Reading Assignment

COLLEGE CHOICE
Essential Questions for Christians

EXAM DATE:
Fifty Years After Graduation

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Thinking about Higher Education

Who would have ever thought higher education could change so dramatically in such a short period of time?

In the past, universities were grounded in: CHARACTER-CURRICULUM-CARING-COURAGE.

Today, they have become driven by: SIZE-SPORTS-STATUS-SIZZLE.

When I was completing my Ph.D. in higher education, I wrote a paper arguing that the governors of the Academy were wrong, and that someday, community colleges might be a respectable alternative to traditional four-year institutions. Back then students went to a community college only to prepare for a "real college."

Back then, in 1979, the only for-profit schools we knew of advertised on late night TV and taught truck driving and secretarial skills. And the possibility of theirs gaining respect as a genuine educational alternative would have been unthinkable. We all knew that "real colleges" were only founded out of sacrifice.

Today, the largest institution of higher education is a for-profit school, the University of Phoenix, which enrolls over a half million students. Among the largest ten schools in the country, four are for-profit institutions, four are community colleges, and only two are comprehensive universities: Penn State and Arizona State. Those ten schools combined enroll 1.5 million students.

It is not simply a demographic change that has shaken higher education. But change has rattled the very foundation upon which universities are built.

Consider the swing represented in two quotes from the inaugural addresses of two Ivy League presidents.

In 1937 Yale's new president, Charles Symore, issued this challenge:

"I call on all faculty, as a thinking body, to recognize the tremendous validity and power of the teachings of Christ in our life-and-death struggle against the forces of selfish materialism."

Exactly 70 years later the new president of Harvard, Drew Gilpin Faust, presented a totally different position:

"The 'Veritas' in Harvard's shield was originally intended to invoke the absolutes of divine revelation, the unassailable verities of Puritan religion. We understand it quite differently now. Truth is an aspiration, not a possession."

With the dramatic changes in higher education, it is understandable that prospective students and their families are overwhelmed and confused as they consider which school to attend.

I would like to offer them new benchmarks for evaluating the alternatives of higher education.

If you know a prospective student, please pass along the following article: "College Choice – Essential Questions for Christians." Or tear it out and tuck it away for your younger children or grandchildren, because the biblical principles of Christ-centered higher education are unchanging.

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TARTAN

Volume 123 | No. 2
Winter 2011

The Belhaven Tartan is published by Belhaven University, 1500 Peachtree Street, Box 158, Jackson, Mississippi, 39202 for distribution to alumni, parents of students, and friends of the college. Please send alumni updates, address corrections, and other news to Belhaven Tartan, care of the above address. You can reach us by phone at 601-968-5930 or by email at belhaven@belhaven.edu or by fax at 601-968-8946. Visit our web site at www.belhaven.edu. Periodical postage paid in Jackson, MS. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Belhaven University, 1500 Peachtree Street, Box 158, Jackson, MS, 39202.

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EMERITUS
College Choice
What criterion do you use for choosing a college?
Dr. Parrott examines essential questions Christians should know.

Switchfoot
From college football’s Bowl Championship Series TV promo to Belhaven University, Switchfoot is on a mission.

Blazing Trails in Health
Belhaven, donors and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation partner together to promote healthy living that gets you moving.

Back to Belhaven ’10
Alumni and friends gather to celebrate Belhaven with 5K, football and host of events during homecoming.

Campus News
Alumni News
Parting Art
I’ve been blessed with a unique vantage point from which to view nearly every secret about university life and administration. I’m a third generation college president who has served in the corner office for twenty-two years. In fact, if you stop by my office, you’ll see the desk where I work was my grandfather’s desk when he was a president back in the 1940s.

So when it comes to understanding universities, and especially how we go about persuading high school students to attend our institutions, I know the process inside-and-out. As they say, I know how the sausage is made—and sometimes it is not pretty.
During the last decade, the competition for students has convinced some very smart Christians to make dumb college decisions. They are fooled by name-brand marketing campaigns, as well as the glamour of campus amenities and prestige rankings. Or, too often, Christian families buy the assumption that any school will do, as long as you attend a good Bible study near by.

I’m deeply concerned that smart Christian families are being swayed to follow culture’s value of higher education—Size, Sports, Status, and Sizzle—rather than the Godly criteria that would help students find the school that best matches their needs.

As someone who knows the industry of higher education from the inside, I often share with students and families a fresh perspective to consider as they work through this critical decision of college choice.

I believe many families are making one of the most important decisions of their lives based on inappropriate criteria. And if for no other reason than the investment of time and money (not to mention, how it will shape nearly every other outcome of a graduate’s life), families need to be equipped with the right standards to help them choose the school that fits them best. The typical criteria of college selection are highly inadequate for making a well-informed decision:

A. Most families reference US News rankings, but don’t realize those scores are skewed in favor of the type of institutions the editors attended.

B. All students study the quality of academic programs, but forget to examine as carefully the character of the individual who does the teaching.

C. Some parents urge students to consider enrolling where they attended a quarter-century ago, but don’t realize that while the university campus may look the same on the outside, the worldview in the classroom has dramatically shifted.

D. Too many students make their decision (research tells us) within seven minutes after they get out of the car for a campus tour, thus, deciding on the appearance of the campus.

E. Many students desire to attend college with high school friends, not realizing that university life will be so dramatically different that a whole new crop of friends are more likely to become their focus.

F. Often families base this decision on money. And while that is an important factor, this critical juncture of life is too important to be guided only by the prospect of saving money. At the same time, higher tuition does not assure quality.
I’d recommend that prospective students and families move beyond these misleading criteria and probe the schools under consideration by asking two key questions that will reveal the mission and ethos of any university:

**Two Key Questions for College Choice**

(1) **Are these people I would want to be like?**

Education is not indoctrination, so universities don’t turn out cookie-cutter students—but they do tend to mostly come out flavored the same. During the most impressionable phase of life, the many years immersed in the culture of a campus will frame the worldview of students, and will shape their path and priorities.

Great buildings and pretty flowers may be featured on the prospective student campus tour, but the meaningful evaluation of the campus comes in asking the question, “Are these people I would want to be like?” For good or for bad, you will tend to become like the people of that campus because the warp-and-woof of the educational process is the defining—and then refining—that occurs in the interaction between faculty and students.

Reading the mission statement of a university won’t tell you much about the place because these pronouncements all sound high and lofty, but understanding the people will tell you everything. A school’s embraced mission is not revealed in a document, but in how that mission is lived out as faculty teach students, coaches respond under pressure, and how students are guided to set their priorities.

At every university you will find some wonderful people who are worthy role models. But in American higher education today, they have become a minority while the collectively skewed values of the dominating majority have imposed an unhealthy culture on most campuses. Consider these trends of deteriorating values across higher education as illustrated in these statistics from the revealing book, “The Five Year Party” by Craig Brandon.

- In 1961 university students spent 24 hours studying each week. Today, studying has dropped to 8 hours weekly.

(2) **What does the university require of every student?**

The fall semester after the 9/11 attacks, the University of North Carolina implemented a significant academic policy—they required all freshmen to study the Quran. I believe that to understand our world, and to share the message of Christ’s love, we must understand other religions, so I agree we all need a better understanding of Islam (although I feel assured required reading of the Bible is never likely to be recommended by the UNC faculty).

As a university insider, when I saw that announcement my immediate question was, “How many committee meetings did it take to get that passed?” I know the process of a campus, and I assure you it required layers of meetings to make this decision.

- The cost of college athletics has sky-rocketed and the tuition hikes carry many of those additional costs. Duke spends $20,405 for each member of the golf team (plus scholarships), and the average salary of an SEC softball coach is now over $250,000.

- Senior professors in Ivy League universities now take sabbaticals every third year rather than every seventh. Last year, 20 of Harvard’s 48 history professors were on leave.

- Binge drinking dominates the culture of most universities where 44% of students are classified as binge drinkers. Few Friday classes are offered because the campus party starts Thursday evening.

- The majority of students take six years to complete their four-year curriculum.

- “Professors strike an implicit bargain with their students: we will give you light workloads and inflated grades so long as you leave us alone to do our research.” — The Economist

- Only 10% of students say they are “totally engaged” in the educational process, while 40% report being “totally disengaged.”

At the schools you are considering, talk to the faculty, staff, and students. Probe until you understand their priorities, values, and aspirations—you’ll tend to become like them, so use them as a mirror to see how you fit.
Because university students are very busy—every academic major, sport, club, and art has many requirements—the institution, as a whole, can require only a limited number of activities of all students. So what a university requires of all students reveals what they value most. And knowing what they require of every student—what they value—will be the most accurate description of the school.

At Belhaven we have four requirements of all students—and these reveal what we value most for our students.

