

\*\*\*\*\*

## ASSOCIATED BAPTIST PRESS

\*\*\*\*\*

June 25, 2008

(8-65)

### IN THIS ISSUE:

Most evangelicals, Baptists tolerant, even universalist, survey suggests  
Young CBFers, responding to Sherman, call for end to bitter anti-SBC rhetoric  
Love and Marriage: Church, state uneasy bedfellows in recognizing legal marriages  
Love & Marriage: Couples counting down to wedding consider program time well-spent  
Love & Marriage: What happens when cohabitating couples want to join the church?  
Defending minorities very Baptist, Wright-Riggins tells BJC banquet  
Richmond seminary names Israel Galindo as dean  
OBU trustees name social science school for longtime supporter

### Most evangelicals, Baptists tolerant, even universalist, survey suggests

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- A massive survey of Americans' religious views shows that Baptists, like the overall population, generally are socially tolerant of other faiths. It also suggests that most Americans and most Baptists are, effectively, universalists.

The latest results are the second set of findings released from the United States Religious Landscape Survey, released June 23 by the Washington-based Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. The survey showed large majorities of Americans favor the statement "Many religions can lead to eternal life." Fewer agreed that: "My religion is the one, true faith leading to eternal life."

Tolerance reigned across all major faith categories, including large majorities of Catholics, mainline Protestants, evangelicals, Southern Baptists, African-American Baptists, and members of congregations affiliated with the American Baptist Churches USA.

Smaller majorities of Americans and Baptists favored the assertion, "There is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of my religion." "Although many Americans are highly religious, we found they are not particularly dogmatic about their approach to faith," said John Green, the Pew Forum's senior fellow in religion and politics. "We believe that this non-dogmatic approach to faith is consistent with the great diversity of American religion, which this report describes in great detail."

On the "one true faith" question, 70 percent of all Americans affiliated with religious traditions said there were multiple routes to eternal life. Among all Protestants, the figure was only slightly lower -- at 66 percent. Those who identified as members of evangelical churches were slightly more evenly divided on the question -- with 57 percent affirming multiple faiths' access to heaven and 36 percent insisting that their faith was the only true one.

But respondents who identified themselves as Southern Baptists were more reflective of the general population's views on the subject: 61 percent said many religions could lead to a positive hereafter, while 33 percent said their faith was the only route to salvation.

American Baptists were slightly more universalist, with 73 percent affirming the multiple-routes-to-heaven assertion and 22 percent favoring a more exclusivist view.

But some religion reporters quibbled with the survey's framing of the universalism question -- which didn't define what the questioners meant by "faith" or "eternal life."

"I am being a bit picky here, but I suspect that if you asked a lot of people that Pew Forum question today, they would think of the great world religions. But many Christians would think more narrowly than that," wrote veteran religion reporter Terry Mattingly in a June 24 posting on GetReligion.org, a blog that analyzes the secular media's coverage of religion. "'What is your religion?' 'I'm a Baptist, a Nazarene, an Episcopalian, a Catholic.' 'Can people outside of your religion be saved?' 'Of course.'" "This is not the same thing, for many, as saying that they believe that salvation is found outside faith in Jesus Christ."

The survey results were the second set of data from a groundbreaking survey, conducted last year. It interviewed more than 35,000 Americans about their religious affiliations and views on religious and social questions. The first set

was released earlier this year.

### **Young CBFers, responding to Sherman, call for end to bitter anti-SBC rhetoric**

ATLANTA (ABP) -- In response to controversial comments at the recent Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly, a group of younger CBF supporters has called for an end to "old rhetoric" and for renewed attention to the world's needs. Seven leaders issued an open letter June 24 to Cecil Sherman, one of CBF's founders and its first coordinator, over comments he made at the June 19-20 meeting in Memphis, Tenn.

