

SPRING 2012

# the Cornerstone



DALLAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

## for the love of MUSIC

*Senior Shanandolan Reynolds shares her passion for gospel music and talks about her experience as one of BET's Sunday Best finalist.*

SAVING YOUR MARRIAGE

PLANTING RANCLAND

PIEDMONT LECTURES

# A Word From Dusty

## DCC Honors Our Founder

In every generation God raises up a handful of men and women of uncommon courage and exceptional effectiveness. These are the ones who change the spiritual landscape of nations and end up in the history books that are studied in the following generations.

Vernon Newland could be counted in that company of spiritual heroes. Orphaned at an early age, raised by a Christian grandmother, off to the mission field at his earliest opportunity, captured and nearly killed as a prisoner of war in World War II, — upon his return to the States, he became the visionary and energetic leader behind both a church-planting movement and the establishment of several Christian colleges (including this fine institution).

Although his life was cut short in a tragic plane accident, the work he had already completed and the progress he had set in motion would change the lives of people around the world for decades ahead.

I wish I were more like him. His indomitable spirit and mountain-sized faith motivated his work and those around him. His fearless efforts for the Kingdom resulted in great advances. His time on earth was a role model for spiritual, entrepreneurial leaders.

While I may not ever reach that level, what I can do is honor his spiritual legacy through my work at DCC.

We aim to keep his spirit, which was the spirit of Christ, alive at Dallas Christian College. As we do, there are many students who are following in his footsteps. But for many of these aspiring world influencers, these may be the most difficult financial times we have experienced since Vernon Newland founded the College in 1950. The shipwreck of the economy over the last three years has had a devastating impact on countless students and their families.

Therefore, in November I announced the formation of the Newland Legacy Fund. This fund will be providing financial assistance to students who need it the most. We have already made over \$450,000 of commitments to those students this year. And we must raise the funds to meet those commitments, not because DCC depends on it, but because the kingdom depends on God's servants answering the call, preparing for service, and becoming people of irresistible influence in this dark and broken world.

I hope and I pray that you will become a charter member of the Newland Legacy Fund. An envelope is attached in this magazine for your convenience. In the years ahead, we dream that this fund will grow to meet the needs of every student who answers God's call to kingdom work.

Who knows? The next great Christian leaders of our generation may be depending on you and me to help them through.

May God bless you as you join in this great effort. 🙏

**DUSTY RUBECK**  
President



**“His indomitable spirit and mountain-sized faith motivated his work and those around him. His fearless efforts for the kingdom resulted in great advances. His time on earth was a role model for spiritual, entrepreneurial leaders.”**

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**DALLAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**

[www.dallas.edu](http://www.dallas.edu)

Sophomore Ciara Latour holds a trophy awarded to her team for "best decorated hallway in Winslow Hall" awarded during homecoming weekend last October.



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## Can you see me now?

*DCC begins using new video feature for online class*

DCC has just finished a class in a new format that led online student Andy Kupas to say, "This actually makes me feel like I am actually attending college now. It is a wonderful experience. Even though I read the chapters we are supposed to, I also take notes on what the professor says and that helps tremendously. If it were possible, I would take all of my classes this way (short of actually being on campus)."

Andy is talking about the class that he just finished in which he logged on to a web conference from his home computer and participated fully in an on-campus evening class. He could see and hear the instructor, the students in the classroom, and the other students who were online. He could join the class discussion just by—you guessed it—raising his hand (virtually by clicking a hand icon!). Oh,

and the week that Andy could not attend—he watched the recording and participated in the online discussion with others who could not attend the class session "live."

DCC will be offering an expanded list of classes in this format for Spring, 2012. 📄



fast-loading content were one of the main priorities of the new website project. The others were increasing the security of the site, as well as making it more mobile friendly," Sheila Tran, webmaster and director of marketing, said.

The college plans to optimize other sites associated with the college, such as the alumni and athletic sites. Plans to develop a complete mobile version of the site are also underway. 📄

## DCC website gets a facelift

*Find what you need faster*

DCC's main website, www.dallas.edu, got a fresh new look during the summer. The new website features the school's red, and has a cleaner, more modern look that better suits today's web standards.

The website serves as a main communication tool between the college, the student community and the general public. Among its many purposes, the site serves to attract, inform, and encourage new students to apply; provide information about academic programs; and allow donors and alumni to stay current with college news and events.