A. **We value gifts.** We require a freshman course called Mosaic, which is designed to help students identify their gifts and understand how to best use their gifts while studying at Belhaven and as a life-long pattern. We believe God has uniquely gifted every student, and our responsibility as educators is to help them discover those gifts and build on their strengths.

I believe one of the problems of education is that we spend too much energy trying to make up for the weaknesses of our students rather than building on their strengths. So, at Belhaven we get every freshman started by taking the time and resources to help them identify and understand their gifts and develop a pattern of life that will utilize their strengths.

B. **We value a biblical worldview.** We require a one-of-a-kind general core curriculum that helps students understand how big ideas and trends have developed through the ages and how our Christian worldview stands distinctive. Our “Worldview Curriculum” is built around a two-year history course covering the full span of civilization. Synched with this history course are survey courses in literature, philosophy, art/music appreciation, and Christian thought. Through this curriculum students can see how the pieces of big ideas fit together as worldviews have progressed through the centuries.

At a practical level, in the same weeks our students study the history of the Renaissance, they also read the philosophers and literature of that period, study the art and music of the Renaissance, and understand how Christian theology and the Church developed during this time. This Worldview curriculum serves as the foundation of all our academic programs, and furthermore, we assure that worldview perspectives are built into every academic major at Belhaven.

C. **We value worship.** We require all students to attend chapel once a week because we believe that all teaching of truth must be built on a foundation of God’s Truth. The purpose of Chapel is to bring together the entire campus in a shared spiritually enriching hour that allows us collectively to be challenged to explore the depths of God’s Truth and love.

In the same way we require students to study the truth of physical science, the arts, and literature, there is no contradiction in requiring students to study God’s Truth. As the study of chemistry cannot be completed from a textbook alone, the study of God’s Truth also needs a “laboratory” for experiencing and understanding, for it is not enough to study the Bible without having exposure to the worship of God and an opportunity to understand the relationship offered to us in Christ.

D. **We value family.** Belhaven is one of only two schools in America that require a course in marriage and family for graduation. “Kingdom Life and Work” is a course that examines practical biblical teaching to help students balance their career with responsibilities at home.

No matter how successful our graduates may become in their profession, they won’t be happy without the proper balance of a happy home life. If our graduates are to be prepared for the breadth of God’s calling in their lives as women and men of
faith, they must value their families more than they do their paycheck.

By examining what we require of all students, you can clearly understand the heart of Belhaven University—we value gifts, a biblical worldview, worship, and family.

Take that same question, “What do you require of all students,” to any institution, and you’ll understand what they value. And if they don’t have any requirements for all students, that too, speaks volumes about the emptiness of their institutional core.

The Bottom Line
I have awarded nearly 10,000 diplomas during my years as a university president. And every one of those students has a story—and every story is unique. I can’t guarantee how students will come out, because, after all, the real test of a University’s effectiveness isn’t understood until they return for their 50-year reunion when we see how they have stood up to the tests of life.

But I do know some research-based facts that drive home the immensity of the decision families are making about which university to attend:

- Of the Christian high school students who choose a public institution, at the end of their college career, 52% will no longer identify themselves as born-again nor will have attended any religious service in the prior twelve months.

- The more conservative a student’s background, the larger the decline in religious commitment if the student attends a non-Christian college.

- Three-fourths of university students say they are “searching for purpose/meaning in life” and an equal number expect their school to help them develop emotionally and spiritually.

- Students almost always reflect the values of the faculty of the school they attend.”

Those are the facts. I believe Christian families need to weigh those realities before making their decision about which school to attend.

Our Purposeful Stewardship of Belhaven’s Mission
As I’ve watched the oil leak tragedy in the Gulf unfold, I am convinced that the long-term negative impact of this oil crisis in the Gulf is not going to be the oil that was spilled—but it’s the chemical dilutants that have been added to our waters that could have a toxic impact far beyond the damage from the oil.

Scientists are now predicting that when an oil mess is diluted like this, it enables the most dangerous portions of the oil to get embedded in the environment for a very long time.

That is analogous to what has happened to many universities who were founded on Christian ideals. Their waters were once clear and pristine. But when they got attacked for their faith and the waters got polluted, instead of just cleaning up the mess, they started to dilute their message so that the attacks would be more tolerable and easier to manage.

And in diluting to deal with the pollution, rather than cleaning up and protecting what they treasure, the damage from the attackers became embedded and changed their environment forever.

From Harvard and Yale a century ago, to a host of modern examples, schools have slowly diluted their Christian worldview in order to counter attacks to their biblical message. Or, a handful of fundamentalist schools have simply created their own waters that are cut off from the rest of the environment, so that their self-made lake can be kept artificially clean.

At Belhaven University, God has allowed us to serve in the world but not be of the world—understanding and reaching the culture without running from it. And we have done so only because we have been careful stewards of teaching an unchanging biblical worldview.

We have a diverse student body from a variety of Church backgrounds and some with no spiritual foundation at all. Our greatest strength as a university is found in majoring in the majors of faith:

- The uniqueness of Christ as the only way to the Father
- The justification by faith alone
- The authority and inerrancy of Scripture
- The transforming power of the Holy Spirit
- The reality of eternal life to come.

Like the pillars beside our fountain that symbolize Belhaven University, these timeless pillars of faith are the immovable center of our campus.
But coupled with this, we also are committed to a spirit of Christian grace that respects varying priorities within the array of evangelical thought and worship expression. So while being deeply committed to the majors of faith, we are also committed to a culture of grace when it comes to welcoming the breadth of God’s people when there are differences among us in the minors of the Christian life.

Like the fountain next to our pillars, we have a spirit of grace that allows the water to move freely—within preset limits—so that students can discover the fullness of the Christian life, ask the hard questions of faith, and learn to appreciate those who come out of different traditions of the evangelical Church.

In what matters most in faith, we don’t budge—in diversity of expression we are accepting. Most Christian schools cannot do this, and Belhaven’s unique outlook is a mission to be cherished. And this is a mission that allows us to cherish every student. Because of this stewardship of an unchanging biblical worldview and our balance to include the breadth of God’s people, Belhaven University is a treasure among Christian higher education.

• We teach our students that God’s Truth is absolute.
• We help them understand that the beliefs by which they live matter.
• We enable students to see God’s sovereignty in every arena of life.
• We ground every aspect of our curriculum and campus activity in biblical principles.

This is Reformed Higher Education at Its Finest.

We are not a nominal Christian university with a wholesome campus lifestyle, whose only integration of faith in the classroom or on the athletic field is to have a short prayer at the beginning of each session and then to teach from the mainstream of secular thought.

Instead, everything we do has a depth of biblical understanding and activity that prepares our students with a Christ-centered worldview that will enable them to stand up to the tests of life, rather than flounder in their faith as soon as they independently confront the culture.

There is no calling more important, no asset of this University to be more highly cherished, and no greater responsibility to hold than to teach an unwavering biblical worldview and to be purposeful stewards of that mission.

The Best Question I’ve Ever Been Asked

When prospective students are considering Belhaven University, we tell them exactly who we are and where we stand. If other institutions were as forthcoming, I believe we wouldn’t have so many smart Christians making dumb decisions, because they would understand exactly what they are getting into when they select a university.

As I visit with prospective students, at the end of the conversation I usually say to them, “If God leads you to Belhaven University, we’d love to work with you.” Although I’m quick to add, “But if God doesn’t want you here, don’t you dare come here. All that matters is that you are exactly where God wants you to be.”

I can say that confidently because we are convinced that God has handpicked every student attending Belhaven University. And because they are a gift to us from God, we are purposeful stewards of every single one of them.

Throughout the years, I’ve done scores of Q&A sessions with prospective and current student groups, and have heard about every question you could imagine—to the point I can nearly always anticipate the questions. But last fall I hosted the group of student Resident Assistants for breakfast as I do every year. And after sharing some of the plans for the year, I gave them an opportunity to ask questions about anything they wanted to talk about.

That morning I had a question I’ve never been asked—but I think it is the most important question students are most wanting answered by the university to which they entrust their future. The question wasn’t the normal inquiry about buildings, programs, costs, procedures, parking, or food service—it was simply, “Do you love us?”

Yes, we really do love our students, and I see that love lived out in thousands of ways across our campus. To genuinely love our students takes courage from the faculty and staff because loving students through the growth process of these years will often be a messy and jagged line of progress. But it is just the way Jesus taught that ministry should be.

Often I pray for prospective students and their families as they are working through this difficult college choice decision because it is such a complex and weighty decision. To make it worse, they are too often given misleading information and base their decision on the wrong criteria.

I don’t pray that all prospective students will all come to Belhaven—we don’t have room for all of them. Rather, I pray that each one will clearly understand God’s choice for his or her life, because the cost of making the wrong choice is far too high.

