INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

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Passing The Baton
Next Generation Preaching
Remember Your Sender
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SUMMER 2015

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OUR MISSION
Johnson University educates students for Christian ministries and other strategic vocations framed by the Great Commission in order to extend the kingdom of God among all nations.

OUR VISION
To bring glory to God and hope to the world by preparing promising students for excellence in Christian ministry through an affordable, community-oriented, Christ-centered education.

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On the cover of this issue of SONLIFE is a sample of the student life of Johnson University Florida, cultivating the next great Christian leaders to extend the kingdom of God among all nations.

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Get Connected
Scan this QR Code with your smart phone to visit the JUFL website. You can also like us on Facebook to stay up-to-date with the latest info from Johnson University Florida!
Dr. Michael L. Chambers has been named the new Chancellor and Vice Provost, Elect for Johnson University’s Florida campus in Kissimmee. The appointment was effective on June 1, 2015.

“I know of no person more qualified than Dr. Michael Chambers to follow Dr. David Eubanks as the head of Johnson University Florida,” said Dr. Gary Weedman, President of Johnson University.

Dr. Chambers will succeed Dr. David Eubanks, the current Chancellor and Vice Provost who has overseen the Florida campus of the Knoxville-based Christian university since it merged with Florida Christian College in July of 2013, renaming the campus Johnson University Florida.

“Now is the time for a new leader who will work with President Weedman in guiding Johnson University Florida in the years ahead,” said Dr. Eubanks. Eubanks served as President of Johnson University from 1969 to 2007 and was called out of retirement to assist with the merger in 2013.

As his new title indicates, Dr. Chambers will serve as both the chief administrative and chief academic officer for Johnson University Florida. Dr. Chambers will assume the full duties of Chancellor and Vice Provost at the University’s convocation in August 2015, at which time Dr. Eubanks’ title will become Chancellor-Emeritus. Dr. Eubanks has announced his intention to retire in November.

Dr. Chambers is no stranger to Johnson University Florida. Having worked in various teaching and administrative capacities at the campus for 27 years, he returns from his most recent post in St. Louis, where since 2006 he has served as Academic Dean and Executive Vice President of St. Louis Christian College.

“He is greatly loved and highly respected by colleagues, alumni, and friends of both institutions as a dedicated Christian leader, preacher, teacher, scholar, and administrator,” said Dr. Eubanks.

Dr. Chambers brings extensive experience in congregational ministry in addition to his expertise in teaching and administration in higher education. He served congregations in Illinois in various capacities and has taught at Lincoln Christian University, Cincinnati Christian University, Florida Christian College, and St. Louis Christian College. Dr. Chambers holds three degrees from Lincoln Christian University and a Ph.D. degree from Warnborough College in Canterbury, England.

Dr. Chambers and his wife, Pamela, are the proud and active parents of three children and seven grandchildren.

“I look forward to working with President Weedman and the administrative staff to honor and advance the Great Commission vision of Johnson University,” said Dr. Chambers.
ALUMNI RESPOND TO MIKE CHAMBERS’ RETURN

With the announcement of Mike Chambers returning to Florida to serve as chancellor and vice provost of academics, alumni were asked to share their thoughts regarding his return. The overwhelming response from our alumni was positive and optimistic about Johnson University Florida. Space constraints would not allow us to list all of the responses in this article. To read all of the responses, please visit the Johnson University Florida website. (Refer to link here)

My classmates and I are thrilled with the news regarding Dr. Michael Chambers’ return to the University. We remember him as an excellent classroom professor with his teaching fresh, challenging, and always Bible-based. Dr. Chambers is a person of Christ-like integrity and high moral character, and we can hardly wait to greet him and his family with a heartfelt “welcome back.”

CURT LEONARD (’80)

In my lifetime I have come across no more than a handful of men of which I would consider to be complete examples of what it means to be a humble servant of God, and Dr. Mike Chambers is one of those men. In all sincerity, when I wrestle with decisions or emotions or spiritual events in my life, one of the thoughts that I contemplate in the process is trying to speculate what Dr. Chambers might say or do in this situation. I know no man more balanced when it comes to spirit and intellect than Mike. He is truly a follower of the ways of King David as a “man after God’s own heart.” I guess I should start wearing a “WWMD?” bracelet, huh? Heather and I are so excited for Dr. Chambers to be back in Florida serving at JUFL. The future is bright indeed in the Sunshine State. May the zeal of dear JUFL never cease!!

PETE RAMSEY (’96)

I cannot think of anyone more capable and prepared for this position. May God bless you richly as you continue to do His work, now back on the Florida campus. You have our complete support, and our prayers will be with you!

JEFF ROBINSON (’92)

I began attending Johnson University (then Central Florida Bible College) in 1979, the same year that Michael Chambers joined the college’s faculty. I didn’t know him at the time, but as I would learn in the months and years to come, he would impact my life in so many positive ways. To borrow a slogan from the sports world, I wanted to “Be Like Mike.”

DOYLE ADAMS (’83)

This is the best news I’ve heard in a long time! Mike is a brilliant thinker, a strategic leader, and a trusted friend to those who know him. There could not have been a better choice for this important role. I am beyond excited and grateful for this news!