During the June 19 morning business session, Sherman made remarks after accepting author copies of his new book, *By My Own Reckoning*, a personal recounting of the CBF's history. In asking listeners to use the lessons of the past to help chart the future, he made a reference to the Holocaust. "Every once in a while, I meet someone of the younger generation who says, 'Don't talk about that anymore,'" Sherman said. "Why don't you tell a Jew not to talk about the Holocaust anymore? You need to remember the events that called us into being and be guided by them as you wisely chart your future."

Sherman was among moderate Baptists who fought the fundamentalists' takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention beginning nearly 30 years ago. He has often been the target of intense criticism by conservatives.

While acknowledging Sherman's leadership and contribution to the CBF movement, the open letter's seven signers called his reference to the Holocaust "misguided."

"...[Y]ou juxtaposed our relatively small amount of pain -- where no one was injured or killed -- to the 6 million killed in the Holocaust. In our opinion and the opinions of many others, your analogy was misguided," the letter said.

David Burroughs, president of Passport Inc., CBF's partner for youth and children's camps and conferences, was among the seven signers. "We all have high respect for Cecil Sherman...but there are some of us who are ready to lay that [the pain of the SBC takeover] down and move forward," he said by phone June 25. "We felt the need to say that out loud."

Burroughs noted that younger leaders within the CBF movement do not wish to discount the organization's history, but believe in "using the lessons of the past." "We do want to remember the past.... There are plenty of forums, including Baptist history [courses] at the seminaries and breakout sessions at the General Assembly," he said. The 45-and-under leaders "want to give proper respect for the past, but don't want to be defined by it."

The problem with repeated references to the past, Burroughs added, is that CBF's critics can use them against the entity. "When we keep referencing the past ... it just gives fuel for some people's fire. [They can say], 'They keep defining themselves by what they did.'" Younger CBFers, Burroughs continued, "are not defined by what happened and have grown tired of hearing about it."

In the letter, the leaders called for a focus on the future. "Of course, remembering what happened [in the past] will help us avoid repeating mistakes. But we will no longer wish for this conversation to have center stage -- nor be the focus of who we are and what we do," they wrote. "Young Baptist leaders are ready to embrace new opportunities for ministry and discipleship. Remembering the past but not dwelling on it, many Baptists are excited and enthusiastic about ministering with the most neglected people around the world...."

They invited Sherman and, by implication, other leaders from that era to "lay down the pain of the past and join us as we focus on a future, bright with possibility."

In addition to Burroughs, other signers included R. Scott Ford, CBF of Georgia associate coordinator for missions; Nikki Hardeman, CBF of Georgia associate coordinator for congregational life; Jeremy Lewis, manager of Together for Hope, CBF's program to assist the 20 poorest counties in the United States; Brent McDougal, coordinator of Alabama CBF; Christina Whitehouse-Suggs, CBF of South Carolina associate coordinator for congregational life; and Mike Young, Tennessee CBF associate coordinator for missions.

### **Love and Marriage: Church, state uneasy bedfellows in recognizing legal marriages**

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- In all of America's brouhaha over whether legalizing same-sex marriage will sully the institution's sanctity, very few Christians are asking one important question:

When -- and why -- did the government get into the sanctification business in the first place? When the preacher, at the end of a marriage ceremony, says, "By the power vested in me by the state of (fill-in-the-blank), I pronounce you husband and wife," is he or she acting as a minister of the gospel or a magistrate of the government -- or both?

And how does that happen in a society with a First Amendment designed to guarantee functional separation between religion and government?

Ultimately, one's view of how closely the religious institution of marriage and its civil counterpart are -- or should be -- related may well influence one's views about whether government has a good reason to limit legal recognition of

marriage to heterosexual unions.