The overall look and feel of the site were enhanced for easier navigation on both computers and mobile devices. The college's social media links can now be found on the main page of the site so that students and constituents of the college can stay connected.

"Simplifying many of the pages and delivering

## Kingdom Week trips announced

As part of Kingdom Week 2012, students will serve in South Dallas (U.S.A), Tegucigalpa (Honduras), Berlin (Germany), San Raymundo (Guatemala) and Accra (Ghana), March 11-17, 2012. A trip to Uganda in December 2011 has also been scheduled.

Each year the DCC community is invited to sacrifice their spring break for week-long mission trips around the world.

"Our objective is to hone DCC students to look forward

to the day of God and speed its coming, during Kingdom Week and forever beyond," Eric Hinton, director of student development, wrote. "For a week in March, new people and cultures will be our classrooms, and new experiences and perspectives will be our teachers."

Participants must raise their own support to participate in Kingdom Week. Donations can be made online on the DCC website. 📄

## From bits to bytes

*College responds to improve student satisfaction by upgrading technology on campus*

In response to the spring semester student-satisfaction inventory and the annual student residence-hall survey, DCC improved its information technology services this past summer.

Problems with providing a stable and reliable internet connection in the residence halls first came up in August 2010. The technology department struggled with developing internet access points that were reliable around the campus.

This past summer, the College signed a contract with Time Warner Cable (TWC) to provide cable television, telephone and internet services on campus. TWC allows the College to be able to do several things to improve information technology on campus.

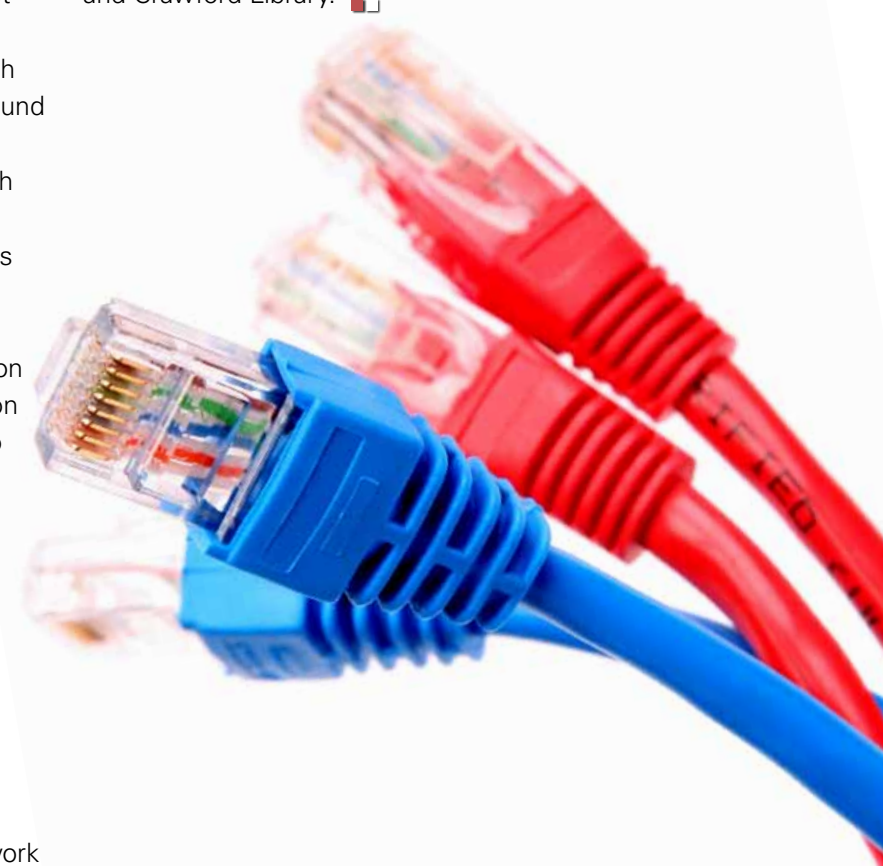
One of the biggest improvements was the connection between the residence halls and the main administration building using fiber optics. This was a major upgrade to the College's infrastructure. The college also doubled their internet connection to 20 mbps (megabits per second) for a faster, more reliable connection.

