

Alabama Centers

The Gatekeeper



New Orleans Baptist
Theological Seminary
www.nobts.edu

March 2014

Special Points of Interest:

- **Seminary Workday**—This Saturday March 15th NOBTS students and faculty are encouraged to help clean up the office and the modules. If you are interested in helping please contact Dr. Pate.
- **Current Student Scholarships**—Applications for the Current Student Scholarship will be taken from April 1-30. For more info please visit www.nobts.edu
- **Ecuador Mission Trip**— August 1-9, 2014. If you are taking classes as credit for the trip, the registration will be open soon. Please stay in contact with Stephen Hall for more mission trip information. Students can pay online at northparkbc.org New deadline April 20th
- **Birmingham Library**—The library and office will be open on Mondays (8am-7pm), Tuesdays (9am-2pm), and Thursdays (10am-2pm).

THE LORD PROVIDES ECUADOR DEPOSIT IN AN UNEXPECTED WAY



Courtesy Photo

By Zach Kendrick

Birmingham—New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary “does not exist merely to get an education or to give an education. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.” So says the description on

the NOBTS website in regards to the core value “Mission Focus.” One of the ways NOBTS strives to have a mission focus is by providing mission opportunities for class credit. Yet, with tuition on top of the cost of a trip, it can be rather expensive for students. Such was the case for Matt Pope, one of Bir-

mingham Center’s Leavell College students. Matt serves as the Associate and Youth Pastor at The Baptist Church at McA-dory. He heard about the Ecuador Mission Trip scheduled for this summer and felt led to go. “I had heard of mission opportunities before, but there

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The Alabama Centers Gatekeeper is a publication of the NOBTS Birmingham Center. Any ideas for articles, interviews, or news can be sent to: bhamasst.nobts@gmail.com

MEET BIRMINGHAM CENTER STUDENT, SHERYL SHIPMAN

In this edition of the *Gatekeeper* we would like you to meet Rev. Sheryl Shipman. She the pastor at Mt. Zion AME in Trussville. Rev. Shipman has an interesting story about how she came to faith and her call to ministry. Sheryl is one of NOBTS Birmingham Center's biggest recruiters. She and Damien Littlejohn have encouraged many of their fellow AME pastors to come to the Birmingham Center. Because of their influence several AME pastors from the Birmingham area have enrolled for classes. Sheryl has also encouraged AME pastors in Mobile to go to the NOBTS Pensacola Center that meets at Olive Baptist Church. Many students at NOBTS Birmingham have come to love Sheryl and her heart for the Lord and ministry. Once you meet her, we are certain you will love her too!

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in the west Birmingham and I have lived here my entire life.

What is your testimony?

My mom told me that I would sit in church at age two and listen to the preacher's sermons and cry. I was a good kid, never smoking or drinking, etc. But it was really at the age of twenty-five,



Courtesy Photo

I truly surrendered my life to Christ and began a personal relationship with the Lord. After that my life completely changed.

Describe your call to ministry.

In the AME we have what we call the Young People's Department (YPD). I was active in my YPD. I felt the call of God early on, but I rebelled some. My grandfather was an AME pastor, so I was active in the church through singing and had been speaking since I was 13 years old. When I was 35 years old I had a dream and the Lord told me I was being disobedient to His call to ministry. So I talked to my pastor and he told me sit and listen to the Lord for a while. After that I sat before our church conference, and they voted to let me be a pastor. Since

then I have served three churches in the Birmingham area.

Are you married? Do you have any kids?

Yes, my husband Donald (pictured above) and I have been married for 33 years. We have four kids; three sons and one daughter. We also have six grandchildren, and are raising our two year old grandson.

Where do you serve in ministry?

Currently I serve at Mt. Zion AME Church in Trussville. I have served there four years.

What is your favorite hobby?

I love to read! I also like to sing. Oh and I love to

shop!

What is your favorite sport to watch and/or play?

I love to watch basketball! I am an avid basketball fan. Go Lakers!

What is your favorite class?

I loved Dr. Jackson's "Church Evangelism," I would come into that class and my jaw would drop in amazement at what we were learning in that class. I probably grew the most in my personal evangelism as a result of that class. I have actually put what we learned in that class into practice. Now when I go out and eat I ask my waiter how I can pray for them. It has opened up some good doors for conversation. I also liked "New Testament" with Dr. Aernie

Besides the Bible what was the last book you read?

A House Divided by Kimberla Roby. It was a fiction book about a preacher who had a child before he got married and the mother of the child resented the baby. It was a very interesting read.

What is one piece of advice you would give students about their years in seminary?

Pray without ceasing! In everything you do, do it as unto the Lord.