SCOTT EYNON (’84)
When Mike and Pam told us they were leaving Kissimmee, it felt similar to a death, like a part of us would be missing, and, quite honestly, we were grieved. We remember feeling like it was the saddest news we had heard in quite a while. When we heard they were returning to Kissimmee, it felt like a revival, like a very special part is being restored, and quite honestly, we can hardly contain our joy. It is the best news we have heard in quite a while!

NILS AND INGIE
(RAVANDAL’82) TARANGER

I first met Mike Chambers at a campus ministry retreat at the University of Florida. I had a long list of troubling questions that Mike patiently answered that weekend. I was inspired by his knowledge of the scriptures, impressed by his explanations of why the Bible is trustworthy, and amused by his understated sense of humor. As a student at Johnson University (then Florida Christian College) several years later, his classes challenged my thinking and moved me to pursue a deep relationship with God. I’m sure that Mike’s leadership will impact today’s Johnson students in the same way.

PHIL KORNEGAY (’94)

I can’t tell you how proud I was of Johnson University Florida to choose Dr. Michael Chambers as the campus chancellor and vice provost. What better choice could be made than to take someone with such a rich history and past with Johnson (formerly Florida Christian College) and place him at the helm. There are many in the state of Florida, both alumni and church leaders, who remember and respect the many years of service of “Dean” Chambers (it will be difficult to refer to him otherwise). That being said, not only am I proud of this decision, but elated that such a dear friend of the college is returning to contribute in such big ways. Welcome back, Dr. Chambers.

ALLEN GONZALEZ (’90)

Mike Chambers was one of the kindest, godly men that I had as a professor. I’m excited to see him coming to JUFL, with his wealth of knowledge and wonderful spirit. He will be a great blessing to the students now and in the future.

GARY HENLINE (’93)

I am thrilled to see the direction that Johnson University Florida is heading. With a godly man like Michael Chambers in leadership, I have no doubt that he will help guide the University into a new age and continue to challenge the student body to stand strong on biblical principles.

DAVID C. FITZGERALD (’05)

I am thoroughly excited about the return of Dr. Michael Chambers to my alma mater! I always had great admiration for his wit and candor during our class sessions. I am thrilled that the current students will be able to benefit from his wealth of knowledge, along with having a great model of character and integrity.

JUSTIN COBOURNE (’03)

Dr. Mike Chambers has always shown a standard of professionalism, academic excellence, and biblical integrity. We were so thrilled when we heard that Mike and Pam had received and accepted this call to ministry at our alma mater, an institution we love, and continue to serve and support as parents of two current JUFL students. We believe with all our heart this to be a divine appointment and that Johnson has hit a grand slam with this choice. The best days of Johnson University Florida are in front of us, and the Chambers are the ones to lead at such a time as this. We thank and praise God for this provision, and pray God’s blessings of wisdom and grace upon our school, upon her students, and upon the fruitful ministry of Dr. Chambers as he serves in a spirit of grace and truth. We are still “Strong in the Scriptures,” but, in our opinion, we just got a little stronger.

TIM (’91) AND MARY (MARSHALL ’91) BOLEN

We are grateful for the alumni responses; too numerous to be included in this issue.

A complete list may be seen at JOHNSONU.EDU/CHAMBERSALUMNI
Earlier in this issue of SONLIFE, we announced the coming of Dr. Michael Chambers. From June 1 until August 25 he will serve as chancellor and vice provost, elect. On that date I will step down as chancellor and assist him until the end of October. The three month commitment that I made to President Weedman will have stretched to two and a half years by that time.

During this period Margaret and I have grown to love and appreciate the faculty, staff, and students of Johnson University Florida (JUFL) as well as the alumni whom we have met. We have made a host of new friends and renewed old friendships all over the state in the churches we have visited. Among them are donors who make up the financial lifeline of this institution. It is possible that I will continue to visit supporting churches and friends of the University during January – March for a few years as long as health and energy allow.

We are extremely optimistic about the coming of Dr. Chambers. His educational background and extensive teaching and administrative experience at both Johnson (then Florida Christian College) and St. Louis Christian College commend him highly. He will be building on a foundation that he played a vital part in laying. Just as significant, perhaps more so, are his integrity, dedication, and reputation for team building. The response from the JUFL campus family as well as our alumni, friends, and supporting churches has been universally supportive and enthusiastic.

Good progress has been made at the University in budgetary control since the merger became a reality on July 1, 2013, but he will face the same challenges that most small private colleges face in America today: namely student enrollment and fundraising. He should be supported strongly by the alumni, who love and respect him, but in reality he will need the help of all of the friends of JUFL, both individuals and churches. From my travels throughout Florida the last two years I have been much encouraged by the goodwill and faithful support of churches and donor friends. At the same time, I have become convinced more than ever that we must add substantially to our church and individual donor bases if we are going to keep our educational opportunities affordable and attract more students.

Please keep Mike and his wife Pam in your prayers as they make this move and join me in doing everything you can to strengthen the base and the outreach of Johnson University Florida.

