was a co-founder and board member.

There was barely an element of the Brethren movement of the mid-20th century that Hoyt did not have his hands

in. His philosophy was simple and his goals ambitious: Christ's return is imminent and we must prepare the world for it.

"[Hoyt and his administration] did have a strong sense of urgency," explains Burkholder. "That was part of what made them successful and part of what contributed to the expansion. When Hoyt and others talked about how bad the world is and about the Christian's mission and about Christ's return, people resonated with that. It got them emotionally involved."

Hoyt's campaigning for the school on the basis of these concerns reveals an essential part of his personality: he wanted more than anything to be a good and faithful servant

in the face of snarling ethical, social and religious opposition. The people who chose to attend the burgeoning school because of his message were the ones who were captivated by his sincerity and excited by his urgency.

### THE STORM-CHASER

Hoyt passed away in 2000. After his retirement from the presidency, he had seen a great deal of continuing success at the college and seminary. He had faced the storm nose to nose and, perhaps intimidated by his hardened features, the storm of dissension and division had turned tail. Grace was safe; the sweat of many men's brow had secured it, but the lifeblood of this man assured it. \*



**HOYT'S ADVISORS** / Dr. Hoyt meets with his administrative team.



**COLLEAGUES & FRIENDS** / Dr. Hoyt (right) with Dr. Homer A. Kent, Jr.

69

JANUARY 20, 1969

Richard M. Nixon becomes  
37th President

JULY 20, 1969

Apollo 11: Neil Armstrong and  
Buzz Aldrin walk on the moon

72

1972

Watergate scandal

73

JANUARY 22, 1973

Roe v. Wade



# *THE 'BUMP' DEAL*

In the following humorous story, Dr. Bill Male (BD 55) recalls an ironic instance in which Dr. Hoyt faced off with an initiative he approved of.

“The campus was growing. We were starting to get more buildings. And there was the main drive between the library and McClain Hall and Philathea. The traffic there got a bit heavy sometimes and a bit fast too. The dean of students at that time decided that he would put some speed bumps in. We talked about this in ‘The PAC’ — our nickname for the team of school administrators including myself, the president, Dr. Kent [and three others] — and it was decided that we would go with the speed bumps.

“So these bumps were installed while Dr. Hoyt happened to be out on a fundraising trip. He got home at about three o’clock in the morning, came whipping up that drive and hit the speed bumps. I know his beloved Buick bounced off them, and I think the transmission may have rested on the bumps. I also know that the speed bumps were gone the next morning.”

69

MAY 2, 1969

Betty Zimmer Morgan  
Library dedicated

AUGUST 23, 1969

Grace Theological Seminary and Grace College  
incorporated as Grace Schools in the State of Indiana

2019

11

NATIONAL  
BANK

CONGRATS

GRACE

COLLEGE

NOW

ACCREDITED



# *DR. HOMER A. KENT, JR.*

THE PASTOR-TEACHER • THE RELUCTANT LEADER • THE NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLAR • THE GENTLEMAN'S GENTLEMAN • THE QUIRKY QUALITIES • THE SUSTAINER

## STEWARD OF GRACE

*by KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK*

## THE PASTOR-TEACHER

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After graduating from Bob Jones University in 1947, Dr. Homer A. Kent, Jr. came to Grace Theological Seminary where he earned his M.Div., Th.M. and Th.D. “I came to find ... a truly biblical theology, a careful teaching of the Scripture. Not just courses about the Bible ... but where we studied what the text said. And at the same time, a school where there was a vision of the need for a ministry to others, to put to use what we were being taught.” Later, in his inaugural address, Kent would tell his audience that this engagement was the kind of teaching and atmosphere he wanted to ensure would continue.

While working on his M.Div., Kent began teaching at Grace College. In a 2007 interview he explains how his ministry call became fulfilled through teaching. “I had given my life to the Lord for some kind of career ministry, and in those days you thought in terms of ... pastor or a missionary. But when I graduated I was still a bachelor and my phone was not ringing off the hook for churches anxious to hire a bachelor preacher. Dr. Herman Hoyt (BD 50, ThM 39, ThD 46) who was the dean of the seminary and the college asked me if I would teach English composition.” Soon, Kent was teaching first and second year Greek, and in 1953, he married Beverly Page of Long Beach, Calif.

Not long after, Dr. Alva J. McClain, president at the time, called Kent to his house one Sunday afternoon and asked him to consider becoming a teacher as his ministry. After that, Kent never looked back. “I discovered that not all the best Christian leaders were pastors or missionaries; in fact, there was one man named Martin Luther who was a college professor, and that was pretty respectable I thought, since he made quite a mark on the world.” During the McClain presidency, Kent became the assistant dean of the seminary under Hoyt. When Hoyt became president, Kent was promoted to dean of the seminary. He served in that role for 14 years before he was appointed as president in February 1975.

## THE RELUCTANT LEADER

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When Kent accepted the presidency after Hoyt’s resignation, Grace Chairman of the Board, Dr. Kenneth B. Ashman (BTh 38, BD 51), knew it was with a bit of reluctance. Kent was zealous for the Word of God — not for administration. The Board worked extensively with Kent to persuade him to become Grace’s next president. They were convinced he was the best man for the job, citing his exceptional qualities of “spirituality, high moral convictions, doctrinal soundness, denominational acceptance, academic excellence, good judgment and a sweet reasonableness necessary for a leader.”

KENT

*Steward of Grace*



**A FAMILY MAN** / Dr. Kent with his wife Beverly (center), daughters Rebecca and Katherine and son Daniel.



**THE RESIDENT PRESIDENT** / Dr. Kent could often be found writing in his office, teaching in the classroom or talking with students on campus.

And perhaps it was because Kent never aspired to the presidency and did not jump at the chance when offered (numerous times), that the Board believed that, with Kent, they'd have a leader entirely dependent on the strength of God. In his inaugural address, Kent confirmed just that: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)." For Paul, this truth was no excuse for diminished effort. It was not an escape from his own responsibilities. But it was a simple, unashamed and powerful statement of his faith, that God always enables His servants to do what He wants done."