“Every five years, if I want to do weddings in Virginia ... I have to [re-apply for a license and] swear or affirm that I will be an officer of the court, not as a lawyer -- which is OK -- but as a minister, so the Commonwealth of Virginia will recognize the ceremonies,” said Barry Lynn, who is an attorney, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and executive director of the Washington-based Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Having to make such an affirmation makes him cringe, Lynn said, because he believes doing so is evidence of an excessive entanglement between church and state in the area of marriage regulation. It isn’t paralleled anywhere else in American law. “I do think many ministers resent becoming agents -- official agents -- of the state to perform marriages,” he said. “And so this coupling of the sacred and the civil occurred early in the United States and is widely the case today.”

Maggie Gallagher is a leading scholarly opponent of same-sex marriage. She said the government regulates such religious authorities’ ability to perform marriages because the state didn’t create marriage. Rather, legal authorities merely recognize and regulate an institution that already exists and is deeply rooted in the society’s history and traditions. That’s why she believes it’s not easy to revise its definition to include, for instance, same-sex couples.

“It is a problem when the government appropriates to itself the power to unilaterally redefine marriage in a way that is not consistent with the will or the traditions of the people -- because the government alone cannot create a marriage tradition powerful enough to preserve and protect the government’s main interest in marriage: bringing together men and women to make and raise the next generation together,” Gallagher, president of the Virginia-based Institute for Marriage and Public Policy, said in an e-mail interview. “Civil government has always been viewed as having a role in marriage, because the common good is so heavily at stake in its protection and preservation.”

Government is in the marriage business because encouraging the best environment for raising and protecting children is a benefit to society at large, Gallagher noted. That’s why the institution has special legal privileges and responsibilities attached to it that aren’t given to other intimate adult relationships. “There’s a reason the government has always been involved in marriage, but not in baptism or my priest’s vow of celibacy,” Gallagher, who describes herself as an “orthodox Catholic,” said. “Marriage is not a sacrament that has only religious implications, like baptism.”

But, in a society with a Constitution that provides religious freedom for all, what is the secular justification for limiting marriage to heterosexual couples? Gallagher and her allies have argued that separating marriage completely from the idea that it encourages the best environment for natural procreation will inevitably have negative effects on the very reason government encourages marriage -- children’s welfare.

Gallagher pointed to a 2006 statement, signed by a broad group of legal scholars, called “Marriage and the Law: A Statement of Principles.” In discussing the tendency of same-sex marriage advocates to argue for marriage equality as a human right, the document warned that such a legal framework could have negative consequences for the future. “To frame the same-gender-marriage issue as exclusively about gay and lesbian civil rights fails to take seriously the issues at stake. Many of us believe that same-sex marriage may offer important potential [social] goods, from increasing stability for children raised by parents in same-sex partnerships, to greater social attention toward the legitimate needs of gay and lesbian people,” it said.

“But we recognize that the question of whether and how altering the legal meaning of marriage from the union of male and female to a unisex union of any two persons will change the meaning of marriage itself is a critical question, which serious people must take seriously, and about which Americans of good will may and do disagree.”

But such disagreement -- exacerbated by conflicting religious definitions of marriage -- might be circumvented, Lynn suggested. “I think we would eliminate some, but not all, of the cantankerous debate on same-sex marriage if we did what many of the nations in Europe do, which is to separate the civil aspects of marriage and the religious aspects,” Lynn said.

In many European countries, any wedding must involve a civil ceremony before a judge or registrar -- separate from any religious ceremony to solemnize or sanctify the civil act. “I’ve talked to, over the years, some conservatives who ... do think that is a respectable way to distinguish the sacred from the secular,” Lynn said.

But Gallagher contended the way that works, in practice, would infringe on Americans’ religious freedom. “France and many others who follow that tradition have appropriated to government the sole power to create marriages. This is not our legal tradition at all. I’m not especially in favor of it,” she said. “A real alternative would be for government to recognize and enforce religiously distinctive marriage contracts so long as they serve the government’s interest -- say, permanent ones for Catholics,” she continued. “But what people who talk about ‘separating marriage and state’ really propose to do is simply to refuse to recognize religious marriage contracts at all. This is not neutrality; it is a powerful intervention by the government into the lives of religious people.”