Join the Johnson University Florida community for the 40th Convocation on Tuesday, August 25, 2015 in the Chapman Center at 9 a.m. when Dr. Michael L. Chambers will be installed as Chancellor and Vice Provost for Academics.
Where will the next generation of preachers come from? From the local church? Yes, most probably, and those filling the pulpits of tomorrow’s churches must be trained and mentored by today’s preachers. To help find tomorrow’s leaders, Johnson University Florida (JUFL) hosted the “Next Gen Preacher Search” on the JUFL campus February 2-3, 2015. Under the leadership of Jeff Walling and Trevor DeVage and in partnership with the 2015 North American Christian Convention, the two-day workshop was a great opportunity for high school juniors, seniors, and college students to hone their skills as preachers.

The Next Gen workshop was divided into two parts. The first included plenary sessions led by notable leaders such as David Eubanks, Roland Howard, Joe Harvey, Ruth Reyes, and Jim Book. These leaders, along with the mentors, spoke on a variety of topics regarding preaching. The second aspect of the workshop was the practical application of delivering a message; each person brought a message he/she had crafted for the workshop from a selected text provided by the Next Gen mentors. Over the course of the two days, the nineteen participants were evaluated and encouraged to sharpen their skills as proclaimers of the gospel. Jeff Walling, Trevor DeVage, and Daniel Overdorf were impressed with the effort of the students’ preparation and presentation of their messages.

The highlight of the workshop came on Tuesday when each of the participants preached a message in front of their peers as well as the three mentors. During that time each participant received encouragement and affirmation to continue to develop their skills as preachers. Over the course of the next few weeks, ministers from around the country will evaluate the messages and choose four finalists for the Next Gen Search. The final four Next Gen preachers will be introduced during the 2015 NACC in Cincinnati, Ohio. Johnson University will provide scholarships to any of the final four Next Gen preachers who wish to attend Johnson University on either the Florida or Tennessee campus.
I lost the first (and only) preaching contest I ever entered. I was a senior in high school, and because I had been raised in the church and was headed off to Bible college, assuming that good preaching was my divine birthright, I entered the preaching competition of the State Teen Convention. I compiled an outline, wrote the sermon, and delivered it in what I assumed then was high and lofty oratory. The judges saw it differently. It wasn’t a dignified loss, either. It wasn’t one of those competitions over which the judges deliberated for lengthy periods of time then finally made a reluctant determination, noting how difficult the decision was. No, there was no contest. I came in dead last.

Recently, I was recounting this sad tale to my discipling group—a collection of preachers’ kids who meet regularly for discussion, study, and contemplation about what makes good preaching. As fascinated as they were with this story, their lingering questions were about what happened next. I spend a fair amount of time on the road preaching, listening to preachers, and training young men to communicate well. Reflecting upon my own training (which was substantial and unappreciated until later in my ministry), given what I’ve heard, studied, and experienced over the years, I find that what the next generation of preachers can expect is not much different from what has made great preaching in all generations—from Paul, to Origen, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Whitfield, Spurgeon, Stone, and the Campbells. What is it that makes good preaching? As the church moves forward into uncharted societal waters and unprecedented challenges, the things that make for the best preaching are still, after all these years, what they always were.

**REAL PREACHING TAKES WORK**

Good preaching takes hard work. Anything worth doing is worth doing well, and nothing worth doing comes easy. The Gospel is serious business, and it deserves serious attention, particularly in two areas.

First: understanding the text. One of the things that impresses me about Paul is the frequency with which he quoted the Scriptures (the Old Testament) even when preaching to Gentiles. Paul was convinced that the Scriptures were the word of God, and in his most comprehensive articulation of the Gospel (Romans) he continually appealed to Moses and the prophets as witnesses to his case. (There are over 100 citations from and allusions to Scripture just in Romans 9-11.) Preaching the oracles of the Living God is no small matter. Every young preacher has high hopes and aspirations, and I fell victim to the same trap that Satan lays for all young preachers: to use the pulpit to become a rock star. Doing so almost always involves moving more and more away from the text and more toward luring people into agreement of my own thinking and opinions. Losing that first preaching contest drove me to my knees—and to my desk. Great preaching isn’t a rock-star mentality. It’s
hard work. And in my preaching I’ve come to articulate with David, “I will not offer to my God that which costs me nothing” (2 Samuel 24:24).

Second: the craft of preaching. I didn’t know very much about preaching when I began and assumed that “best practices” in homiletics required three points, a poem, and a prayer. My training in preaching included not only a serious study of the text, but a continual investigation into what makes good preaching. I have read books on preaching and passed on books to budding young preachers to help them learn cognitively what good preaching entails. But I also listen to good communicators. Preachers are among them, but not all of them are preachers. I also listen to great lecturers, comedians, and presidential speeches. Johnson University Florida offers a wide variety of opportunities for students interested in honing their craft, from preaching courses (beginner to advanced), to Timothy Club (a discipling group for preachers), to preaching opportunities in the local churches and internships with significant preachers.

