

THEOLOGY UPDATE



For Friends and Alumni of Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology
VOL. 10, NO. 1 — SPRING 2004

University Responds to Ministers' Request for Professional Program

McAfee Announces D.Min. Degree

In February, Dean Alan Culpepper received a letter from the Association of Theological Schools giving approval for Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology to accept applicants into its new Doctor of Ministry Degree Program. The letter allowed the School to respond to the 81 ministers who have requested applications for the program, which will hold its first three-week seminar July 6-26.

"The challenge at this time is not in recruiting applicants, but instead in determining how to schedule the qualified individuals in the program," said Culpepper, explaining the School will initially accept 15 students into the program each year. "We hope they will be patient as we begin this process."

A great deal of research has gone into developing McAfee's new Doctor of Ministry Degree Program. In 2001, Dean Culpepper asked McAfee faculty member Dr. Ron Johnson to use his sabbatical at Princeton University to research other doctor of ministry programs and determine the essential components needed to develop one at McAfee.

"I studied literally dozens of programs across the country," said Johnson, associate dean of the Doctor of Ministry Degree Program. "I tried to draw on the strengths of those programs in creating ours. The draft was then circulated among people who direct similar programs for a critique. Then the dean and the faculty at McAfee made further suggestions and brought the program to life."

The doctor of ministry degree is a professional doctorate, designed to help students develop advanced skills in an area they

feel is critical for their ministry. McAfee's Doctor of Ministry Degree Program focuses on faculty-student interaction, academic research and practical ministry application.

One of the program's main strengths is the built-in support system for the doctoral candidates. Each student will have a faculty supervisor and a field supervisor. The faculty supervisor will be a McAfee faculty member, while the field supervisor will be nominated by the student and approved by McAfee.

"The students select their own field supervisor, who must have doctoral credentials and be recognized as a proficient clinical practitioner in the area the student is studying," said Johnson. "The field supervisor is a person who has the expertise in the area the student is seeking to develop — someone the student can turn to for advice and guidance."

Although the doctor of ministry degree is considered a professional or practical degree, Johnson has worked to ensure the academic



The Rev. Charles Qualls of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church discusses the new doctor of ministry program with Associate Dean Ron Johnson.

side is not sacrificed. From the beginning of the program, a student will select a thesis topic, which will be honed and sharpened to a pinpoint focus with the help of the student's faculty supervisor.

In addition to the thesis, students will be required to take three seminar courses, each lasting three weeks. The topics are "Understanding Contemporary Ministry," "Christian Spirituality and Scripture" and "Issues in Pastoral Leadership."

Students then complete three semesters of Individual Study in one of the following areas of concentration: spiritual formation, empowering congregations for transformation, the missional development of the church, preaching and faith communication, faith development, rethinking Christian faith issues, worship and the church, pastoral counseling, Baptist heritage, leadership in the ministry, and Scripture and ministry.

After a two-week research skills workshop, students begin work on their final project thesis, which must be completed within three years. The faculty supervisor closely monitors

the thesis, approving each stage of the draft before allowing the student to proceed to the next stage.

"We ask them from day one to declare a concentration and begin preparing for the development of the thesis," Johnson said. "We want the doctor of ministry thesis to make a unique contribution to the field of ministry."

Students officially complete the program after their thesis has been submitted and approved, and they take an oral examination. On average, the program can be completed in three to four years, with only 11 weeks of work required in classes at McAfee. The program was purposefully designed for ministers to complete their studies without requiring them to uproot their families and their ministries.

The Rev. Charles Qualls, associate pastor of Pastoral Care at Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, has applied for admission into the inaugural doctoral class at McAfee. "The Mercer brand is very strong in Baptist work," said Qualls, a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "This is a degree that I have been looking to pursue. Having it in my own backyard has huge appeal."

Qualls sees definite benefit in the degree for his work in the ministry. "This degree is

tailored to reflect the reality that I am serving a church and I am doing the work I want to do," he added. "The McAfee program offers a realistic way to get the doctor of ministry degree."