Lynn said he found that argument “bizarre,” from a church-state perspective. “Everybody recognizes that you don’t have to have a religious marriage. State legislatures write out the rules of marriage, the rights and responsibilities of this

civil institution,” he said.

“If people have to sign documents or register before an official, it in no way impugns the integrity of the religious promises that are made during a sectarian or religious ceremony. . . . The state, of course, has some right to set the rules for the responsibilities and rights of marriage. If that were done for some couples, in no way does it impinge on the rights of a church to explain marriage in its own way.”

But Gallagher said separating the two -- say, offering civil unions to gay and straight couples alike and then allowing churches to solemnize them as *marriages* if they so choose -- wouldn't end debate. “It doesn't solve any of the really hard questions: Why is the government involved in intimate unions -- why can it separate out and define at all what private and personal adult relationships are worthy of special respect?” she said. “If marriage -- even renamed ‘civil unions’ -- has any legal shape or consequences at all, the government still has to define the same question: Why only two people? Why can't they be brother and sister? Is sexual fidelity implied? If so why? Why connect sex, residency, caretaking [and] financial responsibility in a package? Why not let people pick and choose? “We don't get out of that debate by saying, ‘This isn't marriage; it's something else.’”

### **Love & Marriage: Couples counting down to wedding consider program time well-spent**

LEWISVILLE, Texas (ABP) -- For many couples, it's like the seconds before a new year's exciting beginning. For a few, it's more like the panic of watching a ticking bomb. Newlywed Brooks Monroe insists counting down the days to his wedding by participating in one Texas church's program was time well-spent.

Monroe and his then-fiancée Lauren had been dating six years when they enrolled in the Countdown to Marriage program at First Baptist Church of Lewisville, Texas. “We'd both just started jobs, and I was kind of skeptical at first, but I'm so glad we went ahead and did it,” Monroe said. “It was an awesome chance to invest in ourselves, and in our future, and in the future of our marriage. The topics were so applicable.”

Countdown to Marriage is a group premarital counseling program designed by Byron and Carla Weathersbee of Legacy Family Ministries in Waco, Texas. It prepares engaged couples for marriage through seven weeks of topical discussion of common marital issues. The Weathersbees, both Baylor University alumni and members of Columbus Avenue Baptist Church in Waco, founded Legacy Family Ministries in 1995 after working in family ministry for 13 years.

Countdown to Marriage is an integral part of Legacy Family's larger vision to strengthen families as the source of Christian development and ministry. “What we're trying to do is use the family institution as not only the greatest evangelism tool, but also the greatest discipleship tool,” Byron Weathersbee explained.

The program for engaged couples grew naturally out of ministering to families as a whole, Weathersbee said. “We had folks who just needed premarital counseling, so we launched a class of five couples,” Weathersbee said. “We tried to find curriculum that would meet our needs and was interactive, that really got couples working through issues and talking.” Over seven weeks, couples analyze each phrase of a traditional marriage vow to address relevant contemporary issues. For example, the phrase “for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer” brings up “money matters” -- the topic of week three in Countdown to Marriage.

Countdown to Marriage also includes the topics, “God's purpose for marriage,” “roles and responsibilities,” “in-laws,” and “communication and conflict resolution.”

The program concludes with a weekend retreat.

During each seven-week session, all couples meet as a group once a week for instruction and feedback about the designated subject. Limited participation keeps groups small and conversational.

Monroe said he enjoyed the group interaction. “We could all learn from each other's struggles,” he said. “I think if it were smaller, we would have missed out on a lot -- but it wasn't so big that you didn't have a chance to contribute to the group.”

In addition to group meetings, couples are assigned weekly tasks -- some individual and some joint assignments. Activities like Bible study, focused conversation, romantic dates or prayer help couples process and apply lessons learned. Spending structured time working through weekly topics helps many couples prioritize their relationship in the midst of pre-wedding busyness. “The time we spent preparing for the lessons, and the time we spent sitting down with the group, was the most valued and cherished part of the week,” Monroe recalled.

