

REACHING OUT

Fall 2021/Winter 2022

A publication of the School of Religion

Vol. 31, No. 1

MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE RECOGNITION WEEKEND



Furman Fordham II
South Central Conference

This year's Ministerial Candidate Recognition Weekend was held on September 24 and 25. The guest speaker was Furman Fordham II. Pastor Fordham has served in various churches in Australia, Illinois, Nebraska, and Tennessee. In 2020 he was elected to serve in the Church Ministries and Mission Development Department for the South Central Conference.

The weekend was filled with excellent biblical exposition. Fordham's Friday night message titled "WHAT?" unpacked our

response to the realization that we serve a God who *wants* to use us in His ministry. It is good news that not only are we chosen by God to unite with Him in service and ministry, but that He wants us to be on His team and is eager to work with us.

Continuing the theme of single-word questions, the title for the early service Sabbath morning asked "WHY?" Fordham explained that this question begs for an answer when we look at who we really are apart from God. Nothing about us makes us worthy of serving together with God. The answer to "Why?" is "Because we serve a God who loves us unconditionally and longs to have us in His company."

"WHERE?" was the title of the message for the church service. All were reminded through the life and experience of Jesus that sometimes God leads us into the wilderness, where we are tested and tempted and tried. It is not a comfortable place to be. But it is in the wilderness that we learn dependence upon God. The wilderness is necessary for our own growth and development.

As the church service ended, School of Religion dean Greg King called the 11 ministerial candidates forward. After a few words of encouragement from the Scriptures, the School of Reli-

gion faculty gathered around the students for a prayer of consecration.

During the weekend, Fordham recommended a book to the students that had been a blessing in his own life and ministry. He told the students that he would send them each a copy when he got back to his office. True to his word, a few days later a package arrived with the promised books titled "*Anonymous: Jesus' Hidden Years . . . and Yours,*" by Alicia Britt Chole.

The following week the seniors began interviewing with the Southern Union conferences for openings in pastoral ministry. The faculty is grateful that each candidate has been placed in a ministry position.



INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ELLEN G. WHITE AND ADVENTIST HERITAGE



Jud Lake, director, Institute for the Study of Ellen G. White and Adventist Heritage

The Institute for the Study of Ellen G. White and Adventist Heritage exists to heighten awareness and appreciation of the gift of prophecy and God's leading in Seventh-day Adventist history. The institute carries out its ministry in three ways. First, it organizes an annual lectureship each fall semester that features experts in the field of Ellen White studies. Previous guest lecturers include Jim Nix, Merlin Burt, Cindy Tutch, George Knight, Michael Campbell, and Philip Samaan. Second, it conducts tours of Adventist Heritage sites in New England during selected years. The tours visit such

places as the homes of Joseph Bates, Uriah Smith, and William Miller, and the Washington New Hampshire Church. The focus is on the stories of the pioneers and the ways the Lord led in their lives. Two highlights of the tour are sharing stories and songs in the Miller chapel and having communion on Ascension Rock.

The third way the institute carries out its ministry is through the writing and research of its director, Jud Lake. His books in-

clude *Ellen White Under Fire: Identifying the Mistakes of Her Critics* (2010), *A Nation in God's Hands: Ellen White and the Civil War* (2017), and *The Pocket Ellen G. White Dictionary* (coauthored with Michael Campbell: 2018). Lake has also contributed numerous articles and chapters in books, such as "Ellen White's Use of Extrabiblical Sources," in *The Gift of Prophecy in Scripture and History* (2015) and several articles in the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* (2014), including coauthoring with Jerry Moon one of the major essays, "Current Science and Ellen White: Twelve Controversial Statements." Lake's continuing research and future publishing ventures involve such subjects as Ellen White and extraterrestrials, Adventism and the concept of worldview, Ellen White and the promises of Scripture, and a biography of D. M. Canright.

Ultimately, the institute desires to emphasize the relevance of the ministry of Ellen White and to highlight the way that she points us to Scripture as the revelation of God's will for us. As she states: "The Lord has sent his people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light" (*Review and Herald*, Jan. 20, 1903).

PIERSON INSTITUTE OF EVANGELISM AND WORLD MISSIONS WEEKEND



Tom Evans, CEO of Child Impact International

The Pierson Institute held its Weekend of Evangelism and World Missions on the campus of Southern Adventist University November 9 and 10, 2021.

The speaker, Tom Evans, has served the church as a professor, conference president, church planter, and seminar presenter. He is currently the CEO of Child Impact International.