Quality is the watchword for Johnson and others at McAfee who are responsible for selecting students and implementing the degree program.

"We developed a program McAfee can be proud of," Johnson said. "The students will know they have been in a doctoral program. They will leave here with a body of research that will benefit them for the rest of their career. And they will have research skills that they can apply to other areas of ministry that they want to become more proficient in during their career."

For more information about the program, call McAfee at (678) 547-6474 or toll-free at (888) 471-9922, ext. 6474, or, go online to <http://theology.mercer.edu/dmin.html>.



Dr. Johnson spent months researching other doctor of ministry programs across the nation to find the best components for developing a doctoral program at McAfee.



MERCER THEOLOGY UPDATE

Spring 2004

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Mercer Theology Update is published
three times a year for friends and alumni of the
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From the Dean:

McAfee is Building Partnerships

There is wisdom in the image of a rope. Individual strands of fiber wrapped together and pulling in the same direction have a strength that far exceeds that of any single strand by itself. Historically, Baptists have formed associations, conventions, alliances, and fellowships because we realized there are important tasks in missions and theological education that individual churches, schools and institutions cannot accomplish successfully by working alone. Today the need to work cooperatively is more apparent than ever. Some say we are living in a “post-denominational” era, when networks of churches, agencies and schools will provide the connections and services once supplied by denominations.

Congregations have more options for literature, theological education, mission projects, and missionary support than ever before. At the same time, Baptist groups around the world are reaching out to us for fellowship and support.

McAfee was founded in response to the call of Baptist ministers and laypersons in Georgia for a new seminary in Atlanta. The School of Theology’s list of Founding Churches, published every year in its Bulletin, celebrates the partnership and support of 206 churches in

Georgia and the southeast. From its inception, McAfee has been supported by Mercer University and by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. More than 50 McAfee graduates are serving in local churches, 10 are chaplains, and another seven are serving in Baptist agencies. McAfee School of Theology is, therefore, fulfilling its “Founding Principles,”



R. Alan Culpepper

‘As McAfee matures, it is cultivating new partnerships and shared endeavors...’

which call for it to prepare men and women to “become effective and responsible pastors and leaders in ministry” and to “serve as a continuing resource to pastors, churches and professionals in ministry.”

As McAfee has grown, it has established important partnerships and working relationships with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia, the Consortium of Schools partnering with the CBF, the *Review and Expositor*, the Association of Theological Schools, the Atlanta Theological

Association (which includes Candler, Columbia, the Interdenominational Theological Center, Erskine, and the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary), the Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary (a consortium of nine Asian seminaries that offers the Ph.D. for their most capable graduates, with which McAfee has established a long-term partnership), the Liberian Baptist Theological Seminary (from which McAfee has welcomed one or two students every year, and for which it has supplied support by means of a Mission Immersion experience and books for its library).

Now, as McAfee matures, it is cultivating new partnerships and shared endeavors: a faculty exchange program with the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, internships and collaborative projects with the Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasting Company, CPE opportunities through the Center for Care and Counseling of Georgia, a closer relationship with Baptist Women in Ministry, and new ministry opportunities through Faith and the City and the Regional Council of Churches of Atlanta.

The rope is strong, and by working together we can call and equip a new generation of leaders for the church who will have the breadth of awareness, training, experience and relationships necessary to cope creatively and imaginatively with tomorrow’s challenges.

Women in Ministry Moves to Atlanta Campus

by Wes Griffith

Baptist Women in Ministry was established by three women in Louisville, Ky., in 1983 to be a catalyst in Baptist life, drawing together women and men in partnership with God to illuminate, advocate and nurture the gifts and graces of women. The non-profit organization will be moving its offices in Kansas City, Kan., to James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology on the Mercer campus in Atlanta this year.