## THE NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLAR

Kent is a New Testament theologian and a prolific writer. From 1967 to 1973 he served as a translator for the New International Version. He has authored 21 books, many of

them in-depth, exhaustive commentaries on New Testament books.

Over the course of many years, Kent translated the New Testament from Greek into his own translation. It was part of his discipline to translate one or two verses a day. Previous pastor of the Grace Brethren Church of Columbus and Grace's Chairman of the Board Dr. Jim Custer (BA 60, BD 63, ThM 77, DD 91) calls him "one of the best Greek exegetes alive today." But even with his superb intellect, scholarship and credentials, Custer says Kent "would consider it an honor if you wanted to have a cup of coffee with him. That's just the man he is."

## THE GENTLEMAN'S GENTLEMAN

If Hoyt was a taskmaster with a commanding presence and tenacious temperament, Kent

was a team player, with a calming spirit. After Kenneth Briggs, the religion editor of The New York Times, visited Grace in 1980, he aptly described Kent as "unflappable" in his article "Evangelical Colleges Reborn." Custer describes him as a meek man: "He was always consistently 110 percent of the time reflective, gentle, kind. He had no interest in promoting Kent." Kent's humility was and is perhaps his chief quality.

## THE QUIRKY QUALITIES

Besides his graciousness, some of the most endearing and admirable qualities about Kent are his methodical organization, his unwavering self-discipline and his attention to detail. Nancy Weimer (BA 75) who has been the administrative assistant to the past two Grace presidents and to current President Dr. Ronald Manahan (MDiv 70, ThM 77, ThD 82) says Kent

MAY 4, 1979

Margaret Thatcher becomes  
England's Prime Minister

JANUARY 20, 1981

Ronald Reagan elected  
40th President

AUGUST 12, 1981

IBM introduces first personal  
computer (MS-DOS)

is unquestionably the most organized person she has ever known. "When writing a book he would plot out how long it would take him. He would assess the due date and then work backwards determining how many chapters he would need to write each week or month and then how many verses that meant he had to translate each day. He never missed a deadline. Never."

Ron Henry (BA 58, BD 62), dean of admissions and professor under Kent's presidency, remembers when Kent told him one day how he'd gone through all of his grade books and tallied up how many students he'd taught over the years. "He taught for fifty years," exclaims Henry. "I don't even know where all my grade books are," he chuckles. But in all of his radical planning and mindfulness of the details, it was never exasperating to others. It was always a gift and, at the very least, amusing.

## THE SUSTAINER

The combination of Kent's organization, scholarship and graciousness made him a steward of Grace College & Seminary. He wanted the school to continue to grow, to maintain its sound financial footing and to provide the kind of education for young people that would equip them to answer God's call wherever it would lead.

After Kent's appointment, the college was granted accreditation by the North Central Association (NCA) in March of

1976, after what Kent says was a difficult twenty-year pursuit. This significant achievement was quickly followed by many others. The seminary began offering two new master's programs: Master of Arts in Missions and Master of Theology in Missions. In March of 1978, after the Chester E. Cooley Science Center was completed, the college began a nursing program and six tennis courts were constructed. Kent witnessed the highest enrollment of the seminary to this day. In 1980, there were 447 registered students. The college enrollment was at 893 — up 17 percent from 1978.

In 1982, Dr. Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr. was hired to create and grow the Department of Biblical Counseling in the seminary. That same year the seminary also received accreditation by the North Central Association. This accreditation proved critical as graduates began experiencing hiring difficulty, specifically those who wanted to serve as chaplains in the military.

Grace also remained in the black every year except Kent's last. The school's financial difficulties resulted in a decline in enrollment. The college landscape was shifting. Grace College was fighting to establish itself as a liberal arts college rather than a precursor for those who wanted a Bible degree from the seminary. Further, although the seminary used to be one of the primary institutions offering advanced Bible degrees, other colleges were beginning to establish seminaries

and graduate degree options in order to attract a greater market share. During much of Kent's administration, there wasn't even a line item in the budget for marketing the seminary.

As Grace began to struggle financially, the Board decided it needed a fund-raiser. The Board approached Kent with the fundraising need. "Kent thought seriously and decided it wasn't him and where he was comfortable," recalls Weimer. After coming to a mutual decision to end his presidency, Kent announced his resignation on May 11, 1985, at the annual recognition banquet for faculty and staff, and he expressed his desire to finish his ministry at Grace in the classroom teaching. When he retired in 1999, he'd served Grace for 50 years. That same year, Grace named its newly built residence hall, Kent Hall, in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Kent's service. \*



**A PASSIONATE PARTNERSHIP /**  
Dr. Kent kisses his wife at his inauguration.

AUGUST, 1980

New graduate programs in  
Biblical Counseling

JUNE, 1981

Grace rejoins the Mid-Central  
College Conference

JUNE, 1982

Regional accreditation  
achieved for the seminary

KENT *Steward of Grace*



# THE CRUX OF IT

Dr. Jim Custer (BA 60, BD 63, ThM 77, DD 91), former pastor of one of the largest Grace Brethren churches in the country, is one of Kent's protégés and biggest fans. While a student at Grace College he visited the Kent household weekly to take voice lessons from Mrs. Kent. This gave him a chance to observe the godly values of Dr. Kent's private family life. Custer often teased their three children that he was their "adopted older brother."

"To know him is to love him. We Brethren are passionate about the Word and very concerned that we be faithful to the Scripture. Sometimes that excites an exaggerated ego, a dominant aggressiveness that's not pretty. It can seem to be harsh, unkind, unsociable, ungracious. Kent somehow missed that gene. Somehow that never found a place to grow up in his personality. When we get to the Bema seat judgment and the believers are awarded for their works, I'm going to find a wheelbarrow and help him carry his awards over to his apartment."