Associate Pastor Brian Dodridge at First Baptist Church in Lewisville, who helps lead Countdown sessions at his church, said he wished he had had the program when he was preparing for marriage. “They're all the conversations married couples ought to have, and often have 10 to 15 years into the marriage, but we're introducing them on the front end,” Dodridge explained.

Though the program is scripturally founded and teaches a Christian worldview, non-Christians also enroll. Dodridge

once had the privilege of giving one participant a Bible. Many couples pray or read Scripture together for the first time while in Countdown to Marriage.

Since the program provides thorough preparation for marriage, some non-Christians attend out of sheer practicality. “The majority of folks look to get married in either a church or synagogue, and they look to the church for guidance and direction,” Weathersbee said. “We’ve made it fun, we’ve made it interactive – it’s appealing to young couples who’re really desiring to know what they’re getting themselves into!”

The program at First Baptist Church in Lewisville also draws attendance from all over the Dallas-Fort Worth area. “The best thing is that a lot of the couples are not a part of our church,” Dodridge said.

Countdown to Marriage has now spread beyond the program’s base in Waco to several cities and churches in Texas and Oklahoma. A condensed version of the seven-week curriculum also is available as a weekend retreat to facilitate those who live far from a program site.

The Weathersbees hope to spread the program throughout Texas because of its effectiveness in preparing lasting marriages and possibilities for evangelism. “We’ve taken about 900 couples through this course and the weekender course, in and around Waco. We do a pretty good job of tracking those couples, and our last count we’ve had less than four percent who’d gotten a divorce,” Weathersbee said.

### **Love & Marriage: What happens when cohabitating couples want to join the church?**

DALLAS (ABP) -- When the nice young couple presenting themselves for membership in your church is shacking up, how should the congregation respond? Churches likely will face this and other tough questions as society’s definition of family continues to evolve.

“This isn’t the church our parents grew up in,” said Philip Washburn, pastor of Park Central Baptist Church in Dallas. “If we believe ‘come all who are weary and heavy-laden,’ we must love people, not turn them away. A lot of the couples [in non-traditional lifestyles] are couples who have grown up in the church.” Washburn said he focuses on developing relationships first. Although no couple living together has yet sought to join Park Central, he is working with individuals in the community about the issue.

Michael Tutterow, senior pastor of Atlanta’s Wieuca Road Baptist Church, agreed churches must build relationships to help people first find faith and then to grow. “We open our membership to anyone. ... We start with where they are and help them,” Tutterow explained. “We take the stand of grace, something our entire staff shares. “Trying to determine who’s at fault isn’t productive. We take the ‘now what’ approach: [Since] this has happened, now what?”

Wieuca Road concentrates on accepting individuals, regardless of the issues they face. “Acceptance is not the same thing as condoning. But if you provide the acceptance, there is room to grow,” Tutterow said. “If you point fingers, people are more likely to walk away. “I would rather err on the side of acceptance. ... People grow with grace. I’ve never seen anyone grow under legalism. ... Why would people want to go to a church that adds more burdens?” The church accepts unmarried couples and tries to get them into groups that model healthy relationships, Tutterow said.

Travis McIntosh, pastor of Beverly Park Baptist Church in Seattle, stressed that people must be made aware of biblical teaching and that some moral standards must be met before individuals are accepted for church membership. When an unmarried, cohabitating couple who had been attending the church inquired about joining, McIntosh emphasized how glad the congregation was with their presence. However, they could not join unless they married or changed their living arrangements.

Although Park Central would love and nurture an unmarried couple, it’s likely the pair would not be able to join until they settled the cohabitation issue, Washburn explained. “We can’t back down on who we are,” the pastor said. “But we’ve got to love them with the love that is Christ-based, not human-based.”