Karen Massey

“We recently celebrated our 20-year anniversary, and we feel it is time to move ahead,” said Dr. Karen Massey of McAfee School of Theology, who recently was elected president of Baptist Women in Ministry by the organization’s board of directors. “Moving to Atlanta allows us to better support our constituency, which is predominantly in the South and along the eastern seaboard.”

Massey went on to say, “We are now in a transition period. No one can really say what the future will bring. We are excited, however, about all the different possibilities.”

A transition team has been named to assist with the move and the organization’s new directions.

Massey said that she and the Baptist Women in Ministry board members do have some general goals, such as better connecting with seminary and college students who are looking to become ministers.

“Building a relationship with McAfee will help us in this regard,” she added. “We are thrilled with the offer from Dean [Alan] Culpepper [to be at McAfee] and look forward to the partnership.”

Massey believes the move will immediately help them accomplish their goals of “providing support, resources and fellowship to Baptist women in ministry.”

Baptist Women in Ministry offers résumé services, FOLIO distribution to colleges and seminaries, internships and mentoring, speakers for churches and groups, and scholarships and continuing education stipends.

Aleshire to Speak at McAfee Commencement

Dr. Daniel Aleshire, executive director of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), will speak at the James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology commencement on May 15, in the Sheffield Center on the Atlanta campus.

He has been with ATS since 1990 and was named the executive director in 1998.

Prior to that, he served on the faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1978-90 and, before that, as a research scientist at Search Institute in Minneapolis, where he worked on projects related to theological education, church-related higher education and youth service agencies. Previously, he was pastor of Bergen Baptist



Daniel Aleshire

Church in Waldwick, N.J.

Dean Alan Culpepper of McAfee School of Theology describes Aleshire as “an insightful and articulate spokesman for the church and the ministry who never fails to call ministers and theological educators to a fresh and higher commitment to their vocation.”

An ordained minister, Aleshire holds a B.S. degree from Belmont College, the M.Div. degree from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and an M.A. degree and Ph.D. in psychology from George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tenn.

Aleshire has written extensively on issues of ministry and theological education, Christian spirituality and Christian education. He is co-author of *Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Seminaries*, which received the 1998 Distinguished Book Award from the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion.

**McAfee Highlight****School Forms Institute for Healthy Congregations**

By Jenny Butkus

McAfee School of Theology has joined forces with a small group of church consultants to develop a new resource for students, pastors and church leaders. It is called the McAfee Institute for Healthy Congregations, and the goal of the Institute is to assist church leaders in congregational development and conflict resolution.

Dr. Larry McSwain, a professor of ethics and leadership at McAfee, helped create this new Institute, which will hold yearly conferences and refer churches to consultants for assistance.

"A number of moderate churches in Georgia have struggled in recent years and terminated pastors because of conflict within the congregation," McSwain said of why the School decided to create the new Institute. "We felt like there was a need for additional resources in Georgia to which the School of Theology could respond. We see this as a natural extension of our mission at McAfee."

Created in January, the Institute currently has five experienced consultants on board with plans to expand this network through specialized training with interested church leaders.

Dr. Keithen Tucker is one of the consultants who helped develop this new Institute. Having served as a pastor in North Carolina for 20 years, he was a member of a conflict management and resolution team in North Carolina. He recalls how difficult serving as a pastor could be, and he has witnessed, firsthand, what a difference having resources like those offered by the Institute can make.



Larry McSwain

"I remember, as a pastor, we had difficulties, and there just didn't seem to be a way to solve the problems. I experienced a lot of disappointment," he said.

Then he received specialized training in conflict management consulting. Now, Tucker realizes that communication is essential to a healthy church. As a consultant, he does not take sides in a conflict, but, rather, he works with congregations to get to the root of the problem.

"My main task is to help them identify the real issues that have led to the conflict," he said.