*Christianity Today, March, 2006 pp. 80–106
Given my life journey, this could be the most important moment of my life, outside of coming to know Jesus Christ 53 years ago and Him calling me back to my home state in Mississippi in the midst of hardship, poverty, racism, and death.”

Standing with bent frame in the middle of the stage, Dr. John Perkins, father of racial reconciliation in the United States, began another chapter of the message he has preached for decades. With all the men he has mentored and in whom he has invested in his eighty
years, Dr. Perkins could have leaned on any one of them as he spoke of his life’s mission of community development, racial reconciliation, and social justice.

But the assistance came that night from a rock band from California: Switchfoot. It was a strange meeting, strange even at moments for a few members of the audience, some of whom had never heard of John Perkins and were there to hear their favorite band, while others were there to support the man they revered as leader, mentor, or father on this momentous occasion for him.

The juxtaposition of this elderly black Christian civil rights leader from Mississippi and a band of young white rock stars known the world over was in Jackson, Miss., on the stage of Belhaven University. What both were doing there together and how they got there requires a look back at their beginnings.

Old Hate
New Tune
John Perkins was born in 1930 in New Hebron, Miss. His mother died when he was an infant, and his father left the family. His family members were sharecroppers as well as gamblers and bootleggers. After quitting school two different times, he finally quit for good at age 15, when he had reached about the fifth-grade level.

From his earliest years, that which was impressed upon him was that he was black, and that meant that his life held strict limits.

“Who I was in those days was described only in terms of a dependent relationship to a white man.

“Back then, if a black child was walking along the road or was in town on a Saturday, and he met an older white person, the white’s first words would be, ‘What place you live on, boy?’

“I had to know the answer. Because I wasn’t anybody all by myself, or even by who my family was.”

As long as he “stayed in his place,” things would go well for him, as well as they could for a black man in rural Mississippi at that time.

It was in the midst of this that his older brother Clyde came home on furlough from the war in 1946. Clyde was well-decorated for his efforts in the war and was used to fighting alongside whites. Now back in Mississippi, he and his girlfriend stood in line for a movie one night with other blacks. A white deputy came by and told those around to quiet down, and as he did so, he struck Clyde with his night stick. When Clyde resisted the deputy’s second attempted blow by grabbing his arm, the deputy stepped back and shot Clyde twice. Clyde died in a Jackson hospital that night.

“All that army stuff about making the world safe for democracy. All that fighting some place off in Europe didn’t get him killed. He had come home safe from the white man’s war only to be shot down six months later by a white man in his own hometown.”

Worried that John would try to retaliate, his family sent him to California while things cooled down.

In California John had success. He had a good job, and the violent and oppressive conditions of his home state were behind him. At age 19 he returned to Mississippi for a brief visit, and fell in love with his future wife, Vera Mae. They were married two years later in 1951, lived in California, and had five children.

During their time in California, John’s oldest son, Spencer, began going to Sunday school at a nearby church. John had experimented with various religious groups; but found none of them satisfactory. What he knew of Christianity was from the black churches in Mississippi in his childhood, and all he could see in them was an emotionalism that had no positive effect on daily life.

“I’d been to religious services as a kid, of course, but I never learned that I could have the power of God in my life, a power that would make a difference in me and in my surroundings...In fact, I had always looked at black Christians as sort of inferior people whose religion had made them gullible and submissive. Religion had made so many of my people humble down to the white-dominated system with all its injustices.”

Despite his skepticism, John realized a change was taking place inside Spencer. During this time he finally gave in to the invitation of his friend and coworker Calvin Bourne, who had been inviting him to church for years. John started going to church and rigorously studying the Bible. The life of Paul especially intrigued him:

“The thing that really hit me about Paul was this motivation he had. By this time in life, I was pretty super-motivated, but I was motivated for my own economic betterment. As I read and studied the life of Paul, I saw that he was super-motivated, too. But his motivation was unselfish.”

After months of searching and seeking, John became a follower of Christ himself. John became involved in church life, in preaching and teaching and children’s ministry, and he began
to feel a stirring in his heart for Mississippi. He believed God was calling him to return to his home state and be an instrument for fixing the problems which had so oppressed and affected him.

He returned to Mississippi with his family and began active ministry there, focusing on evangelism and Bible teaching. He and his wife were able to speak and work in numerous places, including teaching Bible classes in the local schools. After several years the Perkins’ work had grown to encompass not only this kind of teaching but also helping meet the physical and material needs of the poor black communities to which they ministered. In the midst of this the Civil Rights movement began, and Perkins was on the front lines in his community. As such an active individual in the black community in that era, he became a target for those opposing the movement.

One night he and some Tougaloo students with him were pulled over in Brandon, Miss., by the Highway Patrol in what he later realized was an ambush. John was taken to the jail where for hours he was passed from one group of officers to the next and beaten and ridiculed by each, beaten even into unconsciousness.

Despite the persecution he suffered and the opposition to an attempt to allow black Mississippians the ability to live free and normal lives, John refused to hate his persecutors.

“If we returned hate for hate, anger for anger and violence for violence, we would lose what little we had already gained, along with any hope of ever gaining anything else.

“I couldn’t hate back. When I saw what hate had done to them, I couldn’t hate back. I could only pity them. I didn’t ever want hate to do to me what it had already done to those men.”

In 1976, six years after the night in the Brandon jail, as he continued God’s work in Mississippi, he published his life story and mission up to that point in a book called Let Justice Roll Down.

**Striking a chord**

In the mid-1990s in San Diego three teenage surfers recorded a demo in one of their bedrooms. Two of them, Jon and Tim Foreman, were brothers. Jon was the lyricist, guitarist, and vocalist; Tim played bass; their friend Chad was the drummer. They called themselves Chin Up, named for a friend, Willis Chin.

Jon and Tim had grown up in the United States. Jon came to know Jesus as a young child through his father’s witness, and Jon led Tim to Christ when Tim was six. Their childhood afforded them many opportunities, and during their high school years two of their favorite things were music and surfing. John picked up the guitar as a junior high student and helped Tim learn to play the bass. Jon and Tim had played in a band named Etc. while their friend Chad played drums for the band Half Together. After the two bands broke up, the three came together to form Chin Up.

While Chin Up played at local coffee houses and other venues, the band’s demo, recorded in the bedroom, found its way into the hands of Charlie Peacock, a veteran of the music industry as both producer and musician. The band was soon recording under Peacock’s record label, Re:think. They had changed their name to Switchfoot, a surfing term used when a surfer changes his foot position on the board and goes the opposite way: a metaphor for the band’s music and lifestyles.


Switchfoot’s success and reputation grew when the movie A Walk to Remember, starring Mandy Moor, came out. The movie featured two songs by the band that became smash hits internationally, “Meant to Live” and “Dare You to Move.” The album, The Beautiful Letdown, on which these songs appeared, was released in 2003 and went double-platinum, selling over 2 million copies. That same year guitarist Drew Shirley began touring with the band.

Switchfoot has resisted being labeled a “Christian band,” asserting that the band members are, in the words of Tim Foreman, “Christian by faith, not genre.” However, their lyrics and their lifestyles leave no doubt as to their devotion to the Lord. The band is involved with numerous charity organizations and in 2005 held their first annual Bro-Am, a benefit surfing contest and music event in San Diego to raise money for local charity organizations.

A couple of years ago Jon Foreman came across John Perkins’
book *Let Justice Roll Down*. He was overcome by reading Perkins’ story and brought the book to the band. “Jon brought the book to the band,” says guitarist Drew Shirley, “and that started a conversation. It started a journey that I didn’t even realize was there in my own life, but it was.”

That conversation led to a song. In November 2009 Switchfoot released the album, *Hello Hurricane*, featuring a song entitled “The Sound (The John M. Perkins’ Blues),” a song about social justice, taking up the cry and mission of John Perkins; Switchfoot quotes Dr. Perkins in the song: “John Perkins said it right/Love is the final fight.” “The Sound” became the band’s first Top 10 Modern Rock hit since “Dare You to Move.”

**A New Song**

In February 2010 the music studio of the Perkins’ Foundation in Jackson was broken into and their equipment stolen. Switchfoot was touring through the southeastern U.S. in September and October 2010 and, after hearing of the Foundation’s loss, decided to do a benefit concert to raise money for new equipment for the Perkins’ Foundation’s studio.

Belhaven was the perfect location for the concert to take place. “And it’s right that we would be here on Belhaven [University’s] campus – it’s right because my son Spencer was the first African-American to graduate from this school, and this school both taught him and honored him and gave him the highest award this school can give: They named the pulpit in the chapel after him.”

The concert was for Dr. Perkins a display of what he has been fighting for in Mississippi for nearly fifty years. “This has purpose to it... this has a purpose beyond the entertainment. This entertainment here tonight is to show our fellowship and our unity.”