REAL PREACHING TAKES A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SCRIPTURE

In the last section I mentioned this as a matter of exegesis and sermon preparation. But here I am referring to a fundamental commitment to Scripture in the personal life of the preacher. There is a strong temptation particularly related to pastoral ministry that confines Scripture and its personal application more to the pulpit and to the ministry than the personal life of the minister. Familiarity breeds contempt, and if we’ve learned anything from Hophni and Phinehas (1 Samuel 2:12-26; cf. 1:3) and the oracles against the shepherds of Israel (Jeremiah 23:1-6; Ezekiel 34:1-31; Isaiah 56:9-57:13), it’s that those who administrate the sacrifices are those most likely to profane them. The next generation of great preaching will see preachers who are committed to letting the Word shape their personal lives to the same degree as their sermons. The recent drama involving celebrity preachers losing their ministries has not been so much a matter of succumbing to moral temptation as it has been about carelessness in personal spirituality and holiness. What went for Timothy two millennia ago still goes for the modern preacher: “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers” (1 Timothy 4:16).

As you can tell, I struggled a lot in the early days of my preaching. I made a lot of mistakes.

We have nothing to offer from the text except what we have received from God through the text. Great preaching isn’t about filling sermons with movie clips, propagandized gimmicks, or sentimental stories filled with nonsensical aphorisms and platitudes. It’s about passing on to the congregation what we have received from the Father—the result of hard and serious study, the fruit of personal reflection, the pain of acknowledging our flaws and failures, and the joy of the grace of Christ.

REAL PREACHING TAKES A LOVING COMMUNITY

“Let him who is not in community beware of being alone. Into the community you were called, the call was not meant for you alone; in the community of the called you bear your cross, you struggle, you pray” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together, 77).

As you can tell, I struggled a lot in the early days of my preaching. I made a lot of mistakes. No doubt some were offended and the Father rolled his eyes at my immaturity. But at every stage of my ministry I was surrounded by a loving community of God’s people who believed in me and wanted to see me succeed. They could see, better than I could, the kind of preacher I needed to become, and they were patient with me until I got there (or rather, they’re still patient with me hoping someday I might!). Great preachers are surrounded by great communities.

E. V. Hill, preacher of Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles (and one of the greatest
homileticians of our day), spoke at a national convention I attended. He remarked that he had stayed at Mt. Zion for 42 years because, “I’ve never had one bit of trouble out of those people. And I tried not to give them any.” His comments reflect a loving relationship between preacher and congregation. Great preaching involves a reciprocal, caring relationship. The preacher must love the congregation, and preach with them, not at them. The congregation must love the preacher, giving him more encouragement than criticism, freedom to experiment, and time to come to his own conclusions about what doesn’t work. There will be hard things that need to be said from the pulpit. But those things are almost always more even-tempered sermonically and accepted by the congregation when they are born from a loving relationship where the preacher understands himself to be a fellow sinner than when the preacher views himself as the sole righteous leader amidst a faithless people. For neither of the latter are true. And better relationships between congregation and preacher inevitably lead to longer and more effective ministries.

Scripture. Hard work. A loving community. These will define the next generation of great preachers and their sermons. Every preacher will embody these values differently—flesh them out amidst his own style and personality. But these three remain. Johnson University Florida is committed to training young preachers who embody these values.


Johnson University Welcomes Sid Foulke

Johnson University Florida is pleased to welcome Sid Foulke as planned giving coordinator. Sid is no stranger to JUFL, having served on the staff from 1982-1986.

Sid has also served as a trustee and brings over 30 years’ experience in the insurance industry to his role as planned giving coordinator. He understands the needs individuals have in planning and executing an estate plan. Sid and his wife Nancy have been married 56 years and are members of First Christian Church, Kissimmee, Florida, where Sid serves as an elder. He has been connected to the University for a number of years. Both of his sons and their wives are alumni of JUFL.

If you are interested in information regarding planned giving or legacy giving, please contact Sid at 407-569-1389 or SFoulke@JohnsonU.edu.
Friends—we did it. We’re graduating. Today marks an accomplishment; it marks the end of one adventure and the start of another. All papers are turned in, tests are taken, and courses completed. We have received our caps and our robes, and our faces will be hung on the wall for years to come. We did it. But, as this day carries itself to completion, a giant page is being turned. As the minutes of today count down, a new door is being opened. Where will we go? What will we do? How many more chapters are in our future? The answer is unknown.

As I began writing for this special moment, I sat in my room contemplating words to share, stories to tell, and quotes to pass on. As I racked my brain for something, I continuously encountered a reoccurring theme, and that is to Remember Your Sender.

When we leave these doors today, we are not simply moving on to our next destination. We are being sent.

In Exodus chapters 3 and 4, we encounter a captivating story of the sender and the sendee. Moses, the unusual hero of an incredible plot, finds himself in the spotlight of God’s redemptive plan for his people.

It was a normal day. Moses was encamped in the land of Midian, living with Jethro the priest, who also became his father-in-law. He was in charge of watching Jethro’s flock and ended up doing this for several years. Moses, familiar with this area, noticed something unusual one day while watching the flock.