"Life-Changing Divine Appointments" was the title for Friday night's presentation. Evans explained what divine appointments are and shared both

biblical and personal examples. Evans' book, *Life-Changing Divine Appointments: 30-Day Challenge*, was given to every student, with the challenge to pray for the next 30 days for God to lead them to divine appointments.

On Sabbath morning, Evans presented "Spiritual Conversations with Secular People." He shared principles and gave examples of four areas that could be entry points for starting conversations with secular people. This was followed by a panel discussion on church revitalization that included Tom Evans, Alan Parker, Eliezer

Graterol, and Carlos Martin. The panel members answered student questions about how to revitalize a church in today's world.

After the panel discussion, there was a special prayer of dedication for the Soul-winning and Leadership Training (SALT) students who would be conducting evangelistic meetings in Cancun, Mexico, over the Thanksgiving break.

The last presentation was titled "The First Step for Church Growth." While many suggestions could be given to define where to begin, Evans pointed out that the first step is for each person to engage in daily devotions and to be totally surrendered to God. As God prepares our lives, we can be used by Him however He wishes to use us.

The Pierson Institute of Evangelism and World Missions is named after Robert H. Pierson, former president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and passionate missionary and evangelist. The Pierson Institute operates the Evangelistic Resource Center (ERC) and is part of the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University. Every year the Institute sends more than 100 students on evangelistic mission trips through ERC Missions, trains hundreds more through the SALT program, and conducts vital research projects. The institute is largely funded by donors, who make our mission of discipleship and evangelism possible.

FACULTY NEWS

Stephen Bauer, professor of theology and ethics, held a Spiritual Emphasis weekend at McDonald Road SDA Church, with the theme “Imperfect People of Faith: Improbable Heroes in Difficult Times.” Bauer spoke Friday evening and twice Sabbath morning. His titles were “The Outlaw: A Social Outcast Trusts an Improbable Promise;” “Broken by Choices: Finding Faith in Life’s Ruins;” and “God Undercover: When Suppressed Faith Rises.” In Waterville and Norridgewock, Maine, he spoke on “Righteousness by Faith in Romans and Hebrews;” “Ethics of the Gospel”, and “Forgiveness.”



Michael Hasel, professor of archaeology and biblical languages, published a number of scientific articles on his directed excavations at Lachish including preliminary reports in the *American Journal of Archaeology* and the *Bulletin of ASOR*. He also contributed the first chapter on “The Authority of Scripture,” in *True North: A Prophetic Call to Faithfulness*. Additionally, he wrote several popular articles, including “Rediscovering Lachish and Sennacherib’s Assyrian Campaign,” in the *Adventist Review*. He appeared in multimedia productions including “From Script to Scripture” for Hope Channel International and two major programs for It Is Written television.



Greg King, dean and professor of biblical studies, served on an international team of faculty members for the Adventist Accrediting Association that made an accreditation visit to Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen, the Adventist seminary in Austria that trains pastors for Austria, Switzerland, and Germany. He also led a Bible lands study tour to Israel, Jordan, and Egypt that included over 60 travelers. Additionally, he spoke at the Alaska Conference Camp Meeting in Palmer, Alaska, presenting a seminar on the importance of the Ten Commandments and their relevance for contemporary society.



Martin Klingbeil, professor of Old Testament and Near Eastern studies, lectured for a week on the Book of Psalms at Bogenhofen Seminary, Austria. In September, he served as external examiner for a dissertation defense at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. He was also the presenter for the archaeological pre-series lectures, which introduced *The Great Reset* evangelistic meetings by John Bradshaw, speaker of It is Written, at Chattanooga First SDA Church in October. During the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Antonio, Texas, in November, Klingbeil presented a scholarly paper on an archaeological topic. In addition, he has published a number of articles in professional journals and church publications.



Alan Parker, professor of ministry and evangelism, is conducting a large research project on race and culture in the Adventist Church. Alongside others, he is developing training materials that will help churches navigate cultural change. He also did research on why young adults leave the church and surveyed over 700 former members. He presented a report at both the Southern Union Evangelism Council (EC3) as well as the North American Division eHuddle Convention. In November, he presented a paper for the Adventist Theological Society on how churches can respond to poverty.



Wilson Paroschi, professor of New Testament studies, participated in several pastors and elders meetings via Zoom and in person, both in the United States and in Brazil, addressing topics such as the authority of Scripture, Christ and doctrine, and homosexuality in the Bible. He also concluded an article on Creation in Romans 1-2 for a special volume on Creation in the Bible, edited by the Biblical Research Institute. He is currently working on the final revision of his commentary on Paul’s letter to Titus, which will be part of the new *Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary*.