Dr. Perkins continued: “Jon Foreman read my book and heard me crying out like the prophet Amos: ‘Let justice roll down like water.’ And Foreman said, ‘This book was written back in 1976 – why haven’t people heard this?’ Then he said, ‘I’m gonna make a bigger sound.’ And that’s why we’re here tonight.”

The concert raised more than $7,000 for the John M. Perkins Foundation. “We want this to be an ongoing celebration, and we want it to become a model of all of us joining together to reach out into these places of need.” ■ AF

*Special thanks for biographical information and quotes taken from John M. Perkins’ book *Let Justice Roll Down* and the website Land of Broken Hearts Biographies section.

On your mobile phone download a QR Code Reader of your choice and watch this video on Switchfoot at Belhaven.
Creative Writing Host Alumni, Author Elizabeth Spencer

Belhaven alumna and world-renown author returned home to the Belhaven stage for a visit to Belhaven University’s Creative Writing Program students. The Creative Writing Department hosted Spencer for an intimate and informal dialogue about her writing and her creative writing process.

“Elizabeth Spencer is the grande dame of Southern letters and one of Belhaven’s most accomplished graduates,” said Dr. Randy Smith, chair of the Creative Writing Department. “It is a great honor and opportunity for us to have this esteemed writer and teacher back on campus.”

In anticipation of this event Dr. Donald Hubele, chair of the English Department, gave a presentation on Spencer and her work on Thursday, November 11. “There are two almost perfect American novels,” said Dr. Hubele. “One is To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee; the other is Ms. Spencer’s The Voice at the Back Door, in which she wrote about social issues, injustices, and crimes that had occurred in her hometown. For her to have written this novel at that time in American history at the time in American history that she did—and only two years after graduating from Belhaven—is just amazing.”

Spencer graduated from Belhaven in 1942 and attended Vanderbilt for a graduate degree in English. Since 1948, Spencer has published nine novels, seven short story collections (including the 2001 Modern Library collection, The Southern Woman), and a memoir (Landscapes of the Heart). She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and of the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Spencer has won many awards for her writing, including five O. Henry Awards, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. A musical version of her novella, The Light in the Piazza, won six Tony Awards in 2006.

Annually, Belhaven honors an outstanding Creative Writing student with an award named after Spencer—the Elizabeth Spencer Creative Writing Award.

StoneWorks’ SALT-Leadership Training to Belhaven

For the third year in a row, Belhaven University hosted the StoneWorks Arts Leadership Training, or SALT, Conference. SALT is a joint effort of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and StoneWorks Global Arts Initiative. StoneWorks is a catalyst for raising up leaders in the arts who will be transformers and creators of culture, speaking and ministering to their communities through art.

Dr. Colin Harbinson, who was the Dean of the Arts at Belhaven from 2000 to 2007, is the international director of StoneWorks. “The SALTs seek to identify up-and-coming leaders in the arts and to bring them into an environment for a week where they can grow in their understanding of the arts and in connection with God’s purposes and also to deal with some of the issues that cause many artists to fall,” says Harbinson.

“We’ve seen some tremendous things happen as a result of the conference,” he said.
Once again God worked in incredible ways throughout the previous academic year at Belhaven! Though we did not have the full depth of insight as students, faculty, and staff to see all that would unfold, there was an unwavering trust and dependence upon the Lord’s providence. One of the most significant ways we see His faithfulness to Belhaven is through the generosity of our Partners in Stewardship. Your wonderful gifts are a primary reason we are able to further the mission and vision of Belhaven in the lives of students from around the world. THANK YOU!

OVERVIEW OF THE PAST YEAR
As has been the case most times in the past, our verse of the year served as an appropriate precursor for 2009–10. Psalm 18:19 says, “He led me to a place of safety; He rescued me because He delights in me.” The events of the year were a reminder of exactly how much the Lord guided and protected us, individually and collectively. Reflecting upon all that took place, we see clearly that it was Him who established us to good works and met us at every turn. Our prayer is to continue the model of servant leadership where our campuses each year. It is a joy to hear and see the impact Belhaven has in families, churches, communities, and the marketplace across the globe. Our prayer is to continue the model of servant leadership set forth by Jesus Christ himself, who called us to our mission to “serve, not be served.”

ALWAYS THANKFUL
We continually thank the Lord for the men and women He chooses to place on our campuses each year. It is a joy to hear and see the impact Belhaven has in families, churches, communities, and the marketplace across the globe. Our prayer is to continue the model of servant leadership set forth by Jesus Christ himself, who called us to our mission to “serve, not be served.”

• Who would have ever imagined we would begin our 127th year as Belhaven College and spend the last six months of the year as Belhaven University! As we have expanded, both in academic offerings and international partnerships, the need for the Belhaven name to match our growth became more apparent. The change to University does not change who we are or shift our focus, but describes more accurately who we have become.
• Belhaven enjoyed its largest enrollment to date in 2009–10 with 2,923 students. This number included 1,021 Traditional students (18–22 years old), 1,773 Adult and Graduate students across four campuses (Houston, Jackson, Memphis, Orlando), and 129 students in our Online program.
• In a gracious spirit of building God’s work, Covenant College, a sister Presbyterian school, transferred their accelerated adult studies program called Quest and its 200 students to Belhaven. Thus, Belhaven’s reach has expanded into the Chattanooga and Atlanta metropolitan areas.
• Belhaven once again served as “International Village” for the International Ballet Competition, held in Jackson during the month of June. The University provided housing and food, as well as facilities for rehearsal and performance, for all IBC competitors.
• For the tenth consecutive year, Belhaven was recognized as one of America’s Best College Buys, according to the Annual National College Survey.
• Blazer Football made big offseason news when two members of the 2009 team were signed to NFL contracts following the 2010 NFL Draft. Tramaine Brock (Safety) inked a two-year deal with the San Francisco 49ers, while Jacob Phillips (Offensive Line) agreed to a three-year contract with the Seattle Seahawks.
• Belhaven had the strongest showing of any participating institution in the 2010 Southern Literary Festival Competition. With placement in all four writing categories (fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and one-act plays), Belhaven students won first place in two, second place in two, and third place in one. Additionally, the Brogue won first place in the literary journal category.

It was a banner year for Belhaven Blazer Athletics! Three programs advanced into their respective National Tournament competitions within the NAIA.

1. The Men’s Basketball program enjoyed an historic season. The Blazers broke the school record for most wins in a season with 24 (24–10 record) and headed to Kansas City to participate in the Buffalo Funds NAIA National Tournament for the first time since 1972.
2. Blazer Baseball capped off their greatest season in school history (44–17 record) with the program’s first trip to the 2010 Avista NAIA World Series in Lewiston, Idaho. The team knocked off defending national champion Lubbock Christian University for their first win in the World Series, and finished the season as the 14th ranked team in the NAIA.
3. The Belhaven Softball team won a program best 54 games (54–10 record) in 2010 and broke 47 national or school records along the way. The team advanced to the Elite Eight of the NAIA National Tournament, while completing the season as the 6th ranked team in the NAIA.

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<table>
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- Bethsaida Baptist Church, Inc.—French Camp
- Briarwood Presbyterian Church—Jackson
- Briarwood United Methodist Church—Jackson
- Brown Mississippi Baptist Church—Southaven
- Christ United Methodist Church—Jackson
- Covenant Presbyterian Church—Jackson
- Crossegates Baptist Church—Brandon
- Eclectic United Methodist Church—Eclectic, AL
- Faith Bible Church—Robins, IA
- Faith Presbyterian Church—Brookhaven
- Faith Presbyterian Church—Irmo, SC
- First Baptist Church—Gulf Breeze, FL
- First Presbyterian Church—Belzoni
- First Presbyterian Church—Canton
- First Presbyterian Church—Danville
- First Presbyterian Church—Jackson
- First Presbyterian Church—Kosciusko
- First Presbyterian Church—Lexington
- First Presbyterian Church—Louisville
- First Presbyterian Church—Natchez
- First Presbyterian Church—Pascagoula
- First Presbyterian Church—Port Gibson
- First Presbyterian Church—Water Valley
- First Presbyterian Church—Hattiesburg
- First United Methodist Church—Trussville, AL
- French Camp Presbyterian Church—French Camp
- Gethsemane Seventh Day Adventist Church—Daphne, AL
- Global Mission Church—Seoul, South Korea
- Grace Chapel Presbyterian—Enfield, CT
- Gwinnett Community Church Inc.—Lawrenceville, GA
- Heidelberg Presbyterian Church—Heidelberg
- Highlands Presbyterian Church—Ridgeland
- Holy Trinity Anglican Church—Ridgeland
- Hopewell Baptist Church—Andalusia, AL
- Horizon Presbyterian Church—Phoenix
- Lakeside Presbyterian Church—Brandon
- Lawndale Presbyterian Church—Tupelo
- Liberty Baptist Church—Waynesboro
- Life Foursquare Church—Angleton, TX
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- Mt. Olive Presbyterian Church—Mt. Olive
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- New Hope Baptist Church—Jackson
- North Park Presbyterian Church—Jackson
- Open Door Christian Church—Novato, CA
- Peace Lutheran Church of Waterford—Waterford, MI
- Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church—Ridgeland
- Penlake Baptist Church—Brandon
- Pear Orchard Presbyterian, Reflectors’ Class—Ridgeland
- Presbyterian Church USA—Louisville, KY
- Presbyterian Women of Green Hill—Enterprise, AL
- Presbyterian Women Of The Church—Ocean Springs
- Providence Presbyterian Church—Clinton
- Redeemer Church, PCA—Jackson
- Second Presbyterian Church—Memphis, TN
- Shiloh United Methodist Church—Pelahatchie
- St. Andrew Presbyterian—Oxford
- St. Andrews Cathedral—Jackson
- Summit Woods Baptist Church—Lees Summit, MO
- Suwon Central Baptist Church—Seoul, South Korea
- Trinity Presbyterian Church—Jackson
- United Methodist Church—Green, OH
- United Presbyterian Church—Sandersville, MS
- Wells Church United Methodist—Jackson
- Westminster Presbyterian Church—Vicksburg
- Westminster Presbyterian Church—Gulfport
- Westminster Presbyterian Church—Hattiesburg
- Westminster Presbyterian Church—Natchez
- Westminster Presbyterian Church—Rock Hill
- Women in the Church Presbyterian PCA
- Woodbury Lutheran Church—Woodbury, MN