During spring break, the IT department performed phase one of a complete overhaul of the dorms' network. An outside vendor designed and deployed a new wireless network in Newland Hall. The change proved successful, and a new wireless network was installed in Winslow Hall this past summer.

"The combination of a fiber connection, more bandwidth and a professionally designed wireless network is our way of addressing [student] concerns with the

information technology services on campus," Annie Blair, former senior director of administration said.

Further technology updates on campus include the addition of new copiers and printers in the Service Center and Crawford Library. 📄





## Hoopful Helping

The DCC men's basketball team, together with SoupMobile, spent a day in South Dallas hosting a basketball clinic and helping serve meals to homeless men and women.

The first annual "Jesus, Basketball, and the Homeless" event occurred on Friday, October 28. The team, led by head coach Charles H. Williams, helped prepare and serve meals, and then put on a basketball show for guests at the event.

"This will no doubt be a day to remember for those involved, both on the receiving and giving end of this event," John Irving, assistant men's basketball coach, wrote. "We hope to have your prayers with us, as some undoubtedly will... have that initial seed (Jesus) planted in their hearts until someone comes along to water it."

Williams developed the partnership between DCC basketball and the "Soupman," David Timothy, executive director of Soupmobile Inc. The result was an event that helped minister to the homeless, with food and entertainment all in one setting.

SoupMobile is a non-profit mobile soup kitchen feeding and sheltering the needy and homeless in the Dallas area. Timothy founded the organization in August 2003.



1 Corinthians 9:25-27 "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."

## Soccer Wraps Up After a Great Season

### MEN'S SOCCER

What a fantastic season for Crusader's soccer for both the men's and women's team!

The men's team took the southwest regional championship for the second year in a row. The team headed off to nationals and had four players named to the All-Region Team, including Christian Berrier, Gerson Machado, Paul Lucky, and Ben Blair. Head coach Brad Rogers was also named the Southwest Region Men's Coach of the Year.

"The Team overcame adversity and came together, this is a tribute to the Christian Character that they have in themselves," Rogers said.

### WOMEN'S SOCCER

After struggling for several seasons without a win, the women's team pulled off two wins this season! They made DCC History by being the first team to win a game and will be forever known as the team that took DCC women's soccer to the next level.

Rogers was named the Southwest Region Women's Coach of the Year and said he could not be more proud of [this season's] athletes.

"This was the most incredible group of athletes that I have ever coached. Their determination and positive attitude was such a blessing to me and everyone that watched them play." ■■



2011 Men's Soccer Team



2011 Women's Soccer Team



## Cups of Service

Students Taylor Ellis and Alicia Faustino help serve coffee to welcome more than 75 homeless men and women that attend a worship and meal service at the homeless kitchen, an outreach of Cornerstone Baptist Church.

On Thursday, October 20, 200 students, faculty, staff, and volunteers headed to South Dallas as part of the College's service day. Once each semester, classes are cancelled and the campus is closed, as students and faculty work to complete community service projects in impoverished parts of the city, in conjunction with City of Dallas and World Impact, Inc. Last year, students completed a total of 53,636 hours in community service.



MATTHEW MEEKS

## Destination DCC

BY MATTHEW MEEKS

This year's incoming student class has something to teach us all. After speaking with our 88 new traditional students, I am overwhelmed by a sense of calling and servitude. The road to DCC was anything but easy: a number of students had to overcome financial challenges, struggles within their families, and even health problems to take the opportunity to study here. Their struggles reminded me that for many, the completion of a college degree is still a luxury. It is both an honor and a privilege to help make their dreams a reality.

The ethnic and geographic diversity of the new class is remarkable. Over 28% are Hispanic or Latino, and 15% are African-American. Some students hail from Mission, TX, while others

traveled from as far as Buenos Aires, Argentina.

"This new class is a closer representation of God's Kingdom," Brittany Burnette, associate director of admissions, said. We could not agree more.

Over 30% have chosen majors in a ministry-related field. They are committed to serving as Kingdom laborers, and they view DCC as their training ground for future ministerial work. This sense of calling and purpose is felt around the DCC campus, and it is evident in many ways, particularly within the chapel services. It is an inspiration to watch the new students and their expressions of worship. "We are excited about this new group, and we are even more excited about what

they will accomplish for the Lord," said Mark Worley, vice president of community. "As students, their love for God and their passion to reach the world make this group special."