Moses encountered a burning bush. Like any sensible man, Moses got closer to see what this fiery spectacle was all about. The closer he came, he realized that the bush was not burning up, but it was on fire. As he stared in confusion, something absolutely incredible happened. “Moses! Moses!” God called out. “I have seen my people being persecuted.” Searching for the right person for the job and he called Moses? Yes, Moses, the run-away shepherd. “Moses, go to Pharaoh and save my people!” And at that moment, Moses experienced his calling.

Being called and responding to the call are two completely different things. As Moses stood before the presence of God, this calling seemed unlikely. Moses began creating a list of excuses. “Who am I, that I should go?” and “Suppose I go and they ask who sent me, what shall I say then?” Moses was completely confused why God chose him for this incredible task. God responded by reminding him numerous times “I am with you. The Great I AM is sending you.” What more did he need? Moses was reminded over and over again that he was not going out on his own. He was going in the name of the GREAT I AM.

Today is May 1, 2015. It’s a normal day. We gather as a group of graduates to celebrate the wonderful feat of completing our degrees. The gym is full of people. Look around. Friends, family, professors, faculty, and suddenly there is a calling, “Graduates! Graduates!”

Our time here has prepared us for this moment. We are being called to be a part of the greater plot. We hear it all the time from parents and grandparents, “You and your children are going to have it rough. This world is getting darker and darker by the minute.” There is suffering out there, there is confusion out there, and there is need for redemption. There is a great need for the almighty power of the Great I Am.

The beauty of this entire encounter is the fact that God wanted to use Moses. Taking his odd past into consideration, God called this man to lead his people. God is in the business of using us, of sending us.

The temptation is to mimic Moses and roll out a list of excuses claiming that God “has the wrong person.” But
that’s really not what it’s about, is it? “But, God, I don’t remember everything from my Life of Christ class” or “I don’t know where my core communications mat went” or “God, I am not good enough, smart enough, talkative enough, popular enough.” It goes on and on. And then He reminds us, “It’s not about you. It’s about Me, the one sending you.” It is about the Great I Am.

Every time Moses pointed his finger to his own chest, he was missing it. Three times he did this. “I can’t” or “I am not,” and every time God took Moses’ finger and pointed it to Himself, back to YHWH. There is beauty in God wanting to use us, but there is greater beauty in Him who is sending us.

This entire story occurred before the cross. Even being on the other side of the cross, this is an incredibly beautiful story of God using Moses, but what about today? Today, we live on the side of the cross that is marked with the suffering and resurrection of our divine King. On this side of the cross we are covered in grace and extended redemption.

Suddenly, through this lens, today is not a normal day. Not only are we being sent by the Great I Am, but we are being sent by a risen savior. Everything we do is still not about us, but is all about Christ, our king. Today is not a normal day. Since the empty tomb, every day is the farthest thing from normal, and we get to be a part of it. As we serve, as we live, as we take what we have received here, we are being sent. We will be used by YHWH, but never forget, it all points back to Him.

Now, under our almighty sender, there are some sub-senders; behind me are the most incredible men and women we will ever encounter. Not only them, but also faculty and trustees as well. Remember them. Thank them. Pray for them. They are rooting for us. They have been since we first stepped on this campus, and they will continue to do so from this day on. Remember them.

Not only must we remember this faculty, but our family and friends as well. They are rooting for us. They are sending us as well. Not to mention, those sitting next to, in front of, and behind you: remember them. Remember those who came out from all over to be here for you. Remember them.

Now please hear me out. Today is a special moment and whether we want it to be or not, this moment is about us. In this moment, we all have a reason to celebrate. Enjoy this moment. Go spend time with loved ones. Post pictures on Facebook. Go get some pie. Smile! We did it! We made it! But, as we are being sent out, as we serve, and as we live, remember YHWH. The second your foot leaves these doors, remember the One who is rooting for you so much He sent His Son to die for you. It is about Him always. Friends, go out and Remember Your Sender.

Chosen by the senior class, Mike Sackrider was the 2015 Class Orator. Mike’s message challenged his classmates and the commencement audience to remember they were called to follow God. Mike is currently serving the Community Christian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

I have learned a great deal about the Scriptures and the history of the Church during my time at JUFL, most importantly, how to make a defense for the Gospel and stand for Truth.

The professors and other faculty members were very patient with me and very understanding of my personal life issues that hindered my studies. I am eternally grateful to all my professors.

- Denise Sierra

The opportunities for learning and spiritual growth are essentially endless. The faculty and staff at JUFL are truly wonderful people. Although my future vocation may not be at a church or parachurch organization, I am confident that I have been equipped to serve others as God has called me.

- Hana Eldick
Christian business man and church leader, Bill Duncan, dreamed of providing scholarships to students from Christian Churches in Indiana to attend Bible colleges. His dream was realized in 1963 with the launch of the Alexander Christian Foundation (ACF). Preachers and businessmen joined with him in its founding and continued it after his death. The first scholarship was awarded in 1964 to a young high school senior planning to attend Johnson University Tennessee (then Johnson Bible College). Since then, over $2 million in scholarships have been awarded by the ACF in Indiana.