# *DR. JOHN J.* *DAVIS*

THE RENAISSANCE MAN • THE COMMUNITY RESOURCE • THE OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLAR • THE STALWART

## GUARDIAN OF GRACE

*by* KERITH ACKLEY-JELINEK

**DAVIS** *Guardian of Grace*



**THE REAL-LIFE INDIANA JONES** / Dr. Davis with his archeology students discussing an artifact.

## THE RENAISSANCE MAN

At Dr. John J. Davis' (MDiv 62, ThM 64, ThD 67) inauguration on Oct. 10, 1986, Neal Carlson, chairman of the community advisory committee, had the audience laughing as his list of descriptors for Davis continued on and on. "We are proud that Dr. Davis is a professor, a lecturer, a writer, a photographer, a fisherman, a hunter, a botanist, an archaeologist, a scholar, a roller-skater, an evangelist, a musician, a father, a husband, a former Boy Scout, a Kiwanian." Ask anyone to describe Davis and it's almost certain they'll call him a renaissance man. He is a jack — and master — of all trades.

Ron Henry (BA 58, BD 62) remembers, when he and Davis were faculty members, how Davis developed an interest in hockey. He had never played it himself, but within months Davis was a color commentator for Fort Wayne's minor league hockey team. "I remember hearing the play-by-play announcer say he'd never seen anybody who hadn't played hockey become so well versed in understanding the nuances of the game," marvels Henry.

Davis has participated in 13 archaeological expeditions to Jordan and Israel as a senior staff member. He's recorded five classical country CDs, three Hawaiian CDs and recently produced a comedy music CD.

Henry says that every Thursday night you can find him and a few others playing a "Jam Session" at Grace Village in Winona Lake.

## THE COMMUNITY RESOURCE

Davis' broad and limitless interests were especially useful when he assumed the presidency and took on the responsibility to cultivate major donors and continue to bridge the gap between the academic and local communities. They also gave him numerous opportunities in Grace's local community and beyond, throughout the world.

Henry remembers Davis using his love of the outdoors as a bridge to the community. "For decades, Davis wrote articles for outdoor journals, magazines and newspapers," recalls Henry. "Outdoor Scene," his weekly column in the Warsaw Times Union, appeared for 31 years.

Davis also spent a lot time at Breeding Cigar Store in Warsaw, Ind. Men from all walks of life would gather there to unwind from the day, and Davis enjoyed their camaraderie. During a July 2012 interview, Davis remembers, "The owner of the place ended up having a Bible in there because at the back table we got into biblical discussions."

NOVEMBER 9, 1989

Berlin Wall opens to the West

90

FEBRUARY 7, 1990

Communist Party relinquishes sole power in Soviet government

AUGUST 2, 1990

Iraqi troops invade Kuwait initiating the Persian Gulf War

DECEMBER 25, 1990

First World Wide Web server and browser completed

## THE OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLAR

When he and Davis were fellow seminary students, Henry remembers Davis' eager capacity for scholarship. "We were in our Homiletics class and we'd received our assignment to come up with a sermon outline based on a certain passage of Scripture. I had worked and worked and worked on an outline, and when we came to class, Davis showed up with four [outlines]."

Davis has contributed numerous articles to various books, dictionaries and journals, including: Harper's Bible Dictionary, The Higley Sunday School Commentary, The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia, the Evangelical Commentary, The New

International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology, Holman Bible Dictionary, and Hermeneutics, Inerrancy & The Bible. He has served as a translator for the New International Version of the Bible and is a contributor to the study edition of that Bible. He has also contributed to the study edition of the New American Standard Bible and the Christian Life Edition of the New King James Version of the Bible. He's published 19 books and has taught in 45 different countries. Chairman of the Grace Board Dr. Jim Custer (BA 60, BD 63, ThM 77, DD 91) says, "Davis' knowledge of the land of Israel, its customs, history and folklore, plus his understanding of the Old Testament law, literature and covenant is profound and prophetic."

## THE STALWART

Although the counseling program under the seminary was increasing when Davis became president, the M.Div enrollment was declining. Davis was one of the few who discerned early on that something was awry. Bill Male (BD 55), who hired Dr. Larry Crabb as director of the counseling program, says although the master's program thrived under the leadership of Crabb, several years into the program, Crabb began to change his position on the purpose of the degree. "Originally, we were all in agreement that the counseling program should be about developing counseling skills for pastors. But it started to become more about counseling than pastoring," recalls Male. Davis began



**COMMUNITY CONNECTOR** / Dr. Davis is a prolific writer and has authored more than 15 books, many of them on the Old Testament.



**THE FISHERMAN** / Dr. Davis is an avid outdoorsman and an award-winning outdoor writer.

90

1990

Admitted to the membership of Independent Colleges of Indiana Foundation

2019

19

DAVIS *Guardian of Grace*

receiving letters from churches where Grace counseling graduates were criticizing pastors and dividing churches.

Consequently, the seminary began suffering from credibility issues. In 1989, Davis dissolved the counseling program after approaching Crabb, who Davis says left graciously, recognizing the issues at hand. “We all hated for Larry to move on. He’s a national figure, very well known, highly respected ... and he understood,” said Davis in a Grace interview earlier this year. Furthermore, it brought criticism



**THE SCHOLAR** / Dr. Davis is a sought out lecturer and has taught at more than 20 schools across the globe.

from the faculty because Davis made the decision without bringing it before them. Nevertheless, Davis’ administrative assistant Nancy Weimer (BA 75) says, “He knew the program needed to end. It took a person of his character and personality to do it.”

As the counseling department ended, divisions within Grace seminary began to escalate, and Dr. John Whitcomb (BD 51, ThM 53, ThD 57), one of the seminary’s most respected and popular professors was at the heart of it. Whitcomb had been teaching side by side with Davis since the mid-60s. They’d written a series of books about Old Testament history together, and Custer says they were “brother to brother” in all that they did. But Whitcomb began to suggest that Grace’s faculty was no longer adhering to a literal interpretation of the Word of God. As an extremely popular conference speaker, Whitcomb was invited to ministerial groups and used that pulpit to criticize his colleagues and to express his concerns about the reliability of Grace’s historic stand for biblical accuracy and authority. “Although Whitcomb was repeatedly admonished to cease such criticism, he refused to desist or to be accountable for his own comments,” Custer says with great sorrow. In 1990, in the middle of the school year, just six months before Whitcomb was 65 years old, Davis dismissed one of his

oldest friends and one of Grace’s finest professors.