Barry Tryon, professor of applied theology, directed the 2022 Summer Field School of Evangelism held in Knoxville, Tennessee. Eight theology-student evangelists each preached a full evangelistic series in different churches in the greater Knoxville area. He also taught an on-campus graduate class, Spirituality in Ministry, for the Masters in Ministry program.



2021-2022 Ministerial Candidates



Michael Black
December '21
Montana Conference



Aaron Buttery
May '22
Carolina Conference



Dan Catangay
May '22
Florida Conference



Edgar Escobar
May '22
Kentucky-Tennessee Conference



Juan Carlos Grajales
May '22
Michigan Conference



Mark Harrison
May '22
Alaska Conference



Josnel Lache
May '22
Georgia-Cumberland Conference



Fredy Martinez
May '22
Georgia-Cumberland Conference



Nathan Nelson
May '22
Georgia-Cumberland Conference



Sergio Vasquez-Mejia
December '21
Alaska Conference



Ryan Walker
May '22
Georgia-Cumberland Conference

Congratulations, Seniors

Dates reflect the time of graduation.

MINISTERIAL TRAINEE WEEKEND



Gary Rustad, president, Georgia-Cumberland Conference

The Ministerial Trainee Induction Weekend took place February 18 and 19, after a three-week delay due to COVID concerns. Gary Rustad, president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference, was the guest speaker. He challenged students with three key principles from the story of Samuel's calling to ministry in (1 Samuel 3, NKJV).

The first principle was **Connect**. The biblical text says: "The word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation...and while Samuel was lying down, that the LORD called Samuel"

(verses 1,4).

Yet the Lord saw in young Samuel one in whom He could revive the prophetic gift and thus influence the whole nation of Israel. As Christians, we should connect with God in such an intimate way that He entrusts us with a lifetime calling to ministry and service.

The second principle was **Listen**. Samuel heard God speak three times in the stillness of the night, because he was listening (verse 10). We need to daily connect with God and listen to what He has to say.

The third principle was **Share**. Samuel was willing to share God's message with the priest, Eli, even though it was a difficult conversation (verses 11-14). Likewise, as Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we must share the unique three angels' messages with a postmodern society, even though definitive truth and moral absolutes are no longer popular.

Rustad concluded with a personal story about the passing of his beloved father. Even in the advanced stages of Parkinson's, his dad was able to recite Bible promises along with the references. As Adventist Christians, we may suffer afflictions due to faithfully carrying out God's commands, but this will lead to a far greater weight of glory. Each of us can say, along with Pastor Rustad and the Apostle Paul, "I know in whom I have believed" (2 Timothy 1:12). School of Religion dean Greg King closed the weekend with a charge to the 16 incoming ministerial trainees and a dedicatory prayer.

The consecration weekend left a deep impact on students. Edvan Benitez later posted on Facebook: "This weekend was very special for me because it was the reconfirmation of my calling to be a pastor, not just from the School of Religion, but from my God. God has called me to be his servant! I heard it and felt it and I have decided to accept it. . . Here I am, God. Send me." Each of the attendees felt a similar tugging on their hearts as the Lord spoke through His servant, Pastor Rustad.

SENIOR CONSECRATION WEEKEND STIRS HEARTS



John Bradshaw, president It Is Written

John Bradshaw, president of It Is Written, gave a compelling message for the university vespers during the School of Religion's Senior Consecration Weekend. "Don't think small when you go to the mission field." He told the students that their main purpose should be to share the message of salvation. "You might have someone ask you, 'What must I do to be saved?' Remember why you are going to another country. Not just to sightsee, but to save souls!"

The evening's highlight was the consecration of those who had already dedicated themselves to serving God in a major way. This included 21 School of Religion seniors, 60 Evangelistic Resource Center (ERC) students who were soon to conduct evangelistic meetings, and 54 outgoing student missionaries planning to serve in various places for the coming school year.

On Sabbath morning, Bradshaw shared from his experiences in ministry. He stated: "In ministry, you need to deal with people, and if you don't want to deal with people, go do something else. Ministry is not about you being great; it is about you being a servant and willing to do the hard things."

For the final service, Bradshaw emphasized what is really important in ministry. "Don't waste your time," he warned, "on things that are a distraction. You can't accomplish everything. You are called to win souls for God." It was a dynamic and gripping presentation. Following the sermon, there was a special prayer for the seniors by Greg King, dean of the School of Religion.