Mr. Duncan promoted the establishing of ACFs in other states, and in 1989 the Alexander Christian Foundation of Florida was organized. The founding leaders were ministers Joe Cooper and Ross Pepper, and Harry Scott, elder of First Christian Church, Orlando. Since then over $500,000 has been awarded to 500 recipients, a high percentage of them attending Johnson University Florida (then Florida Christian College).

On April 1, 2015, around eighty-five students, parents, and directors of ACFF met in the Chapman Center of JUFL to announce the awards for the 2015/16 school year. Twenty-seven scholarships were awarded, twenty-five went to continuing or newly enrolling JUFL students.

Instead of having a speaker, the normal practice, Harold Armstrong, chairman of the ten-member ACFF board of directors, did a splendid job of interviewing each student who stepped forward to receive a scholarship. His questions included “What prompted you to consider Christian service as your life’s vocation? What person has had the greatest influence on your life? What led you to JUFL? What do you think God has in store for you? Where do you think He is leading you? What field of study will you be pursuing?”

Everyone present was deeply impressed by the maturity, sincerity, and dedication with which each student responded. Many said it was the best program of its kind they had ever experienced. Over $30,000 was awarded to the students, and the overwhelming sentiment of those responsible for the grants was that the funds could not have been invested better than in the lives and education of these students. Awards come from ACFF endowments and from gifts for annual grants.

Dr. and Mrs. David Eubanks were honored by the surprise announcement of the Board of Directors that a scholarship was being endowed in their names through ACFF in recognition of their contributions to the merger and their service to JUFL since the merger. Gifts of $20,000 from churches and/or individuals are needed to establish an ACFF endowment. The Foundation is seeking more donors to help establish endowments or to make annual gifts in order to build on their twenty-six years of aid to Christian students in Florida. May their good work continue until Jesus comes.
Since the first century, the Great Commission of Matthew 28 has been a call for world evangelism as Christ’s ambassadors have taken the word of God around the world. Community Christian Church (CCC) has an active mission’s ministry taking the gospel message to others, but they also see the world coming to worship as well. Every Sunday nearly 80 distinct people groups gather for worship and hear the word of God proclaimed. The diversity of the congregation is something to celebrate! Scott Eynon, senior pastor at CCC since 1994, cites Revelation 7:9, “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language.” Nearly every West Indian nation, along with several Hispanic ones, plus Africa, Asia, Europe, Russia, and even Thailand are represented during these services. Outside of U.S.-born congregants, Jamaicans, Haitians, and Colombians comprise the largest portion of the congregation. Scott often reminds people, “We get to be a part of a church that looks like Heaven will be like one day.”

One of the rewarding aspects of leading a church of such diversity is found in the comments Scott wrote in an article in the January issue of the Christian Standard. “It’s incredibly thrilling to know you are part of a church that really is reaching people from all over the world and being able to equip people to go back to their countries as well and share the hope of Christ.”

The foundation for reaching diverse populations for five of the church’s leadership staff began at Johnson University Florida, where these leaders graduated. Senior minister, Scott Eynon, and associate minister, Bill Davis, were early graduates attending what was then Central Florida Bible College. Student ministers Tim Gray, Arron Tyree, and children’s director Katy Garcia, received their education from Florida Christian College. While these alumni attended the University at different times, they received the same foundational truths of scripture which prepared them for leading a diverse congregation. As a University, we are thrilled to learn of the work our alumni are doing to extend the Kingdom of God. We continue to pray God’s blessings on their efforts, as we do for all our graduates.

The SonLife is indebted to John Chace, director of pastoral care at Community Christian Church (Ft. Lauderdale, Florida), for providing information regarding the article. Mr. Chace shared much of the information in an article published in Christian Standard.
**BIRTHS**

Sean ('04) and Michelle (Anderson '04) Davy adopted siblings Piper, age 7, and Damon, age 5, on December 22, 2014.

Darin ('04) and Lindsey Slaymaker announce the birth of their daughter, Xyza Grace Slaymaker, born March 6, 2015.

Billy ('06) and Katie (French '06) Babbino announce the birth of their third daughter, Laney Josephine Babbino, born March 26, 2015.

Elliot ('06) and Abigail (Pardue '06) Blount announce the birth of their daughter, Eden Kylee Blount, born January 5, 2015.

Dana ('08) and Jennifer (Mason '07) King announce the birth of their son, Asher Anthony King, born September 13, 2014.

**EMPLOYMENT**

Travis ('99) and Kippy (Kirchner '00) Jacob have moved to Orlando, Florida. Travis is chief culture officer in charge of human resources at Maximized Living in Celebration, Florida, and Kippy is director of public relations at the Education Foundation of Osceola County.

Elliot ('06) and Abigail ('06) Blount recently moved to Jacksonville, Florida. Elliot is the millennial minister, working primarily with 18-30 year olds for Swiss Cove Christian Church.

Ben Boles ('03) began serving as lead pastor at Homeport Christian Church as of August 2014. Ben served as student minister at Homeport Christian Church prior to becoming the lead minister. He received his Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies from Lincoln Christian University in December 2014.

David Fitzgerald ('05) began serving as lead pastor at First Christian Church of Winter Park, Florida, as of November 2014. He served as student minister at First Christian prior to becoming lead minister.