Whitcomb did not go quietly, and although Grace breathed a sigh of relief to be rid of the tension he consistently stirred up, the public wasn’t sure whether Whitcomb’s dismissal only served to prove he was right: Grace was diverging from the centrality of God’s Word. Davis told the faculty that Grace wasn’t going to get involved in the public dialogue or defend every charge. “I told the faculty we’re just going to get on with our business and let the Lord take care of that, and He did,” says Davis. Custer, who was in the trenches during the denominational turmoil and debate, says it was one of the darkest periods for Grace College & Seminary, dealing a near fatal blow to the seminary. And for the Fellowship of the Grace Brethren Churches, it ultimately led to a split in the denomination in 1992.

Henry is confident Davis made the right decision in each circumstance even though it wasn’t always popular. “If there was a problem, he faced it head-on and dealt with it. He was willing to make tough decisions. No question in my mind about that.”

Weimer agrees. “He faced a really rocky time both externally and internally. He was the one who could handle it. He was the one who held the ship together.” \*



# *THE SMOKE- JUMPER*

When a wildfire breaks out, smokejumpers combat fires in the riskiest of conditions. They're capable of penetrating the interior of a wildfire, making critical and sometimes difficult decisions to extinguish it, preserving the landscape for future generations. They choose in some cases to actually create small fires to stop big ones. They make triage decisions regarding 50 acres to preserve 50,000.

In many ways, this is what Dr. Davis did while leading Grace. His years as president were some of the toughest in Grace's history. "Davis' presidency came at a very difficult time in our nation," Custer explains. "The controversy regarding Billy Graham, the controversy surrounding the rise of neo-evangelicalism, the attempts to soft peddle the authority and accuracy of Scripture in light of modern scientific research. These tensions escalated significantly on the campus of Grace during Davis' presidency."

His mantle was managing all of that. To keep the school consistent with the biblical ideas of its founders and embrace a more evangelical and less fundamentalist stance. And Davis did. Although it was painful, Davis helped clear the way for current Grace president, Dr. Ronald Manahan, to move the school forward. "Several times I have told Dr. Davis that his dedication regarding Dr. Whitcomb was crucial to the future of the institution," says Manahan. "Left unattended the circumstance would have been negative and disruptive for Grace during the following years. Dr. Davis' decision was strategic for the future of Grace College & Seminary." When Manahan took over the office in 1993, he did so with greater freedom. The landscape of Grace had been preserved.

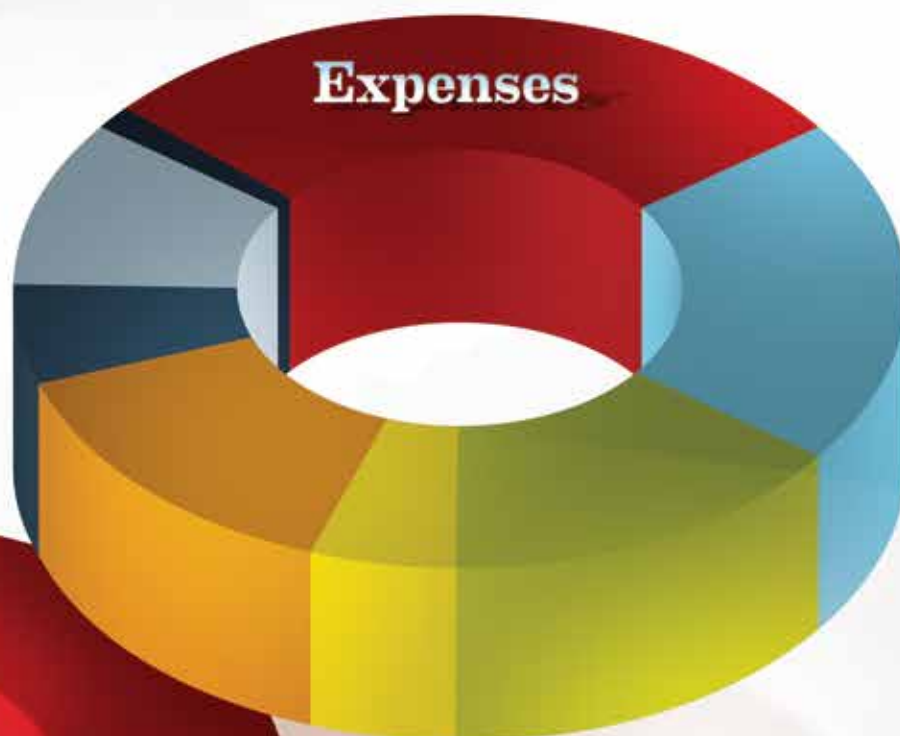
2011-2012

# Financial Activities

## EXPENSES

● Student Scholarships	\$9,970,969.00	28.5%
● Instruction	\$7,027,432.00	20.1%
● Institutional Support	\$5,237,839.00	15%
● Physical Plant Operations	\$1,857,813.00	5.3%
● Student Services	\$4,940,589.00	14.1%
● Depreciation & Debt	\$2,052,211.00	5.8%
● Auxiliary Enterprises	\$3,368,744.00	9.6%
● Academic Support	\$467,788.00	1.3%

**TOTAL**                **\$34,923,385.00**



## REVENUE

● Tuition	\$25,673,724.00	74.8%
● Room & Board	\$4,783,694.00	13.9%
● Fundraising	\$1,925,458.00	5.6%
● Auxiliary Services & Sales	\$1,673,541.00	4.8%
● Investment Return	\$249,688.00	0.7%
● Gains	\$5,105.00	.01%

**TOTAL**                **\$34,311,210.00**

# President's Club

Membership in the President's Club is reserved for individuals and organizations who give \$1,000 or more a year to Grace College & Seminary. Members listed gave their gifts during the June 1, 2011 – May 31, 2012 year. Alumni appear in black print.