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BELHAVEN UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2011

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Theatre Chair
Joseph Frost
Published
Joseph Frost, Chair of the Theatre Department, was published this fall in Matter Anthology, an anthology of works and presentations from the Matter ’09 conference. Frost’s play, The Urns: A Pantomime, is one of three works he presented at the conference in September. “The plays are almost like parables, really,” says Frost, “stories out of which multiple meanings can come.”

Pennebaker Receives Miss. Humanities Council Teacher Award
Bob Pennebaker, chair of the Visual Arts Department, is the recipient of the 2010 winner of the Miss. Humanities Council Teacher Award. The award is given annually to one humanities faculty member at each higher education institution in the state.

In response to this award, Pennebaker gave a presentation entitled “Perception and Visual Art.” “I address various issues,” says Pennebaker, “related to optical perception and an understanding of how the general public can better appreciate and relate to the visual arts.” Pennebaker discussed the inadequacy of typical approaches to artistic understanding and gave suggestions for more informed responses.

Business School finished first out of 155 teams competing in the nationwide CAPSIM business simulation.

Author Neil White Shares Experience
Neil White—former newspaper editor, magazine publisher, advertising executive—and federal prisoner read at Belhaven University on October 28th. White, who was convicted of bank fraud and check kiting in 1993, read from his memoir, In the Sanctuary of Outcasts, in the Student Center Theater. The author’s memoirs is centered on the years he spent in prison in Carville, LA—a prison that also served as the last leper colony in the continental United States.

Lifting the Veil
Belhaven presented Lifting the Veil, a play by Paul D. Patton. Based on the true story of the runaway marriage of evangelists Katherine Kuhlman and Burroughs Waltrip, this play tells the story of their wedding night, of the bride’s doubts about having deserted her ministry and of the groom’s attempts to get her to stay.

The play was directed by senior Theatre major Jonathan Dixon and cast sophomore Anna Rebmann as Kuhlman, sophomore Matt Hester as Waltrip, and freshman Zak Blatche as the hotel owner. This production was a part of Theatre 151, the Theatre Department’s series of performances for the exploration of challenging topics and the discovery of inspiring and innovative material.

Belhaven presented the 78th Singing Christmas Tree, named a “Top 20 Events” by the Southeast Tourism Society.
The Belhaven men’s soccer team had a season to remember in 2010 as the Blazers put themselves back on the national stage with a trip to the NAIA National Championship Tournament for the first time since 1994. The Belhaven soccer program has a storied history with this being their seventh overall appearance in the national tournament. The Blazers finished 2010 with an overall record of 16–2–3, posted a 3–0–2 mark in the Southern States Athletic Conference West Division, and went 1–1 in the national tournament. Belhaven’s all-time national tournament record is 9–7–3, including an NAIA National Championship in 1992.

In order to have a great season as a team, there have to be some outstanding individual accomplishments and that was certainly the case with the 2010 team.

- Belhaven had nine different players recognized for their efforts both on the field and in the classroom when the Southern States Athletic Conference recently announced the All-Conference, All-Division, All-Tournament, and All-Academic Teams.

- Stefan Fernandez, a senior forward from Melbourne, Fla., was named to the SSAC All-Conference team, All-West Division team, and the All-Academic team. Fernandez was named to the 2010 CoSIDA/ESPN Academic All-American 2nd Team when it was announced by the CoSIDA Academic All-America® Committee.

- Fernandez led Belhaven in game winning-goals with five and was tied for first in the SSAC in that category.

- Alex Rodriguez, a junior defender from Lufkin, Tex., joined Fernandez on the All-Conference and All-West Division team as well as being named the SSAC Newcomer of the year. Following the season, he was also named as a second team NAIA All-American.

- Guillherme Brandao, a freshman forward from Brasillia, Brazil, made an immediate impact for Belhaven in 2010 and was recognized with a spot on the SSAC All Conference, All-West Division team, All-Tournament team, and was named to the SSAC All-Academic Team.

- Gautier Troch, a senior goalkeeper from Paris, France, was named to the SSAC All-West Division team due to his outstanding numbers in the net this year.

- Troch is ranked first in goals per game in the SSAC at .72 and is fourth in total saves. Troch was named SSAC Defensive Player of the Week five times and was recognized at the national level with an NAIA Defensive Player of the Week award.

- Tom Cosgrave, a sophomore defender who hails from Manchester, England, was selected for a spot on the 2010 SSAC All-Tournament team.

- Coach DeCou was also recognized at the conference level by being named SSAC Coach of the Year. DeCou, who just finished his fourth season as the Blazers head coach, guided the team to the 16–2–3 season that put the program back on the national stage. DeCou holds an overall coaching record of 105–87–15, and his record at Belhaven, including games this season, is 50–18–7.

“I am so proud of the boys and all that they accomplished,” said Coach DeCou. “We have talked for the four years that I’ve been here at Belhaven that our goal was to get to the national tournament and put the program back on the national map. We accomplished that goal, and now our next goal is to win a championship.”
Volleyball, Softball Hire New Head Coach

Belhaven Athletic Department is pleased to announce that a new Head Volleyball and a new Head Softball Coach have been hired. Ashley Stathas, Head Volleyball Coach, comes to Belhaven after spending three seasons as the Assistant Volleyball Coach at the University of South Carolina Upstate, an NCAA Division I member in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Head Softball Coach, Kevin Griffin, comes to Belhaven after spending the last three seasons as the Head Softball Coach at Clinton High School, a 6A school located in Clinton, Miss.

Scott Little, Vice President for Student Affairs and Athletics commented, “Our commitment to student-athletes centers around creating an environment where they can compete for championships and mature as men and women, and I’m confident that Ashley and Kevin will successfully lead their programs in that promise.”

During her four years at USCU, Stathas served as the Spartans’ assistant coach, recruiting coordinator, travel coordinator and was an advisor for the USCU Athletics Benefit Auction. A four-year letter winner as a student-athlete at Lander University, Stathas has also been an active coach at the club level with Club South Volleyball for the past nine years. A native of Fort Myers, Fla., Stathas is a graduate of Lander University with bachelor of science degrees in physical education and exercise science.

During his tenure at Clinton, each of Griffin’s teams finished with top 5 state rankings and earned state tournament berths, while eleven of his Clinton student-athletes signed scholarships to play softball collegiately. With additional coaching stops at Ridgeland High School, Central Hinds Academy and Porters Chapel Academy, he has also been an active coach on the summer softball circuit. Griffin is a graduate of Bellevue University (NE) with a bachelor of arts degree in leadership administration.

Cross Country 5 on All-Academic Team

• Five runners were named on the SSAC All-Academic team: Seraphine Lin, Hannah Reese, Peter Davis, Andrew Sinclair, Luke Lennon

• Davis was also named a 2010 Daktronics NAIA Scholar Athlete

Belhaven Adopts a Class with No Excuse University

No Excuse University is a network of elementary, middle, and junior high schools across the United States that actively promotes a comprehensive model of college readiness to all students. As the class’s sponsor, Belhaven will be promoted among the students and guided by their teacher, John Bowman, who will help them to set goals of pursuing a university education. “Anything we can do to help these young students make a college education one of their life’s goals is an effort that will have lasting impact. We look forward to corresponding with the kids throughout the year,” says Kevin Russell, Vice President for University Advancement.