David ('05) and Tracy (Nolder '05) Prestridge returned to Florida. David is youth minister with South Daytona Christian Church.

Joe ('06) and Sarah (Jamison '07) Schneider recently moved to West Union, West Virginia, where Joe serves as senior minister with West Union Christian Church.

Josh ('12) and Julie (Hercules '12) Colvin moved to Huntingburg, Indiana, where Josh serves as the student minister for Central Christian Church of Huntingburg.

Eli ('12) and Jaklyn (Diaz '14) Robinson moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where Eli serves as student minister with Fort Caroline Christian Church.

Caleb ('13) and Stephanie (Sanderson '13) Combs relocated to Clearwater, Florida, where Caleb is the family minister with First Christian Church, Clearwater.

Dane ('14) and Becca Ottum moved to Palmer, Alaska, where Dane serves as minister of the Palmer Christian Church.

**MARRIAGES**

Jordan Stancil ('13) married Morgan Crank on October 11, 2014, in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The wedding was performed by David Peters ('96) and Terry Davis ('91). Jordan and Morgan moved to Joplin, Missouri, where Jordan serves as program coordinator for MIX, the Christ in Youth summer conference for 6,7,8 graders.

Jason and Caitlin (Schultz '13) Miller married in Palm Bay, Florida, on December 13, 2014. The couple resides in Palm Bay.

C.J. and Ashton (Chambers '14) Jenkins were married on June 14, 2014. Ashton is the daughter of alumni Arron & Rhonda Chambers.

**HELP US KEEP CURRENT**

Send your news, updates, and photos to Johnson at:

E: ATison@JohnsonU.edu

Johnson University Florida
1011 Bill Beck Blvd.
Kissimmee, FL 34744
The Johnson University Tennessee campus made *Senior Saints in the Smokies* a household name with mature Christians in the South and Midwest. The Florida campus used this foundation of solid biblical teaching, interesting workshops, and traditional music to create our own Christian retreat with a southern twist. Over 100 friends and supporters of Johnson University attended the first *Senior Saints in the SONshine* on March 19, 20, and 21, 2015! While our students were on Spring Break, this active group took over the campus for three exciting days.

Attendees experienced a taste of Florida’s finest gospel music with JUFL’s New Creation performing the classical portion of their Spring Tour program; praise and worship music led by Phil Ellis and the Washington Shores Christian Church Praise Team; and a good old-fashioned Hymn Sing led by Tony Cason. Glenn Bourne, widely known for passionate preaching of God’s Word as a professor, speaker, and past president of St. Louis Christian College, presented a morning Bible Study. Joe Putting, senior minister, Tomoka Christian Church, shared a message encouraging participants to “Call on the Name of the Lord” and to “Focus on Today.”

Workshops covered a wide range of interesting subjects including: “Coins and Christianity,” “Heaven is for Real,” “Faith for Generations,” “Encouragement: Why It’s Important and How to be an Encourager,” and a dramatic presentation by Betty Gray on completely trusting God, the faith of Fanny Jane Crosby. From the evaluations received, the workshops were well received, providing spiritual manna for a hungry group of Christian workers.

While we may not have the scenic vistas available in Tennessee, our guests enjoyed an Astros Spring Training baseball game, a round of golf with Dr. Eubanks, fishing at our private fishing hole, an afternoon tea with Mrs. Eubanks, and other central Florida local traditions during their stay with us. With plenty of opportunities to fellowship, including an ice cream social, new friendships were formed and old friendships renewed. The three-day event concluded with the Imagine Luncheon, featuring our guest speaker, Joe Putting, and the talented music of The Liberty Voices.

Before guests left, they were already asking, “What’s the date for next year’s event?” We are happy to announce our second *Senior Saints in the SONshine* is scheduled for March 17-19, 2016, when we will “Return to Mayberry.” Make plans now to join us and bring your friends!

Glinda Cameron serves as the advancement services coordinator at Johnson University Florida.
(1) Trevor DeVage, Jeff Walling and Daniel Overdorf served as the Mentoring Team for the Next Gen Preacher Search. (2) Senior Saints Worship led by the Washington Shores Church of Christ Choir. (3) Margaret Eubanks gave an inspiring recitation of “My King” as the Washington Shores Church of Christ choir looked on. (4) Betty Grey and Dr. Eubanks share during Senior Saints in the Sonshine. (5) Liberty Voices salute to America during the Imagine Banquet was a crowd pleaser. (6) Former Professor Glenn Bourne challenges the senior saints with a Bible Study from 2 John during Senior Saints.
IN MEMORY OF
Darrell Adams
Richard M. and Ruth C. Apple
Kylene Boden
William H. Brown
Dr. Douglas Brumbaugh
Earl Carver
Amelia Cavanaugh
Roger Chambers
Dorothy Constantine
Donald & Debbie Couch
Fred J. Couch
Fred W. Couch
Fred W & Fred J Couch
MC & Beulah Couch
Mickey Couch
Jerry Curtis
Agapito & Rosalia Fernandez
Robert Forbes
Don Harrison
Jerald G. Hieronymus
Lloyd Masters
David Meyer
Cecil Mohler
Ella Mae Muniz
David Murray
Donald Norman
Pastor R.L. Polk
Fred & Launia Poore
Ralph T. Powell
Robert Richenberg
Mary Richter
Liz Roberts
Julia Martin Schroeder
Arthur & Mildred Tison
Jack Wingate Sr.
Don Wright