The other consultants in the Institute are James Bruner, vice president for religious life at Mercer; J. Truett Gannon, Watkins Christian Foundation Professor of Ministry Experience at McAfee; Roy Godwin, certified church consultant and coach; and Karen Massey, assistant professor of Christian Education at McAfee.

In addition to linking churches with professional consultants, the Institute has developed an e-mail listserv for church leaders to use as a sounding board on topics related to congregational health. Anyone interested in the work of the Institute may become a part of the listserv. All listserv subscribers receive a regular, brief e-mail that describes some feature of congregational health. Subscribers then have the opportunity to reply with their thoughts on the issue to the author of the feature or to reply to all of the fellow subscribers.

McSwain said he's particularly excited about the Institute's listserv. The first topic was "Healthy

Churches: Is Diagnosis Possible?" He received interesting feedback on this issue, and he looks forward to having this new educational tool.

"Most of the theological material circulating out there is written by experts saying, 'You should do this. You should do that,'" McSwain said. "This

listserv is a way for people really involved at the local church level to teach us."

McSwain and Tucker are also excited about the Institute's first workshop, set for April 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Mercer's Atlanta Campus. The theme is "How to Change Your Church Before It Changes You!"

"This is something I think every pastor and deacon can benefit from," Tucker said.

Each of the Institute's consultants will present at the April conference. The workshop is \$25, with lunch included.

Anyone interested in attending the workshop, assisting the Institute or using the Institute's resources, should contact McSwain at (678) 547-6442 or mcswain_ll@mercer.edu.

To join the Institute for Healthy Congregations listserv, send an e-mail to mailserv@mercer.edu and leave the subject line blank. Then, in the body of the e-mail type the following: subscribe healthy-churches-l. (Note: this is lowercase l, not the numeral one.) Next, hit the return key and type the following: end. Then send the e-mail.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In addition to working as a church consultant, Keithen Tucker is the director of development and marketing for Baptists Today.

'A number of moderate churches in Georgia have struggled in recent years ... there was a need for additional resources in Georgia to which the School of Theology could respond.'

Professor Teaches Link Between Religion, Science

Traditionally, people may not see a strong link between the study of engineering and the study of theology. But Dr. Graham Walker, associate dean and associate professor of theology at McAfee, says it is extremely important for engineering students to understand that religion and engineering, or more broadly religion and science, are, in fact, interrelated.

Mercer School of Engineering Dean Dayne Aldridge agrees. That's why he asked Walker to teach a one-period class to students as a part of the Engineering Freshman Honors Seminar.

Since the engineering honors program's inception three years ago, Walker has taught Freshman Honors students how people in both the theological realm and the engineering field can benefit from an understanding of how one affects the other.

The workshop is part of a series of discussions students partake in during the two-semester Freshman Honors Seminar, in which they design and construct self-governing, electro-mechanical devices.

"Our study of autonomous robots raises many 'God questions,'" Aldridge said. "The course is designed to move from a systems description of a self-governing robot to a description of a human being as a self-governing entity with abilities,



needs and limitations. Our quest to determine whether it may be possible to design a robot that exhibits human-like behavior opens doors for lots of interesting discussion."

Walker enjoys having these types of discussions. He was awarded a grant a few years ago from the John Templeton Foundation to create and teach course at McAfee titled "Science, Religion and the Sacred Self." He has studied the relationship between science and religion extensively.

"Without a doubt, science and religion have always had a close relationship" Walker said. "Unfortunately, however, too often people see the fields as separate. We need desperately not to do this. The two fields need each other."

As a case in point, Walker notes the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, Aug. 6, 1945. With this tragedy, he said, humans realized the destruction science can cause.

"We better have values that drive technology," he said.

In his discussions with the engineering students, Walker draws many parallels between religion and science. He explains to the students that as students they are creators, just as God is Creator. "We discuss how humanity has been given a gift to create things, and we explore for what purposes we create things," he said. "Can we be co-creators with God and create in the 'image of God?'"

And in designing robots, the students have realized there is interplay between the designed and the designer, just as there is interplay between human beings and God.