Football Highlights

It was an up and down season for the Belhaven football team in 2010 as the year was filled with both highs and lows. The Blazers finished the year with a 4–7 record.

• Eleven players earned Mid-South Conference West Division Honors

• Seven players were selected for the All-Conference team while four Blazers were named Honorable Mention.

• Ricky Wadlington was chosen as the MSC West Division Defensive Player of the Year.

• Said Head Coach Joe Thrasher, “We grew a lot and due to the injuries, a lot of young players saw extended playing time and gained a lot of experience which will hopefully be a positive for us down the road.”

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Three years ago, Belhaven launched a comprehensive healthy campus initiative geared to encourage better living habits among faculty, staff, and students. Today, the initial seeds have blossomed into a full-grown health bonanza!

In the 2007–08 school year, Belhaven started with several simple, yet deliberate, steps towards its healthy campus goal: healthier food selections offered in the Bailey Dining Commons; nutritional labeling for all entrees posted; mounting aggressive flu vaccination efforts; offering smoking cessation programs to those interested in kicking the habit as the BU campus became smoke-free; and launching educational programs to help employees better manage their health care options and assure that their health dollars went further. While all of these steps and other initiatives were widely embraced, two key elements were missing: a complete exercise center and expanded walking trails. All were well aware that until the University could add facilities to allow for regular exercise patterns, the efforts would be incomplete.
The gift from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation serves as the capstone to the healthy initiatives we began three years ago.
—President Roger Parrott

A generous gift by an anonymous donor in November of 2008 allowed for the remodeling of the “loft” area in the northern portion of Heidelberg Gymnasium. The renovation of over 1800 square feet for the future campus exercise center was completed in the spring of 2009. The stage was now set but still missing the exercise equipment. Enter the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation.

With a corporate focus of improving the overall health and wellness of all residents of the state of Mississippi and a longtime affiliation with Belhaven University, Belhaven leaders pitched the idea for the Foundation to not only fund the exercise equipment but to also provide for new campus walking trails, community health programs, and the injection of a “health and wellness” element into Belhaven’s numerous summer programs. The Foundation’s board liked the idea and agreed to provide $350,000 to fund the crowning and final phase of BU’s three-year initiative. “The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation is focused on providing resources and funding to continue our commitment to a healthier Mississippi,” noted Sheila Grogan, Executive Director of the Foundation, “We are excited about the health and wellness initiatives being implemented at Belhaven University that will foster a healthy environment for the university and surrounding community.”

With the support of the Foundation, Belhaven has installed two walking trails. The larger Campus Gold trail is a mile in length and follows the campus perimeter. The trail runs along Peachtree Street, turning onto Pinehurst, heads through the plaza in front of the Student Center, then cuts across campus by the tennis courts and flows along the lake, the practice fields, and behind the Bitsy Irby Visual Art and Dance Center. The second trail, the Academic Green, a half mile in length, beginning in front of the McCravey-Triplett Student Center, circling around the new campus fountain, the Hood Library, Preston, Fitzhugh; and following the Campus Gold trail along part of Peachtree and Pinehurst.

The trails offer students, staff, and the entire Belhaven neighborhood a marked and lighted course for daily exercise while enjoying the beauty of the Belhaven campus. Belhaven Neighborhood Foundation Director, Virgi Lindsay, welcomed the trails. “The addition of these trails is wonderful news for the residents of Belhaven and will only add to the vibrant community activities found in the neighborhood. We are excited that this project will not only benefit the University but will greatly enhance the neighborhood as a whole.”

As the trails were being constructed, the University was busy reviewing bids to complete the BU Exercise Center. Longcited as one of the most-desired additions to campus, the news that a new exercise center would soon be a reality was a huge boost to campus morale. “We have all agreed for some time with current and prospective students that a Fitness Center was a key missing piece on our campus,” commented Belhaven President Roger Parrott. “The gift from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation serves as the capstone to the healthy initiatives we began three years ago.”

Complete with 30 pieces of equipment, the Fitness Center is self-accessed by card key and has a view of the lake and practice fields. Equipped with multiple weight machines, treadmills, and bikes, Belhaven has made instructional “how to use” videos for every machine available on the university website as well as on Belhaven YouTube page. “The response to the Fitness Center from both students and staff has been awesome,” exclaimed Jo Beth Petty, Director of Student Leadership. “Everyone has been waiting for this opportunity for some time, and we are excited, not only to see it finally here, but to see the quality of the equipment and the Fitness Center as a whole.”

Already in 2011, more than 200 faculty, staff, and students have registered for the “BU Healthy Challenge.” The Healthy Challenge will award those who see the largest improvement in their body mass index or “BMI” over a three-month period. “The new healthy spirit found on campus has been refreshing,” said Administrative Assistant Becky Sims. “At lunch and after work you will find many people exercising that had never considered it before...It’s really great.”

The final portion of the grant dollars will fund health and wellness seminars that are open to the public. Already a hit with the entire community, the monthly seminars are being spearheaded by Exercise Science and Sports Medicine Professors Dr. Don Berryhill and Dr. Benjamin Carr. Vice President for University Advancement Kevin Russell noted, “Our partnership with the Blue Cross & Blue Shield Foundation of Mississippi has helped us integrate health and wellness into the fiber of our community. We want to foster life-changing health choices not just short-term resolutions.”

2010 Homecoming & Parents Weekend

(Clockwise)
- Reunion
- Sports Hall of Fame
- Homecoming King and Queen
- Mini Basketball Camp
- Football Game
- Alumni Awards
- 50 Year Club
- Pops Concert
- Homecoming Dance
- 5K Run/Walk

On your mobile phone, download a QR Code Reader of your choice and watch this overview video of Homecoming at Belhaven.

ALUMNI AWARDS RECIPIENTS: (left to right) Ms. Corinne Fox, ’63 (Community Service Award); Joe Martin, Legacy of Learning; Mrs. Heather Logan Ivery, ’00 (Young Alumna of the Year); Dr. Gregory Jordan, ’73 (Alumnus of the Year); Mr. Wayne Husband, ’72 (Jim Park Business Award); Dr. Lynn Gillespie Beck, ’74 (Bettye Quinn Education Award); and Mrs. Florence Richardson Scott, ’60 (Church Service Award).
Belhaven’s traditional fall event was held a bit earlier than usual this year but proved to be successful and enjoyed greatly by all who attended. Back to Belhaven—Homecoming 2010 saw the return of more than 300 alumni, friends, and parents to campus for a weekend of festivity and events.

The Office of Admission initiated the weekend’s activity by hosting prospective Belhaven students and their families for “Discover Day.” These special visitors were treated to a taste of Belhaven at its busiest and best! As has become tradition over the past few years, alumni were welcomed back to campus during the Alumni Reunion Reception in the McCravey-Triplett Student Center commons. This event provided the initial opportunity for classmates to connect with one another and check out the latest changes around campus. From the general reception, individuals from the classes of 1960 and 1980 branched off for special gatherings at various locations.

Dr. Al Chestnut and the Belhaven Biology Department welcomed back graduates to share about their professional experiences during the Biology Alumni Panel event held in Barber Auditorium. The panelists discussed how their time at Belhaven prepared them for careers in their field of study.

Four Belhaven athletic alumni were honored during the 18th Annual Belhaven Sports Hall of Fame Banquet as the concluding event on Friday evening. Held in the H.C. Bailey Dining Commons, more than 100 people were in attendance to celebrate the induction of Miss Tamekia Foley, ’05 (Women’s Basketball); Mr. Keith Brown, ’81 (Men’s Basketball); Mr. Hill Denson (Baseball); and Mr. Jeff Moser, ’90 (Men’s Soccer).

The 5th Annual Belhaven Homecoming 5k Run/Walk began the day’s activities on Saturday morning, October 2. Approximately fifty participants took to the streets of Belhaven’s historic neighborhood for the 3.2 mile course. The beautiful weather seemed to exhilarate all the runners, as the winning times for the male and female champions were an inspiring 17:38 and 19:09, respectively.

More than twenty children got to hang out with members of the Blazer Basketball teams and sharpen their hard-court skills during the Basketball Mini-Camp event held in the Heidelberg Gymnasium. Just outside, on the soccer bowl, Head Men’s Soccer Coach Steve DeCou conducted a “friendly” match between Belhaven Soccer alumni who returned for the weekend’s festivities.