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 Pulse FM  
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 The Papers Inc.  
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*Chairs of the Alumni Endowed Scholarship (left to right) Jerry Abbitt, Vicky Deckers and Dan Scharlach.*

# GRACE ALUMNI SPEARHEAD 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY GIFT INITIATIVE

A very special group of alumni volunteers from across the country has banded together to lead a celebratory alumni gift initiative to commemorate Grace College & Seminary's 75th anniversary. As an expression of gratitude to God for the role Grace College & Seminary has played in the lives of thousands of alumni, the Alumni Advisory Council (AAC) has launched a special campaign to raise a minimum of \$75,000 to create the Alumni Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship will benefit children of Grace alumni who attend Grace College.

Jerry Abbitt (BA 84), Vicky Decker (BS 87) and Dan Scharlach (BS 01), AAC members, chair the 75th anniversary gift initiative. "This 75th anniversary gift initiative is an incredible opportunity for all of us who are part of the Grace alumni family to give a gift that, with permanence, will help generations who follow to afford and benefit from a high-quality Grace education," says Abbitt.

The AAC has given and raised more than \$15,000 in the initial days of the campaign toward the endowed scholarship. Current efforts focus on inviting alumni to consider leadership gifts of \$10,000, \$5,000, \$2,500 and \$1,000 toward the Alumni Endowed Scholarship. Decker is quick to add, "Gifts of any size are welcome and needed from a broad base of Grace alumni as we raise funds that will help our children and their children afford a Grace education. We hope a high percentage of alumni who are not able to give a leadership gift will choose to support this scholarship with a one-time \$75 gift this year."

For more information, please contact Abbitt, Decker or Scharlach at [alumni@grace.edu](mailto:alumni@grace.edu).

*To invest in the Alumni Endowed Scholarship 75th Anniversary Gift Initiative, visit [www.grace.edu/give](http://www.grace.edu/give) (designate "Alumni Endowed Scholarship"), call (866) 448-3472 or mail your gift to Grace College & Seminary, Office of Advancement, 200 Seminary Dr., Winona Lake, IN 46590 (designate "Alumni Endowed Scholarship" on memo line).*

# ALUM NOTES

*Connecting with our family of friends*

## DOWN THE AISLE

00s

Boston Brazzell and **Conna Spradling** (BA 07): March 17, 2012. Conna is a compensation analyst for First Financial Bank in Cincinnati OH. She is pursuing an MBA in Human Resources from Liberty University. Boston and Conna live in Cincinnati. [connajoy@gmail.com](mailto:connajoy@gmail.com) **01**

**Jonathan Cline** (BA 05) and **Lauren Swarr** (BS 05): July 3, 2010. The Clines are at home in Biddeford ME. [swarrle@yahoo.com](mailto:swarrle@yahoo.com)

Christopher Foreman and **Jennifer Triggs** (BS 07): April 14, 2012. The Foremans reside in Cambridge City IN. [jforeman2012@gmail.com](mailto:jforeman2012@gmail.com) **02**

Drew Harten and **Jamie Hoffman** (BS 09): June 16, 2012. Drew and Jamie are members of and were married in the Grace Brethren Church of Lanham MD. Pastor Paul Mutchler officiated the ceremony. The Hartens live in Glen Dale MD. [drewandjamieharten@gmail.com](mailto:drewandjamieharten@gmail.com) **03**

10s

Luke Burton and **Heather Mitchell** (BS 11): June 23, 2012. The Burtons reside in Johnstown OH. [heathermitchell2008@yahoo.com](mailto:heathermitchell2008@yahoo.com)

**Brian Shively** (BS 12) and **Emilyn Donley** (BS 11): June 8, 2012. The Shivelys are at home in Indianapolis IN. [yessica-and-friends@hotmail.com](mailto:yessica-and-friends@hotmail.com) and [joyforalifetime@gmail.com](mailto:joyforalifetime@gmail.com) **04**

90s

Tom and **Susie (Workman BA 94) Owens**: Toby Lukas, August 10, 2010. Toby joins Travis (14) and Kylee (7) at home in Mansfield OH. [suzieq\\_90@hotmail.com](mailto:suzieq_90@hotmail.com) (This alum note was originally printed in the spring 2012 issue with an incorrect email.) **05**

Nathan and **Suzanne (Peters C 97) Ryerson**: Charlotte Christine, March 30, 2012. Charlotte joins Thomas (6), Meg (5), Tessa (3) and Max (2) at home in West Milton OH. [nateandsuz@yahoo.com](mailto:nateandsuz@yahoo.com)

Tim and **Lisa (Dougan BS 90) Welling**: Renee Wanya Marie, February 15, 2010. The Wellings returned to the States on March 30, 2012, after adopting their daughter in China. Lisa shares, "It was a four year process, but Renee now joins Joshua (18), Nathan (16), Jeremy (14) and Daniel (10) at home in Goshen IN. [tlwelling9@aol.com](mailto:tlwelling9@aol.com) **06**

00s

Staff Sergeant Michael and **Johanna (Belke BS 08) Dawson**: Lydia Kay, July 30, 2012. The Dawson family is at home in Dillsburg PA. [mikeandjodawson@gmail.com](mailto:mikeandjodawson@gmail.com)

Danny and **Jennifer (Olszewski BS 00) Fatheree**: Landry Drew, January 9, 2012. Landry joins Ty (4) at home in Burbank OH. [fatheree06@aol.com](mailto:fatheree06@aol.com) **07**

Tobias and **Jaclyn (Dissinger BS 04) Forshtay**: Elias Matthew, March 17, 2012. Elias joins Leah (6) and Jacob (4) at home in Warsaw IN. Tobe is project manager for Silveus Insurance in Warsaw and is a current Grace student in the GOAL program. Jaci is self-employed as a photographer and owns Jaci Forshtay Photography. [www.jaciforshtay.com](http://www.jaciforshtay.com) [tobe.forshtay@cropins.net](mailto:tobe.forshtay@cropins.net)



01



02



03



04



05



07



06

## FUTURE ALUMNI

**Joshua** (BS 04) and **Kelsie Glenn**: Nathaniel Joshua, November 3, 2011. Nathaniel joins Caleb (6) and Samuel (3) at home in Warsaw IN. jkglennfam@a.com **08**