GIVEN BY
M/M Dennis Berry
M/M David Eubanks
M/M Thomas Hardlin
M/M Dick Apple
Christian Church in the Wildwood
Jean Brown
Linda Brumbaugh
Zephyr Christian Church
Zephyr Christian Church
M/M Doyle Adams
M/M Bob Mehlenbacher
Bristol Christian Church
M/M S.C. Couch
M/M S.C. Couch
Joyce Couch
M/M S.C. Couch
M/M S.C. Couch
Major John Fernandez
Martha Forbes
Emma Riggs
Charlotte Harrison
Wanda Hieronymus
Gladys Masters
Janet Brumbelow
Sadie Burton
Donna Cook
M/M David Eubanks
M/M Jack Larocca
Clifford McCalley
Gladys McGuire
Eva Meyer
M/M Thomas O’Bryant
Rita Ross
Martha Thomas
Open Door Christian Church
Zephyr Christian Church
Luis Muniz
Tootsie Murray
Nan Norman
M/M Harry Wakefield
Fredda Bishop
M/M Don Parker
Cheryl Richenberg
M/M Hap Noble
Cheryl Richenberg
M/M Larry Martin
M/M David Tison
M/M Alan Tison
Mary Winggate
Zephyr Christian Church

IN HONOR OF
Sara Boger
Lois Bootle
S.C. Couch
Lisa Geisik
Greg Hartley
Jim & Clara Kellar
Larry Kineman
Kevin Parker
James E. Smith
Kent Stookey
David & Margaret Eubanks
Mark & Ann Fessler

GIVEN BY
M/M Kenneth Hartley
Janet Miglioretti
M/M Tim Eade
M/M Francis Gillogly
M/M Everett Lane
M/M Timothy Langston
M/M James Randolph
M/M Charles Summers
Drema Zimmerman
Norman Able
M/M Clarence Adkison
Fairway Christian Church
M/M James Pennington
M/M Kenneth Hartley
M/M Bob Stickney
Doris Pickett
M/M Don Parker
Cheryl Richenberg
Doris Pickett

HONORING LOVED ONES
Permanent funds are a wonderful way to recognize a loved one and continue his or her influence for Christ. The following funds have been established at Johnson University Florida since September 30, 2014.

Named permanent funds may be designated for a specific purpose such as scholarships, library, faculty salaries, etc. or may be unrestricted. Funds are established in the name of the donor or in the honor or memory of a loved one.

For more information, call the Advancement Office at 407-569-1388 or email ATison@JohnsonU.edu
“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
Romans 12:2 NIV

REGISTER ONLINE
JohnsonU.edu/TheEVENT

Call
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or email
AdmissionsFL@JohnsonU.edu

Join us at
Johnson University Florida

$115 Per Person until June 26th
$145 Per Person after June 26th
All prices include housing and meals!

QUESTIONS?

$115 Per Person until June 26th
$145 Per Person after June 26th
All prices include housing and meals!

Join us at
Johnson University Florida

$3.8 million GOAL RECEIVED

Goal to raise $3.8 million by February 2018

2014 - 2018
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SEEKING TO IMPACT OTHERS FOR ETERNITY

$745,000

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DANUBE RIVER CRUISE & CHRISTIAN REFORMATION TOUR  
OCTOBER 9-16, 2016

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS:

- Christian reformation experience (including Whittenburg and other Reformation sites)
- Viking Longship Atla
- Cruise from Nuremberg to Budapest on the Danube River
- Sail through the locks of the Main-Danube Canal
- *Tour castles, churches and a medieval abbey
- Special organ concert in Passau

- Two days in Vienna
- Six guided shore excursions included
- Optional excursions available
- All meals onboard ship, including wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner
- Entertainment, talks, hands-on demonstrations and cooking classes onboard

Linda Reid
lindareid4517@gmail.com
865-257-3200
7900 Johnson Drive,
Knoxville, TN 37998

LIMITED SPACE
BOOK NOW!

UPCOMING EVENTS AT JUFL:

- **CONVOCATION**
  Tuesday, August 25, 2015, 9 a.m.
  Installation of Mike Chambers as Chancellor and Vice Provost of Academics

- **TOOLS FOR TODAY’S LEADERS (ELDERS-LEADERS TRAINING SEMINAR)**
  Saturday, November 6, 2015, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
  A seminar designed to equip elders and other church leaders to lead effectively

- **PREACHFEST**
  Saturday, November 14, 2015

- **HOMECOMING & ROUNDUP FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS**
  Saturday, October 10, 2015

- **NIGHT OF NOEL**
  Friday, December 11, 2015, 7-9 p.m.
  The timeless account of the birth of Christ portrayed through music featuring choirs from Johnson University Florida and Tennessee campuses