A crowd of nearly 125 people filled the dining commons for the Alumni Awards Luncheon on Saturday morning as outstanding Belhaven alumni were recognized and honored for accomplishments in their careers, churches, and communities. This year’s recipients were: Dr. Gregory Jordan, ’73 (Alumnus of the Year); Mrs. Heather Logan Ivery, ’00 (Young Alumna of the Year); Mrs. Florence Richardson Scott, ’60 (Church Service Award); Ms. Corinne Fox, ’63 (Community Service Award); Dr. Lynn Gillespie Beck, ’74 (Bettye Quinn Education Award); and Mr. Wayne Husband, ’72 (Jim Park Business Award). Additionally, those attending from the Class of 1960 were inducted as the newest members into the Belhaven Fifty Year Club, and Dr. Joseph Martin was officially recognized as the newest Legacy of Learning faculty member.

Football fans were treated to a great homecoming match-up between the Blazers and the Bethel University Wildcats. Unfortunately, the home team could not pull off the victory, falling by a score of 43–28. At halftime of the game, Mr. Jonathan Kalehoff and Miss Celeste Scott were crowned the 2010 Homecoming King and Queen.

The Belhaven Music Department offered a panorama of popular movie themes, jazz, Broadway, and light classics during Saturday evening’s Pops Concert in the Concert Hall of the Center for the Arts. The weekend’s concluding event was the traditional Homecoming Dance, held at The Auditorium in nearby Fondren.
Mary Helon Child Robert ’39 with Bibby Swaze ’58 were excited to attend the alumni luncheon as guest of Florence Scott ’60. Mary Helon loves visiting with her Belhaven friends and has always been a proud Belhaven graduate. She resides at The Orchard in Ridgeland, Miss.

‘60s | Ronald Siegenthaler ’61 served for thirteen years as the Administrative Director of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, before being honorably retired by the Presbytery of South Florida in 2010, completing 46 years of ordained ministry in the PCUS and PCA. He received his Doctor of Divinity degree from Knox Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Bertha Littleton ’59 now split their time between Delray Beach, Florida, and Black Mountain, North Carolina.

Tom Maynor ’61 serves as the Community Relations Representative at the Tom C. Maynor Rehabilitation Center at Anderson Hospital’s south campus in Meridian, Mississippi.

Glenda Walker Bates ’61 welcomed the birth of her 4th great grandchild in 2010. Over the years, she has gone from a business career to service as a Minister of Music for ten years. She still serves as a church pianist and a children’s choir director. She fondly recalls many good memories from her years at Belhaven as a “day student,” riding the city bus from West Jackson to and from school and working at the old Baptist Hospital in the afternoons. She is also very proud of Belhaven for its recent University status.


David B. Clark ’66 and Pam Keen Clark ’76 are proud to announce the graduation of their son, Brian, from the University of Mississippi Law School. Brian and his father David, a former District Attorney in Madison County, have set up a law practice in Florence, Mississippi. David and Pam are also excited for their daughter, Shelby, who is a senior at Ole Miss and will be graduating in May. David and Pam have lived in Florence for over 30 years, nearly their entire married lives, where Pam serves on the board of Aldermen.

Betty Hollis Cooper ’66 and her husband, Gerald, announce the marriage of their daughter, Elizabeth Hollis Cooper, to Tim Kirby on December 19, 2010. Elizabeth earned her masters of education in 2006, on the 40th anniversary of her mother Betty’s graduation from Belhaven.

Charlotte Cocker Brown ’69 and her husband, William H. “Billy” Brown, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on August 20, 2010 with their large family and close friends. Charlotte and Billy are now both fully retired from everything except the Presbyterian Church where they both sing in the choir. Charlotte teaches Sunday school, and is active in the DAR, UDC Delta Kappa Gamma, and the 20th Century Club. They reside on Billy’s family farm north of Canton, Mississippi.

‘70s | Barbara McGhan Porter ’70 taught the first grade for 29 years in Miami, Hattiesburg, and Jackson. She now works in the Children’s Ministry at First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, Mississippi. Her husband, Harry Porter, has served as the director of the Criminal Justice Program at

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Mississippi College since 1984. Belhaven honored Barbara with the Bettye Quinn Education Award at the 2005 Alumni Awards Banquet, a small thank you for her many years of service in the field of education.

Sam Mason '75 and Susan Clark Mason '76 live in Clinton, Mississippi. Their children both graduated from Jackson Prep. Their son, Bryan Mason, graduated from Mississippi State, then worked in New York City for three years before moving to Los Angeles with his wife, Teresa. He is currently employed by Live Nation.

Kathy Griffin Stewart '75 and husband Jim are blessed to celebrate new employment, a new house, and the opportunity to welcome a new grandson into the world. Their son and daughter in law live in Ulsan, South Korea; daughter, son in law, and grandchildren are located just an exit away; and their youngest daughter will graduate from Georgia Tech in May.

Lisa Stockdale-Klaus '75 earned her MA and Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University after graduating from Belhaven. She taught for several years at the University of Richmond and Mary Baldwin College, both in Virginia. Since the mid 90's, however, she has been a stay-at-home mom in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Her husband, Jim Klaus, teaches gifted high school students in the Rutherford County Schools and volunteers extensively with the Boy Scouts.

Jamie Duncan Holden '78 went back to school after homeschooling her two children through their school years. She received her PhD in Christian Studies from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 2007. She has served on staff at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Byram, Mississippi, for the past eleven years as Minister of Education.

William Micheo '78 is a Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Specialist, and Professor and chair of the Department of Physical Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine. This past year, he served as Past President of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and as a director of the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

Jeff Lowman '79 celebrated 20 years of ministry with Evangel Church, PCA, in Alabaster, Alabama this October. He received his doctor of ministry degree from Highlands Theological Institute in Edinborough, Scotland in 2005. He has also served as Professor of Systematic Theology and Hermeneutics at Birmingham Theological Seminary for 15 years.

Wanda Holloam Butler Neal '80 welcomed her first grandchild, Brooke Ann Burris, on May 8, 2010. Brooke is also the granddaughter of the late Josh D. Butler Jr. ('78). Proud parents are Lori Jo Butler Burris and husband Ricky Burris of Wiggins, Mississippi.

Gail Sertell Smith '82 was married to Barry M. Smith on September 4, 2010. They have eight children: Maggie, Trey, Jonathan, Jimmy, Adam, Paul, Libby, and Denzel, as well as grandchildren, Alice and Kaiser. Gail is in her tenth year as Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry at Finelands Presbyterian Church in Miami, Florida.

Deanna Kuiper Noyes '83 took seven brave students to Bangladesh in the fall semester of 2010 as part of a senior research course at Dallas Baptist University. Dr. Abrahim and Amie Sarker, professors at DBU and founders of Gospel for Muslims, created this opportunity for biology students as well as others who were going as a mission group. The group of twelve worked with three villages in the Maniganj district of Bangladesh, testing the soil and rice plants to determine how to maximize their crop yield. They also used this as a ministry time, sharing the Gospel and seeing 72 people accept the Lord as their Savior. Plans are already being laid to return in January of 2012.

Jane Everly '85 is currently in her 26th year of employment with the Jackson Public School District. Since graduation, she has earned her Ph.D. in educational leadership and has served as the principal of Davis Magnet School, an international Baccalaureate World School in Jackson, Mississippi. Davis was also named a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

Christopher Reny '86 is thankful to God for the birth of Noah Christopher Reny on March 10, 2010, and also to be cancer free since July 21, 2010.

Gaylia Townsley Nichols '87 and Tommy Nichols, Jr. '90 are now in their 7th year living in Virginia. Tommy is the pastor at Beulah Presbyterian Church, while Gaylia continues to work for New Hanover PC in women’s discipleship ministries.

Betty Sellers Brown Parker '89 has retired from teaching at Pearl Lower Elementary teaching Kindergarten, which she loved. She and her husband have six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. They love to travel and stay active in their church. She is thankful for how her years at Belhaven prepared her for a great career and now retirement. They now live in Pearl, where Betty still does some volunteer work tutoring children.

Charlotte Reddix Williams '93 received her M.A. in Sociology from Jackson State, and her M.S. in Human Resource Management from Troy University. She is the Deputy Bureau Director for the Mississippi Department of Health.

Nathan Tircuit '97 has been the pastor at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Cordova, Tenn., since January 2009. He and his wife, Jennifer, have four children: Kennedy (6), William (4), Caroline (2), and they welcomed Emma Grace on August 15, 2010.

Joel Bezaire '98 and his wife Jennifer had their first baby, Liam Erik Bezaire on October 24, 2010.

Joshua Dear '98 moved to Muskegon, Michigan in April to marry his sweetheart, Karen, and they are already expecting their
first child, due in June, 2011. He is now the Assistant Pastor at Lakeside Baptist Church, and continues to serve as an online Bible teacher for Belhaven. He helped write the manuscript for the new book by Dolphus Weary, titled I Can’t Never Leave, which is scheduled to be in print before the end of the year.

Brad Franklin ’99 and his wife Courtney are expecting a little girl in March of 2011. Their son, Hunter (3), is very excited about becoming a big brother. Brad’s practice, Dental Care of Flora, just moved into a new building on Hwy. 49 in Flora, Miss. after 3 years of planning and prayers.