**James** (BS 01) and **Melanie (Rominski C 99) Matthews**: Jhon Alexander Albert. Jhon (11) was reunited with his siblings, Derly (9), Estefania (7), Jesus (5) and Prospero (3), on July 1, 2012. www.matthewsadooption.blogspot.com and melmat1216@yahoo.com **09**

**Jordan** (BS 06, MA 12) and **Bethany (Vaughn BA 06) Muck**: Gianna Lynn, April 8, 2012. Gianna joins Corinne (2) at home in Bremen IN. Jordan completed his Master of Ministry Studies in May. He is the lead pastor of Community Gospel Church in Bremen. bethany.muck@gmail.com

**David** (BS 01, MA 03) and **Carly (Smoker BA 03) Nicodemus**: Emilia Jane, September 13, 2011. Emilia joins Jack (6) and Henry (4) at home in Columbus OH. Dave is the pastor of high school ministries at Grace Polaris. carlynicodemus@yahoo.com **10**

**Jonathan** (BA 06, S 06) and **Christine Potter**: Audrey Jane Tomlinson, November 18, 2011. In May, Jonathan graduated with a Master of Arts and Religion from Yale Divinity School. In August, the family moved to Georgia so that Jon could attend Emory University to work on a PhD in New Testament. Even in the uncertain times, God has truly been faithful. The Potters are thankful for all that God has done and look forward to seeing what He will do next.

**Nathan** (BA 05, S 05) and **Joanna (Gillette BS 03, MA 06) Zuck**: Jonathan Gillette, December 24, 2010. The Zuck family lives in Avon OH where Nathan is an air traffic controller.

## CLASS NOTES

**60s** Upon graduation from Grace Seminary, **Alan Beal** (MDiv 63) became the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Bunker Hill IL. It was at this church in 1965 that he met and married Velva June, a home missionary. That same year the Beals moved to Reinbeck IA where Alan pastored for many years in the First Baptist Church. In 1975, the Beal family, now including son David born in 1967, moved to a small college in

southeast Kentucky. After teaching for one year, Alan took a pastorate near Joliet IL for four years. His last pastorate was in Fayette OH from 1981 to 2005 when he retired. Alan and Velva June now live near Alan's hometown of Colchester IL. He still preaches occasionally as pulpit supply. Son David and his wife live in Findlay OH with their two sons. **11**

**Dr. Ronald H. Jones** (BD 67) recently retired as the dean of the Bible Department of Angelos Bible College in Portsmouth VA with the title of dean emeritus.

**70s** Lieutenant Colonel **John Schroeder** (MDiv 79) is serving as brigade chaplain of the 332nd Medical Brigade in Nashville TN. He will retire in May 2013, with 23 years of active/reserve duty as a chaplain in the United States Army Reserves. Chaplain Schroeder lives with wife Carol in Clearwater FL. chaplainjd@yahoo.com

**80s** **Ron** (BS 89) and **Susan** (BS 89) **Hand** have served with Cadence International since 1997. CI is a ministry to those in the military and is based in Denver CO. The Hands spent four years with the organization in Darmstadt, Germany, and are now at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Tacoma WA. Ron and Susan support local chaplains in ministering to the wounded warriors at Madigan Army Hospital on Fort Lewis. They disciple, mentor and counsel those with TBI (traumatic brain injury) and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). The Hands reside in Dupont WA. ron.hand@cadence.org

**Reverend David Marvin** (DipTh 84) is now the vice president of enlistment and enrichment for SCORE International. SCORE, a mission organization headquartered in Chattanooga TN, sends thousands of groups on short-term mission trips around the globe. David and wife Debbie reside in Bloomington IN. djmarvin44@gmail.com

**Dr. James Guy Schepper** (BA 86) received his PhD from Colorado Theological Seminary. His thesis is entitled, "Temperament Therapy in Substance Abuse Counseling." He also holds degrees from Oakland Community College (AA) and the University of Detroit-Mercy (MA). Dr. Schepper lives in Hartland MI with wife Janet. He is an adjunct professor at Madonna University, the clinical director at Livingston County Catholic Charities and serves as a volunteer chaplain at Brighton Hospital. jgscounsel@msn.com **12**

**James Stover** (MTh 83) received his master of arts degree from Duquesne University in 2005. He teaches at Wheeling Jesuit University. James and wife Annette live in Washington PA. stoverseminars@aol.com **13**

**Kevin Willour** (BS 82) was appointed president and CEO of Beacon Credit Union (Wabash IN) on Aug. 1 after serving Beacon for 23 years, most recently as executive vice president. Beacon is the leading agricultural lending credit union in the nation, serving the communities of Angola, Auburn, Garrett, Huntington, Logansport, Marion, New Haven, North Manchester, Peru, Plymouth, Rochester, Wabash and Warsaw. With \$965 million in total assets, Beacon supplies more than \$400 million in agricultural-related loans. Kevin is president-elect of the Wabash Kiwanis Club, president of the Cooperative Financial Association, a board member of Mid America Cooperative Council and serves on the Advisory Council for American Share Insurance. Wife **Cindy (Thieme C 82)** is employed at Continental International as the executive VP/general manager, and their daughter Alicia is currently a graduate student at Ball State University. The Willours reside in Huntington IN. **14**

**90s** **Caroline (Bush BS 98) Aukeman** recently finished her 14-year career as a graphic designer for Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company to stay home full time with her two boys Caleb (7) and Owen (3). She is married to **Terry** (BS 98) and they live in Winona Lake IN. caukeman@gmail.com

**Major Dale Melton** (BS 99) serves in the United States Air Force and is stationed at Robins AFB in Georgia. In 2009 he completed his MBA through Liberty University. Dale lives with wife Teresa and children Maria (14), Abigail (11), Leslie (3) and Isaac (3) in Perry GA. e8rider@gmail.com

For 20 years, **Cary Rice** (BA 92) has taught English and directed plays at Louisville Christian Academy where almost 3,000 students attend. He resides in Louisville KY. CALClass82@aol.com