At a time when some Adventists are questioning the importance of evangelists, missionaries, and ministers, this weekend provided a clarion call that God still wants to send people into the world to save souls. May we all respond, "Here am I! Send me." (Isaiah 6:8, NKJV).



ARCHAEOLOGY EXCAVATIONS RESUME AFTER PANDEMIC DELAYS

Southern students had a wonderful experience excavating for three weeks at Khirbet Safra and then touring through the country of Jordan for another 10 days. Paul Gregor, director of the excavation and professor at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, highly commended the group of Southern students. “We have never had such positive and hardworking students who applied their knowledge of archaeology in the field like this.”

Indeed, Southern is very blessed by the high quality students its archaeology program has attracted. Four Southern archaeology majors served as square supervisors at the Khirbet Safra dig, providing them much-needed administrative skills in fieldwork. One of them, Charis Denton, discovered an Egyptian statue on the last day of the excavation, which was the most notable find of the last four seasons at Khirbet Safra. All of the Southern students were excited about the dig, after having waited for several years to receive their required fieldwork training, due to the global health crisis.

Following the excavation Michael G. Hasel, professor of Near Eastern studies and archaeology, and Giselle S. Hasel, associate professor of art history, led 20 students through the country of Jordan. The tour began in Madaba and continued south to the magnificent site of Petra, located in the ancient territory of Edom. The group spent two days exploring the ancient ruins cut by the Nabateans, who controlled much of Arabia during the time of the apostle Paul. While spending the Sabbath in Petra, they had morning and evening worship as is their practice. During these times of worship the students shared what God had been doing in their lives while on the tour. It was gratifying to the entire group when the tour guide later commented how meaningful it was for him to experience these worships and hear how the Lord was working in the lives of the students. This particular tour guide is part of Jordan’s Christian minority. As a child he had attended a Seventh-day Adventist elementary school in Amman, and he still has warm regard for Adventists. This experience serves to remind us all that our witness and influence reaches beyond our immediate circle to those we encounter while traveling in countries that can be very difficult to reach with traditional evangelism.

A camel ride, followed by a night spent in tents in the desert of Wadi Rum gave the group a sense of the Israelites’ time in the wilderness as they journeyed to the Promised Land. Next, the students marveled at the beauty of sea life in the Red Sea, after which the tour ended with a focus on the New Testament period, including a visit to the fortress of Machaerus, where John the Baptist was beheaded.

Following the return of the students to the United States, the Hasels stayed on in Jerusalem for a productive week of work on the upcoming museum exhibit and on publications.

The Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum will open a new exhibit focusing on the results of our many years of work at Tel Lachish in Israel. The exhibit is scheduled to open in January 2023.



THE DEAN'S PAGE

WHY THE BIBLE IS THE BOOK OF BOOKS

What makes the Bible such a unique book? Why do Christian believers around the world continue to testify to its transcendent and enduring value? Why does it play a central role in our ministerial training curriculum at Southern Adventist University, which includes required classes in Old Testament, New Testament, Daniel, and Revelation, among others? What makes the Bible the greatest book of all, the Book of Books?

One way to answer this question is by saying that the Bible tells us both what we need to know and about whom we need to know. Let's take these up in this order.

Some years ago, Evel Knievel, the famous daredevil stuntman who became extremely wealthy by performing death-defying motorcycle stunts (and often injuring himself in the process), was being interviewed on a television talk show. The host asked him: "Why do you do it, Mr. Knievel? You have enough money to live out your years in luxury and splendor. Why do you keep risking your life with such dangerous feats?"

Knievel's reply was both insightful and intriguing. He answered: "Well, the way I view it, every human being has three basic questions, namely, Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? And to these questions, we have no answer. So I might as well find my fulfillment in life by attempting these stunts, as dangerous as they may be."

If Knievel is correct that we have no answer to life's most probing questions, perhaps choosing a lifestyle that trifles with death is understandable. But the good news is that the Bible provides a clear answer to each of these foundational questions.

Where did we come from? According to Scripture, life did not arise on Earth by chance or accident. Also, humans did not evolve from lower forms of life, through long ages of natural selection involving suffering and death in the animal kingdom. No! The omnipotent Lord of the universe, our Creator, declared, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1:26, ESV).

Whenever we as humans are tempted to doubt our worth, when our self-esteem suffers, we should remember this foundational truth, emphatically asserted by the Bible. We are of inestimable value, because we are the personal creation of a loving, benevolent, personal God.