Stuart Mills ’99 and his wife, Meg, continue serving as missionaries with Peru Mission in Trujillo, Peru. Working with the locals at Parish Woodshop, their first aim is always discipleship and are currently helping with economic development, administrative support, quality control, and marketing for the woodshop’s products.

Cebra Rutland Roland ’99 welcomed her new son, Bobby Bryant Roland, on September 9, 2010. Her oldest son, Bruce, is now 7 years old.

‘00s | Cheri Gossman Orr ’00 and Kristopher Orr ’01 along with brothers Ethan (5), Noah & Isaiah (3), welcomed Aubrey Renee on July 13, 2010. Kristopher continues to enjoy his work as Art Director for Waterbrook Multnomah Publishing Group in Colorado Springs, Colo., and Cheri enjoys pouring life and joy into the kids during the week and teaching Pilates on the weekends.

Paul Gundy ’02 and Annie Roberts Gundy ’03 moved to Beaufort, South Carolina, this summer to finish Paul’s last tour with the U.S. Navy, where he is a dentist. They are expecting their third child, a boy, in late April.

Jennifer Muirheid Wallace ’02 married Landon Wallace on September 18, 2010.


Thomas Gardner ’03 continues to work with his wife, Mollie, as a missionary educator in Vienna, Austria at the International Christian School of Vienna. They will welcome their third child this Christmas.

Erin Parrish Fielding ’04 and her husband Wesley were blessed with their first child, Lucy Frances Fielding, on March 27, 2010. Erin also graduated from Mississippi College in May with her M.S. in Higher Education Administration.

Aimee Long ’04 graduated from the University of North Carolina with her M.A. in Dance Education in ’08. She lives in Virginia Beach and teaches at Norfolk Academy and at Denise Wall’s Dance Studio. She is a guest instructor/choreographer for Savannah Arts Academy in Georgia. She still dances and performs several times a year for various benefits, concerts, and children’s programs.

Scott M. Smith ’04 was recently selected as CEO of Central Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson. A veteran hospital administrator, Scott now oversees a 420-bed state of the art hospital facility which is affiliated with more than 300 physicians.

Shelley Grace Miller Clem ’05 and her husband, Daniel, would like to announce the birth of their first child, Naomi Ellen Clem, on Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 2010. She weighed 8 pounds, 8 ounces, and was 22 inches long. The family continues to reside in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Paige Davis Haven ’05 and her husband Rick were blessed with Kailyn Emery Haven on June 23, 2010. Paige is still running her event planning business, Compliments of You, which specializes in weddings and private parties. They live in Brandon, Miss., and attend Broadmoor Baptist Church.

Emily Seuell Seymour ’05 and her husband, Scott, celebrated the birth of their first child, Austin Thomas Seymour, on October 10, 2010. Emily and Scott currently live in Vancouver, Washington, and are in graduate school.

Rebekah Bradford Smalls ’05 was blessed to marry Jermaine Smalls on November 1, 2008, and gave birth to a daughter, Melody Lorene Smalls, on December 4, 2009.

Colleen Christie ’06 moved to Moscow, Idaho, in August 2010 to pursue her Master’s in Education in Physical Education Pedagogy.

Sheralei Clayborne ’06 has been named by the National College of Business and Technology as Bartlett campus director.

Jerrid Harris ’06 has been promoted to Athletic Director at Rockdale County High School in Conyers, Georgia, where he also teaches AP US History.

Gabrielle Pickle ’06 graduated from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2010 with a Master of Divinity in Women’s Studies. She works as the Director of Communications at Sisters in Service, a faith-based nonprofit organization addressing international abuse and exploitation of women.

Larkin Braxton ’07 and Ashley Morgan Braxton ’07 live in Leesville, La., where Larkin works as a Financial Planner with First Command Financial Planning, which works with military families in the area. Ashley moved into the Labor and Delivery Ward Assistant position at the Army hospital in Leesville. They purchased their first airplane in May.

Baskin Jones ’07 has passed the Bar and set up a full-service legal practice in Jackson.

Sarah Sachs ’08 will finish her Masters Degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy at the University of Southern Mississippi in April and is engaged to be married in May. Sarah works full-time as the Director of Worship Ministries at Lakeside Presbyterian Church in Brandon, Miss.
Priscilla Rogers Morgan ’07 was named the Assistant Volleyball Coach at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, La. in March.

Andrew Carcich ’09 played indoor football with the Alaska Wild in Anchorage, AK before being traded to the Tri-Cities Fever in Kennewick, Wash. In 2010–2011 season, he will be playing with the Reading Express in Reading, Penn.

Ashleigh Dolan ’09 moved to Georgetown, Tex., where she teaches 4th grade at Grace Academy, a classical, Christian school.

Sydney Cunningham ’10 is back at Belhaven, working in the Graduate and Online Programs Office as Data Coordinator. She is living in downtown Jackson and serving with WeWillGo Ministries as an Intern-Missionary.

Jarrett Morgan ’10 has worked since graduation as a Surgical Coordinator and Technician in a local ophthalmology clinic in Jackson. He has also been accepted into the University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Medicine, where he will start in August of 2011.

IN MEMORIAM

Sophia Margaret Seward Hedrix ’27 passed away on August 4, 2010 in Jackson, Mississippi.

Jane Furr Roseberry ’33 passed away on May 27, 2010 in Marks, Mississippi.

Eva Grace Barnes ’37 passed away on August 5, 2010 in Ridgeland, Mississippi.

Elinor Woods Herrington ’41 passed away on October 1, 2010 at her home in Olive Branch, Mississippi.

Mary Virginia Bell Chilcutt ’44 passed away on September 18, 2010 at her home in Kosciusko, Mississippi.


Ada Elizabeth (Betty) Wardlaw Jordan ’48 passed away on February 28, 2010 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Kathleen Willis Grafton ’50 passed away on September 5, 2010 in Ridgeland, Mississippi.

Mary Elizabeth (Bettie) McGee Wolverton ’54 passed away, after a four year battle with lung cancer, on August 18, 2010 in Ridgeland, Mississippi.

Lucy Grantham Wilde ’58 passed away at her Chesapeake home Dec. 28, 2010.

Charles L. Skinner ’61 passed away on December 26, 2010 in Jackson, Mississippi.


David H. Singley ’69 passed away on September 23, 2010 at his home in LaGrange, Georgia.

Leigh Ann Ward ’00 died August 17, 2010, at University Hospital from injuries received in a motor vehicle accident.

Frances Clark Graeber passed away on December 4, 2010 in Marks, Mississippi.

UPDATE: 42 Legacies and Growing

Belhaven has now recorded 42 planned gifts since the campaign launched in 2009. With a goal of “100 Legacy” gifts for Belhaven, the ongoing efforts have raised the awareness of how Belhaven alumni and friends can develop a comprehensive estate plan that will jointly provide for their family and expand the mission of Belhaven.

Assistant to the President Larry Mills ’61 is the staff contact for this exciting project and would gladly visit and advise as to how a planned gift would work for you. Contact Larry at 601-968-8889 or by e-mail at lmills@belhaven.edu.
This newly installed directional medallion marks the one mile gold trail surrounding Belhaven University. Come out and visit our half mile and mile walking trails provided by Belhaven donors and a generous grant from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation.
Read More about the trails and healthy initiatives on page 16.
Belhaven Athletics is stronger than ever before, and we want you to join “Team Green.”

Team Green exists to allow individuals, families and businesses to financially enhance and support the student-athlete experience at Belhaven University. The goal of the Belhaven Athletics Department is to create an environment in which student-athletes can compete for championships and mature as men and women – academically, spiritually and relationally. Your financial support of Blazer Athletics can make a significant difference in the success of our sports programs and the growth of our Athletics Department.

Belhaven athletics is excelling both on the field and in the classroom. In academics, our athletes have recently recorded a banner semester with 117 student-athletes inducted into the 3.0 Club. Athletically Belhaven landed four teams in the national tournaments for their respective sport in 2010, and we are on track in 2011 to equal or surpass last year’s results. And, most importantly, our outstanding coaching staff is fully committed to setting a Christ-like example for our student-athletes.

Check out Team Green on the Blazers’ webpage below or call for more information. Every gift counts!

Visit blazers.belhaven.edu or call 601-968-5956 and join Team Green today!
It’s your turn to build on your Belhaven University’s tradition with Belhaven’s online degree offerings. We bring together academic quality with southern hospitality to ease the way for you to earn your degree online.

WE OFFER . . .

• A friend on campus who will answer your calls and smooth your way, not an automated phone environment.
• The flexibility to work around your busy schedule and to help you meet your academic goals.
• A highly regarded academic program, along with faculty who will help strengthen your faith.