After almost five years in the northeast area of Ohio, God has called Matt, **Angel (Hines BS 91, MA 94, MA 98)**, Joshua (10) and Faith (8) **Thompson** to Greenwood SC to make disciples and plant a church. Angel says, "We know it is the 'Bible Belt,' however, just because that is the label does not mean it is bursting with those who are following Christ and making

disciples who make disciples. We have a burden for the people of Greenwood. So, we are selling most of our possessions and heading south. She asks for prayer for her children. Joshua has autism and PANDA D/O. She says, "They are both excited to move and share Jesus. If you ask them what we are doing, they say that we're going to share Jesus and have fun." www.4given.name



08



09



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an open mind to explore all of their dreams. She says, "don't let anything, or anyone, come in the way of whom God has really called you to be...take that risk, my friend, take it head first..." Jennifer and husband Kevin reside in Brooklyn NY. JenniferBallmsw@gmail.com



14

**Kirtis Christensen** (S 05) is a software quality engineer with Raytheon. He also serves in the Indiana National Guard and is currently assigned to the 38th Division as their Family Life Chaplain. Kirtis hosts a website called SeekTheModel.org where he explores and delivers theology from multiple points of testimony involving Scripture, science and the human testimony and experience of God in the world. His testimony is of his deployment as an army chaplain in 2008 to Iraq, his struggle afterward and God's grace. His story is available on DVD, "The Chaplain Movie, A Soldier's Journey," and is available upon request. Kirtis and wife Christine reside in Fort Wayne IN. kirtchristensen@hotmail.com



15

**Nolan Gates** (BS 09) is currently serving in the United States Marine Corp as a 2nd Lieutenant. He and wife **Sarah (Stith BS 09)** are currently living in the Quantico VA area. nolansarah.gates@gmail.com



16

**Dr. Jeffrey Gaskill** (MDiv 05) serves as the senior pastor of Grace Bible Church in Berne IN. The Gaskill family resides in Berne. gaskillfamily8@yahoo.com

**Don** (BA 04) and **Ruth (Moore BS 04) Gibson** reside in Fishers IN with Willem (3) and Rylee (4). Don works at Outland Energy Services and Ruth is a stay-at-home mom. travels@gmail.com 15

In August 2011, **Laura Kister** (BA 06) obtained her Master of Arts in Elementary Education (Literacy Option). Laura lives in Wooster OH. laurak34@hotmail.com

In June 2012, **Vance** (BS 92) and **Linda (Marsh BA 92) Williams**, along with Madeleine (10), Finn (7) and Roan (7) moved from Long Beach CA to Bay Village OH. Vance is looking for work as a graphic designer while Linda will focus on being a mom and wife. They are enjoying being closer to Linda's family. vandlwilliams@gmail.com

**00s** **Jennifer Brook-Ball** (BS 05) received her master's degree in social work from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on May 12, 2012. Jennifer is a medical social worker at the Beth Israel Medical Center in New York NY. She encourages Grace students to keep

**Stephani (Hart BS 03) Rogers** is a stay-at-home mom and has begun teaching GED courses at the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Correctional Facility. This opportunity has opened doors for ministry to inmates and those on home detention and work release. Stephani resides in Lafayette LA with husband Thomas and son Cohen (1). stephaniandmocha@yahoo.com



**DeMarquis Battle** (MAMin 12) is currently pursuing a master's in Bible and theology from Lincoln Christian University and anticipates graduating in May 2013. He is a financial aid counselor for Davenport University and also serves as the youth pastor at Epicenter of Worship Church in Lansing MI. DeMarquis lives with wife Raynika and son Justus (1) in Lansing. minister.battle@epiworship.com

**Gabe Tribbett** (MDiv 2010) is the director of Life Education and Leadership Development at Christ's Covenant Church in Winona Lake IN. Gabe resides in Pierceton IN. 16

## IN MEMORIAM

**W. Roland Felts**, 88, went to be with the Lord on June 14, 2012. Roland moved to Warsaw IN in 1957. He was a composer, arranger and keyboard artist with Rodeheaver Hall-Mack Music Company, Winona Lake IN. He was a music lover who had significant impact on the world of Gospel music through his work with the organization. In 1967, Roland began his career at Grace College as an associate professor, teaching voice and music history. He served as a choir director and church organist though the years at various local churches, including the Grace Brethren Church in Winona Lake and Trinity United Methodist Church in Warsaw.

Roland served his country as a member of the US Army. He loved spending time with his family and listening to music and opera. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Verna May Felts, Warsaw; son **Jeff Felts** (C 80) and spouse Patty, Millersville MD; daughter **Alicia** (BS 83) and spouse **Allen Wedertz** (BS 80), Osceola IN; sister Eleanor Louise Hunter, Oak Ridge TN; 11 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren and many loving nieces and nephews.

**Pastor Ralph Miller** (BD 65) passed away on November 27, 2011. He was 78. Wife **Nancy (Shrock BS 64)** died seven months later on July 2, 2012, at the age of 74. She was a dedicated and loving mother, grandmother, sister and a pastor's wife for 47 years. The Millers served Grace Brethren churches in Ohio, Iowa, West Virginia and Virginia. Ralph's last pastorate was at Boones Mill Grace Brethren Church. Surviving are daughters Lori Ann Miller and Janice Via; grandchildren Nicole Hall, Danny Via, Brett Miller, Bryanna Miller and Brendon Miller; and sister Sally Kuntz.

**James M. Pearson** (MDiv 89), pastor of Brookside Community Church in Fort Wayne IN, passed away July 10. Pastor Jim served as senior pastor of Brookside for 15 years. He was formerly the senior pastor at Bethel Evangelical Free Church in Fargo ND and an associate pastor with Blackhawk Ministries in Fort Wayne. Prior to entering the ministry, he worked in marketing and sales with corporations in Ohio and Indiana. Jim was the author of the book "Minefields in the Marketplace," a compelling look at the ethical minefields confronting Christian business people. The book was translated into several languages for distribution here and abroad. He is survived by wife Linda, mother Margaret "Maude" Pearson; daughter-in-law Emily Pearson, sister Lynne Pearson, brother Doug and spouse Nikki Pearson, and nephew Nate and niece Cara.