Unmarried couples who live together do not present the only challenge to churches. Divorce has been a growing part of American society for decades, and churches still struggle with the issues divorce creates. Wieuca Road has relied on counseling to assist couples headed to separation and divorce. This fall the church will begin using DivorceCare, a recovery and support program that uses seminars and support groups.

McIntosh believes the church, particularly pastors, must be proactive, stepping in when they become aware of relationship problems. “It’s the church’s responsibility to help the family stay together,” he said. “If the church lets them down in this area, how can it be trusted in other areas?”

What should churches do when husband and wife divorce and both want to remain members of the same church? People develop strong connections within their congregations, either through family ties or friendships, and often are reluctant to walk away from that support. Usually, one spouse chooses to leave. But when both decide to stay, larger churches, such as Wieuca Road, have the advantage of size to mitigate possible tension between the former spouses. A medium-sized or small church may have to intervene actively. Washburn said he generally works through the

congregation's deacons to be the buffer between the couple, particularly when former spouses are involved in the same ministries. "A church needs more than just the pastor to work with the situation," he said.

Tension can increase when both former spouses remain in a congregation, especially in a small church. McIntosh prefers that one finds another church home. "I would let the spouse at fault know he should find another church," he said.

Walter Coplen, a family counselor with Coplen, Wright and Associates in Columbia, Mo., said churches must focus on relationship building and sensitivity when ministering to non-traditional couples, single parents and their children. Don't be afraid, he said, to ask people what they need and how the church can help.

### **Defending minorities very Baptist, Wright-Riggins tells BJC banquet**

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (ABP) -- Baptists, of all people, should defend the rights of minorities against the majority, an American Baptist leader told supporters of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty June 20.

"To live with the minority experience is to live with the fear of being forgotten and excluded. It is the feeling of foreignness, of not belonging. It is to live in the reality of what Ralph Ellison called the 'Invisible Man' -- to be present, but not counted; speaking, but not being heard," said Aidsand Wright-Riggins, executive director of the American Baptist Churches USA's National Ministries. He spoke to about 425 guests at the annual luncheon meeting of the Religious Liberty Council, the BJC's organization for individual donors. The luncheon was held during the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly in Memphis, Tenn.

Wright-Riggins said identification with the minority experience should be at the center of Baptist and Christian identity. "The road to somebody-ness is always about resolve and resistance. And Baptists, my brothers and sisters, have always pulled alongside those who were dedicated to resolve and resistance on the road to somebody-ness," he noted. "Baptists respect human nature and human dignity. Baptists fight for the rights of others to speak their own mind and live their own truths. ... We believe in a free state -- but we also believe in a free church, where the god of the majority is never forced upon the consciences of the minority."

Wright-Riggins, who is African-American, said the question of race had reared its familiar head in this presidential election for all Americans -- but it was hitting home for him especially. He noted that his organization runs Judson Press, American Baptists' publishing arm. Judson has published several books by Jeremiah Wright, the controversial former pastor to Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama, and Wright-Riggins said he has gotten letters he described as "vicious" and "vitriolic."

They asked him to denounce Wright. But Wright-Riggins responded, "Let the church be Baptist and affirm the right of all of us to speak." He read a passage from Joshua 22 that detailed the experience of the ancient Israelite tribes that lived across the Jordan from the rest of their kinsmen -- and eventually became regarded as something less than true Israelites.

The other Israelites dismissed them, the passage says, telling them, "You have no part in God." In defiance, the Reubenites, Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh built an altar to Yahweh in their territory to assert their Jewishness. "In an attempt to affirm their own somebody-ness, somebody told them, 'Let's build an altar, to say that we count too....' Isn't it interesting how the Bible itself can be used as a tool -- as a divisive instrument and a 'thingification' tool?"

In other business, BJC supporters heard an update on the group's capital campaign to establish a permanent building for the BJC, called the Center for Religious Liberty, on Capitol Hill. Reginald McDonough, the campaign chairman, said BJC has received commitments for about half of the \$5 million goal. Of that, \$2 million is already in the bank, allowing the organization to move ahead with picking out a property. "The good news is: We're halfway there." McDonough said. "The challenge is: We're halfway there."