Aldridge and Walker both agree that students have benefited from the class.

"We hope classes like this show students that biology, psychology and theology are important to future engineering practice," Aldridge said.

Walker hopes the class helps the students see analogies between faith and science. "I hope that these students will use their sharp, agile minds to bring discussions on the topic into their communities of faith and that they will help open the door to a mutually beneficial relationship between people in the scientific community and people in communities of faith."

Did you know ...**News from Mercer University**

■ Dr. Andrew Silver, assistant professor of English at Mercer's **College of Liberal Arts**, was named the 2003 Georgia Professor of the Year by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in November. Silver has taught at Mercer since 1998.

■ **Tift College of Education** introduced a master's program, the Holistic Educator, on the Macon campus and Eastman Regional Academic Center in October. The program is designed for a wide range of professionals who work with children or families, including teachers, family specialists, caregivers and health educators.

■ The University's recently opened the doors to its newest regional academic center, a 30,000 square-foot facility in Henry County overlooking a lake and golf course. The Center offers evening undergraduate degree programs in human services, criminal justice, information systems and early childhood and middle grades education. Other offerings include the organizational leadership degree completion program and non-credit continuing education courses.

■ The **School of Engineering** ranked eighth in the nation in percentage of female students earning bachelor degrees and second in the nation in percentage of women faculty tenured or on tenure-track in the latest edition of *Profiles of Engineering and Engineering Technology Schools*. Between July 1, 2001, and June 30, 2002, 37.9 percent of the degrees awarded from the School of Engineering were to women and 27.6 percent of the engineering faculty tenured or on tenure-track were women.

■ The **Eugene W. Stetson School of Business and Economics** will begin offering its prestigious Executive MBA degree at the Regional Academic Center in Henry County in January 2005. The program is designed for business professionals with at least seven years of work experience. Classes will be held every other Friday evening and all day Saturday. More information is available online at www.mercer.edu/business or by phone at (678) 547-6400.

■ Daisy Hurst Floyd has been named dean of the **Walter F. George School Law**, effective July 1. She currently serves as professor of law at Texas Tech University School of Law, where she has served two terms as associate dean for academic affairs. A member of the State Bars of Georgia and Texas, and the American Bar Association, she is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation of the American Bar Foundation and the Texas Bar Foundation.

■ The feature film *The Adventures of Ociece Nash*, which opened at 35 theatres in February, is an adaptation of Milam McGraw Propst's book *A Flower Blooms on Charlotte Street*. The coming-of-age book was the first work of fiction published by **Mercer University Press**.

Mark Your Calendar**McAfee Institute for Congregational Health**

"How Can I Change My Church Before It Changes Me?"

A Workshop for Congregational Leaders
Monday, April 19, 2004
Atlanta Trustee Dining
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
For information, call (678) 547-6442.

Annual Preaching Consultation

September 26, 27, 28, 2004
King and Prince Resort
St. Simons Island, Georgia
Speaker: Dr. Clyde Fant
For more information, contact:
Dr. Truett Gannon, (678) 547-6457.



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Mark Your Calendar



Gift Exchange — McAfee Dean Alan Culpepper presents a Jesse Mercer plaza gift to Dr. Fred Saure, president of the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, during a visit to the school in January. Dean Culpepper was in Baguio to deliver the annual Lide-Walker Lectures.

Share Your Latest News!

Alumni Services would like to keep your classmates up to date on your latest news. If you've recently moved or are planning to relocate, please send in this form so we can keep our records current. We also want to know if you have recently married, had a baby, received a promotion, retired or accomplished something else noteworthy.

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McAfee Adds Doctorate Program — See story on page 1.



James and Carolyn McAfee pause at the dedication of the Jesse Mercer Plaza on the Atlanta campus. The McAfees gave the plaza and statue as a gift to the University in memory of Mr. McAfee's mother, Frances Zoe Hilliard McAfee.