Send us your updates online! Visit [www.grace.edu/alumni/alumni-updates](http://www.grace.edu/alumni/alumni-updates) and fill out the form. Make sure to upload a picture (at least 300 dpi).

To email us your update, send it to [alumni@grace.edu](mailto:alumni@grace.edu) or mail it to us at: Alumni Services Office, Grace College and Seminary, 200 Seminary Dr., Winona Lake, IN 46590.

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## REACHING OUT

### FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Over the past several months, we've been gearing up to celebrate Grace's 75th Anniversary at Homecoming 2012. In just a couple of weeks (Nov. 1-4) we'll be reuniting with old classmates at reunion dinners (especially if your grad year ends in 2 or 7), reminiscing about our college years as we tour campus and cheering on our basketball teams in the Orthopaedic Capital Center. But this year, we've also planned many new events.

You don't want miss these gatherings:

- Vow Renewal at Alpha Bell: Come renew your vows at the bell!
- Tailgate BBQ & Faculty Reception: Enjoy a BBQ lunch, games for the kids and reconnecting with your favorite professors.
- First-time Reunions: School of Business, Veterans Affairs Reunion, "Zero" Reunion and the ORCA Reunion.
- Golden Grad Society Induction & Reception: Grace grads from 1950 to 1962, come to Kessler Court between games to be recognized.
- Phil Keaggy Concert: Enjoy the music of Dove-Award winner Phil Keaggy, and don't miss the accompanying Chocolate Dessert & Coffee Bar.
- President's Breakfast: Join us as we celebrate God's goodness to us over the past 75 years.

It's not too late to join us! To RSVP and find complete details, including costs, visit [www.grace.edu/homecoming2012](http://www.grace.edu/homecoming2012).

I'd also like to thank all of you who participated in the directory project by updating your contact information. For those of you interested in a copy, directories are available on a limited basis. Call me at (574) 372-5100, ext. 6129 if you'd like to purchase one.

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you over Homecoming weekend. And if there's any way I can assist you between now and then, don't hesitate to contact me. For up-to-date information on alumni events, resources and news, visit [www.grace.edu/alumni](http://www.grace.edu/alumni) and follow us on Facebook (search "Grace Alumni Community").

See you soon,



*Tammy Denlinger*

Tammy Denlinger (BS 81, MA 88) | Director of Alumni Relations

## The Passing of Charles Henry & Frances Ashman

**Pastor Charles Henry Ashman** (MDiv 50) died March 21, 2012, at the age of 87. His wife Frances passed away one month earlier on February 21. She was 87. Born in 1924, Charles grew up in Johnstown PA. He met Frances Bradley at youth rallies and summer church camp. Frances was the middle sister of "The Five Bradley Sisters." They were known throughout the Grace Brethren churches of southern California for their unique and humorous singing ministry at camps and youth and children's meetings. Frances was a graduate of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. She was active in working with children in whatever church she attended. The Ashmans were married July 12, 1946, in Compton CA. Charles graduated from Westmont College in 1947. He then came to Grace Seminary and graduated magna cum laude. Frances worked very hard at earning her special degree in PHT (Putting Hubby Through) as she helped Charles complete his college and seminary education. His first pastorate was in Rittman OH at the First Brethren Church. It was in Rittman that their children were born. The family moved to Phoenix and Charles pastored the Grace Brethren church there. In 1962, he became the pastor of the Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church. Frances was a wonderful

pastor's wife and happily served in the work of the Lord through ministry to women and children in all the churches that Charles pastored. In 1969, Charles began to teach part time at Grace College and Seminary and taught Pastoral Theology, English Bible and Beginning Greek. Students appreciated his insight and experience. One alumnus commented, "Pastor Ashman was very knowledgeable and taught in such a practical way ... to this day, I still use and remember many things he taught using my current leadership roles in our church." Charles and Frances were members of the Winona Lake Grace Brethren church and residents of Kosciusko County for 50 years. Charles also served the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches as conference coordinator and as an assistant to the current fellowship coordinator. He recently completed board service on and was honored by Integrated Community Development International. Charles and Frances are survived by son **Ken** (BA 73) and spouse **Becky** (C 74), Gallatin TN; son **Karl** (BS 76) and spouse **Patti** (C 76), Wildwood MO; daughter **Judy** (BS 74) and spouse **Rick Fairman** (ThD 86), Lititz PA; six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.



## The Passing of Beverly Jane Kent



**Beverly Jane Kent** (S 85) passed away July 16, 2012. She was 82. She was born on January 23, 1930, in Buena Park CA, to John Splawn Page and Eulah Nell (Bodine) Page. On August 1, 1953, she married **Homer Austin Kent, Jr.** (MDiv 50, ThM 52, ThD 56) who survives. Beverly attended Biola Bible Institute (now Biola University) in La Mirada CA, where she received her degree in music. Beverly then was employed as a voice teacher at Grace College for 25 years. She was a member of Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church, Winona

Lake Literary Club, Grace College Faculty Women's Club and Women of Grace. She will be lovingly remembered by husband Homer, Winona Lake IN; daughter **Rebecca** (BA 77) and spouse **Gary** (BS 77) **Woolman**, Fort Wayne IN; daughter **Katherine** (BA 81, MA 86) and spouse **Mark** (MA 86) **McCarthy**, Columbus OH; son **Daniel** (BS 86) and spouse Lisa Kent, Milton GA; six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She is also survived by brother: John S. Page, Coeur d'Alene ID; and sister Virginia Rose and spouse **Norman Rohrer**

(MDiv 56), Franklin TN. She was preceded in death by her parents, and one sister: Joanne Saffell. Beverly will be remembered as a vivacious and lively first lady of Grace College and Seminary. Bev and Homer have been actively involved in campus activities since leaving the presidency, attending Christmas dinners, convocation chapels and graduations. She will be missed greatly. Memorial donations in Beverly's name may be directed to Grace College and Seminary, 200 Seminary Drive, Winona Lake IN 46590.

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