Why are we here? According to Scripture, life's purpose is not to accumulate as many material possessions as we can so that we can live in luxury and ease. "He who dies with the most toys wins" is the mantra of the secular world, not the motto of a Christian. Such a focus leaves one empty and unsatisfied. The *Westminster Shorter Catechism* had it right when it proclaimed that "man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." This is in harmony with the Bible's emphasis that our goal in life should be to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness

(see Matthew 6:33), and the statement of Jesus that the greatest commandments are to love God supremely and our neighbor unselfishly (Matthew 22:37-39). In short, we are called to live lives of commitment to God and service to others. This is how we discover meaning and contentment in life.

Now to the third question, Where are we going? Scripture has a clear answer to this question, as well. It tells us that our ultimate destination is not a lonely patch of ground in a cemetery. No, Jesus reveals our destiny when He says, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:3, NRSV)

I like the way H. M. S. Richards, the well-known Voice of Prophecy speaker of yesteryear, expressed it: "If you ever read in the *Adventist Review* that H. M. S. Richards has died and gone to his final resting place, don't believe a word of it. I'll just be taking a nap until Jesus comes."

We need the Bible not only because it tells us what we need to know, but also because it tells us about whom we need to know. Scripture, though composed of 66 different books that were written over many centuries by various authors, has one towering figure who binds together the whole: Jesus Christ, our Lord.

In the Old Testament, He is the Creator (see John 1:3; Hebrews 1:2), who lovingly created His human children. And after humans chose a path leading to misery and death, He is presented as the promised Messiah, who, though He comes to earth as a child, is also the mighty God (see Isaiah 9:6), who will bear the sins of others so that they might be saved (see Isaiah 53).

And what is anticipated and predicted in the Old Testament is fully revealed in the New.

The four Gospels tell about Jesus' life and His sacrificial death, and the epistles that follow unpack the meaning of His life and death. Yes, Jesus is the central character of Scripture, and thus the Bible is, in the final analysis, the biography of Jesus Christ.

So in our quest to answer life's ultimate questions, as well as in our need to know history's most important Person, we can turn to the Word of God. That's what makes it the Book of Books!



Greg King, dean



School of Religion

P.O. Box 370
Collegedale, TN 37315

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Chattanooga, TN
College Press

Greg King, PhD, Editor
Janita Herod, Assistant Editor

Faculty

Stephen R. Bauer, PhD—Theology, Ethics
Hyunsok John Doh, PhD—New Testament
Eliezer Graterol, DMin—World Religions, Missions
David Hartman, DMin—Ministry, Evangelism
Michael G. Hasel, PhD—Archaeology, Biblical Languages
Greg A. King, PhD—Dean, Biblical Studies
Martin Klingbeil, DLitt—Archaeology, Biblical Studies
Judson S. Lake, ThD—Homiletics, Adventist Studies
Alan Parker, ThD—Ministry, Evangelism, Director, Pierson Institute;
Graduate Program Coordinator
Wilson Paroschi, PhD—New Testament Studies
Barry Tryon, PhD—Leadership, Applied Theology

Support Staff

Susan Brown—Administrative Assistant, Institute of Archaeology and Pierson Institute;
Graduate Studies Enrollment Counselor
Angela Edwards—Museum Coordinator, Institute of Archaeology
Janita Herod—Office Manager
Douglas Na'a—SALT Program Director, Pierson Institute
Raul Rivero—Associate Director, Pierson Institute
Tui Silafau—SALT Outreach Coordinator, Pierson Institute
Star Stevens—Resource Secretary

GRADUATE PROGRAM OFFERS CERTIFICATES

Starting this summer, the School of Religion will offer three graduate certificates of 15 credits each. “We sensed a need for a shorter program that offers specialized classes. Some pastors already have a graduate degree but want to expand their expertise. Also, many lay church leaders have an interest in our program but can’t afford a full graduate degree. We wanted to create options for these two groups,” shares Alan Parker, coordinator of the graduate program in the School of Religion. The three certificates are in Biblical Counseling, Church Leadership, and Evangelism. The certificates can be completed in about 18 months and are designed for part-time students taking summer intensives and online classes. A minimum of an undergraduate degree is required to enroll in the certificate program.

In addition, a new highly subsidized rate is now available for all North American Division pastors. Previously, tuition scholarships

were only available to pastors in the Southern Union. Now, North American Division pastors outside of the Southern Union qualify for a rate of only \$150 per credit hour, a savings of over 75%. The ever-increasing number of online classes means that pastors from all over the division can now take Southern’s graduate classes at an affordable price. “We are also working on a subsidized rate for those who are in ministry but aren’t serving as pastors,” says Parker.

For more information, scan the QR Code or call Susan Brown at 423.236.2033.