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was not passion to go" he said, "but when this trip was offered I felt led to go." He found out about the trip just two weeks before the deposit of \$500 was due on March 1st. "I told a class mate that I would pray about it, but if it didn't happen I'd be ok," he said. But the next day, the Lord an-

swered his prayer in a big way. His family had paid too much on their escrow account and received a check for the overage amount. The amount on the check? \$500. "I was thinking selfishly at first," he said "I was excited to put it in the savings account, but my wife pointed out to me that it

was the exact amount for the Ecuador deposit." His wife will not be going with him on the trip, but will be praying for Matt and team that the Lord will use them. "At this point I don't know where the rest of the funds will come from, or what [the Lord] has in store," Matt said, "I just know he wants me to go." Matt's testimony is an example of where the Lord

calls, he supplies. He calls his children to be obedient to his call and trust Him with the details. There is still space for anyone who wants to go. The deadline for the \$500 deposit has been extended to April 20. To learn more about the trip or to sign up please contact Dr. Stephen Hall shall@northparkbc.org. Trip fees can be paid online at northparkbc.org

NOBTS/Brook Hills Work Day

Saturday March 15th

9am-1pm



Join us in the office and modules as we say thank you to Brook Hills for hosting the NOBTS Birmingham Center.



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nobtsbirmingham.wordpress.com

GO INTO ALL
THE WORLD
Ecuador Mission Trip
August 1-9, 2014

New Deposit Deadline: April 20th

BIRMINGHAM CENTER

Fall 2014: Graduate and Undergraduate Fall schedules have been taken down temporarily for reworking. We are working to get the schedules back on the proper cycle. This will effect the classes offered for the Fall. Please pardon any inconvenience.

Snack Table: Please remember that all snacks and drinks are 50 cents. Coffee is free.

MONTGOMERY CENTER

Key Card: If are not taking classes this semester please drop off your keycards at the Heritage Church Office

RAINSVILLE CENTER

Please see Zach Richards for any announcements at the North East Alabama Center.

HUNTSVILLE CENTER

Launch: The new Huntsville Center will be opening in August hosted by Whitesburg Baptist Church. At first they will have Monday only classes offering the four CIV classes listed on the Birmingham Schedule.

Certificate: The Huntsville Center will be offering a Bible Teaching Certificate at University Baptist Church starting in August. That program is relocating from FBC Athens.

MINISTRY POSITIONS

Youth Pastor: Grace Baptist Church in Fayette, AL is currently seeking a part-time Youth Pastor. If you are interested please contact Dr. Brad Doss at preacherdoss@msn.com

Youth Pastor: Whorton Bend Baptist Church in Gadsden is looking for a new Youth Pastor. If you are interested, please send your resume to Scott Mayo at smay@farmersagent.com or mail it to 2820 Whorton Bend Road, Gadsden, AL 35901

Youth Pastor: Bellview Baptist Church in McCalla is looking for a part-time Student Minister to be responsible for leading the youth ministry. Send resume to pastor@bellviewbc.org or mail to 6674

TUSCALOOSA CENTER

Launch: The Tuscaloosa Center launches Monday, August 18, 2014, and classes are to be held at the Forest Lake Baptist Church. The semester will meet weekly for fifteen weeks and recess until we start a new semester in January. All credits earned can either stand alone or apply toward either a Bachelor's Degree from Leavell College or Master's degree from NOBTS.

Graduate: Classes to be offered on the graduate (Masters) track are: Proclaiming the Bible, Spiritual Formation I, Introductory Hebrew Grammar, and Pastoral Ministry.

Undergrad: Classes to be offered on the undergraduate track are: Old Testament Survey, Introduction to Counseling, New Testament Interpretation, Personal Spiritual Disciplines, and English Composition.

Interested potential students or professors can contact Billy Austin at 334.312.0843 or bibbybama@gmail.com.

IMPORTANT DATES

March 15—Seminary Workday

March 24-28—Spring Break and Workshops

April 1-30—Current Student Scholarships

April 18—Good Friday (Office/Library Closed)

April 20—New Ecuador Deposit Deadline

May 17—Graduation (Main Campus)

August 1-9—Ecuador Mission Trip

PRAYER REQUESTS

Pray for fellow students and professors who are leaders of churches. May they lead well.

Pray for our churches, associations, state, and nation.

If you have a prayer request please send it to bhamasst.nobts@gmail.com

SEMINARY WORK DAY SET FOR THIS SATURDAY



By Zach Kendrick

Birmingham – The Church at Brook Hills does more for NOBTS than many students probably realize. As part of their hospitality to NOBTS they do not charge rent or utilities for use of the facilities. They also provide the office with phone, internet, and copying services free of charge. Brook Hills is definitely a friend of NOBTS. For this reason the Birmingham Center would like to say thank you by doing some spring cleaning in the module buildings. This Saturday March 15th from 9am-1pm students and professors are encouraged to help clean.

Students from Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, and Huntsville are also encouraged to serve. The type of work that needs done includes: washing doors, cleaning windows and white boards, pressure washing the modules, mopping floors, and cleaning out gutters. Students can also help by donating or lending supplies such as cleaning cloths, glass cleaner, Clorox, mops, pressure washers, ladders, and spray bottles. Students who cannot attend, but would like to donate supplies may drop them off at the office. If you would like to sign up to serve or donate supplies please contact Dr. Pate at rpate@nobts.edu