Religious Liberty Council supporters also re-elected their officers and approved four new board members to serve three-year terms.

Hal Bass, a professor at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and a member of First Baptist Church there, was re-elected co-chair, along with Cynthia Holmes, a St. Louis attorney and member of Overland Baptist Church. Henry Green, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church in Annapolis, Md., was re-elected the group's secretary.

Supporters affirmed the board appointments of Terri Phelps, a member of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.; Joey Kennedy, a member of Southside Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala.; Mitch Randall, a member of NorthHaven Church in Norman, Okla.; and Beverly McNally, a member of Christ Congregation in Princeton, N.J.

### **Richmond seminary names Israel Galindo as dean**

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Trustees of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond have elected Israel Galindo as the 19-year-old school's new dean. Galindo, a Christian education professor at the Virginia seminary, was elected June 17. He replaces Mike Harton, who has served as interim dean for the past two years.

Galindo also serves as the principal of a consulting firm. Born in Cuba and reared in New York, he joined the seminary staff in 1999 after several years as a local-church educator and principal for private schools. He holds a doctorate in education from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

A popular seminar and workshop leader, Galindo has expertise in Bowen Family Systems theory as applied to parenting, congregational life and leadership development. He has written widely and has several books in print, including an Alban Institute bestseller, *The Hidden Lives of Congregations*.

As dean, he will lead faculty in curriculum development and evaluation, in instructional development, and will serve on the seminary's administrative team.

"Dr. Galindo's academic expertise and extensive experience in local congregational ministry will provide great dividends to BTR and her students," seminary President Ron Crawford said about the new dean. "He understands the challenges of the 21st century on local church ministry and will strengthen our efforts to prepare women and men for ministry around the world."

### **OBU trustees name social science school for longtime supporter**

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. (ABP) -- In appreciation for "consistent and generous support" for Ouachita Baptist University, trustees named the Arkansas school's social-science division for Buddy Sutton, a prominent Little Rock attorney. Trustees voted June 12 to honor Sutton, a long-time Ouachita supporter and Arkansas Baptist lay leader. Adopting a resolution noting that Sutton "readily lent his name, reputation and influence to strengthen the standing of the university," board members named the division the W.H. Sutton School of Social Sciences "with sincere appreciation for the life and service of their dear friend and colleague."

Sutton, who served 10 years as chairman of Ouachita's trustee board, is a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He served in private practice for more than 45 years with the Little Rock law firm of Friday, Eldredge & Clark until his retirement in 2005. He is a longtime member of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, where he has served for decades as a deacon and Sunday school teacher.

"Buddy is a rare individual who brings a blessing to whatever he touches and whatever he is part of," Ouachita President Rex Horne said. Horne was Sutton's pastor at Immanuel prior to his Ouachita post. Horne said the trustees' decision to link Sutton's name with the School of Social Sciences will allow Ouachita "to continue to benefit from the influence and character Buddy has now and for generations to come."

Hal Bass, dean of the Sutton School, enthusiastically affirmed the board's decision. "What we want to do in the social sciences is emphasize learning beyond the classroom; the world is our lab," Bass, who also is the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's moderator-elect, explained. "The Sutton name will give us entrees for various settings beyond the classroom into the broader world."

Sutton said he is deeply committed to Ouachita's mission of providing students "a solid and excellent education in the Christian environment that is so important to family life and Christian life." The School of Social Sciences, which includes the departments of history, political science, psychology and sociology, "is a very important bridge to service in the Christian life," he said.

In addition to honoring Sutton's life and work, Horne said the school's new name will "help strengthen a fine school in our university." He is working with Sutton and Terry Peebles, Ouachita's vice president for development, to enhance endowed scholarship funds for the school.

\*\*\*\*\*