As faculty and staff members, we are training these students to take the reins from us and to lead the church of tomorrow. The members of the 2015 graduating class have already shown the dedication, discipline, and desire to be "people of influence, under God's influence, for a life of influence." We are blessed to welcome them into the DCC family.

**MATTHEW MEEKS, BS '04 (DALLAS BAPTISTS UNIVERSITY), M.Ed. '07 (DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY) IS THE DIRECTOR OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AT DALLAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE.**

# For the love of music

BY SHANANDOLAN REYNOLDS

*A* About two summers ago I remember being at home watching BET 'S Sunday Best and being blown away by the talent. It was a joy to finally see a reality show that was designated toward Gospel Music.

Every Sunday at the end of every episode, my mom would say, "Shanandolan you should try out for that show. You would be great." My response had always been, "No, I don't think I would be good enough to be on a stage that huge, and I can't shout and dance like that."

After an earlier experience with American Idol, I had told myself if I ever decided to audition for another show, I would tell hardly anyone, and I would definitely wait for the outcome before saying anything. In response to my mother's suggestion, I thought, if they ever come to Dallas, I will go audition. I prayed about my thoughts and left it in God's hands.

Sometime in the fall of 2010, I remember sitting on my grandmother's couch, and watching BET, when a commercial came on advertising auditions for "Sunday Best Season 4." They announced Dallas, TX, as the first city to hold auditions. I thought "God, really? Wow. Well, Sunday Best here I come!"

February 19, 2011, came faster than ever. I remember feeling so relaxed, more relaxed than the day I auditioned for American Idol. On my way to the audition, I prayed, "Lord, let your will be done. Whatever comes out, let it be of you and not me."

After long hours of waiting, round after round, I went home feeling overjoyed that night because I had received a "yes" from every single judge. At least, I thought it was a yes. You see there is so much more to TV than what appears on screen. There was one last twist in order to make it to the top 20, the big stage. In March I received a phone call saying that after my tape was reviewed, I was not chosen to be a part of the top 20. I was confused and disappointed because in my mind and my heart I didn't feel like this was the end. Although I felt this way, I knew it was in God's hands, which meant I had to continue on with my life.

*"I was on a flight to Atlanta the next day. I began to think about how God immediately turned things around and my cheeks began to hurt from smiling so hard."*

Two weeks later, while riding on the van with my choral methods class, I received a phone call asking whether I wanted to be on the show. Uh, hello? YES! I was nervous and excited, all at the same time. Wait... but I had to fly out the next day...decisions...decisions.

My mind started to run a hundred miles per hour. What about school, money, my hair and clothes? God, this is yours not mine.

After talking to my amazing professors at DCC, I was on a flight to Atlanta the next day. I began to think about how God immediately turned things around and my cheeks began to hurt from smiling so hard.

After arriving to Atlanta and meeting all the contestants, surprisingly I felt right at home.





Normally, in a competition setting, everyone has this competitive attitude, and are not very friendly. It's every man for himself, but I am thankful to say that all twenty of us connected very well. This entire experience was amazing. I went

from staying in my wall-to-wall dorm room to a hotel room that looked like an apartment and I had it all to myself. It all felt like a dream. I thought, God...all of this for me...wow...you could have chosen anyone but instead you chose me to experience this. Thank you, God.

The following day it was time to get down to business. Meetings, rehearsals, interviews, and taping became the story of my life for a week and a half. I have to be honest. I enjoyed every bit of it.

Before entering the stage to sing "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee", in front of the judges, the studio audience, cameras, my whole life flashed before me and I thought, this is only the beginning of something great.

When I hit center stage, I felt comfort, and peace, not because of the attention, but because I knew this was what I was called to do - to minister through music, just as if I was leading worship in chapel. Even after the judges critiqued me, I didn't feel discouraged because I felt in my heart that someone was blessed on that night

and that's all that mattered.

When it came time to pick the top 10, I was prepared to go back to my room and pack my bags until Kirk Franklin called my name to compete for the tenth spot. Apparently the judges had a hard time choosing between me and two other girls. I was in shock and thankful all at the same time.

After the "sing off" with the other two contestants, I was eliminated from the show, but I have to honestly say I was ok with that. Being on the show taught me so much, or shall I say, God taught me so much.

It is truly a blessing to have had an opportunity like "Sunday Best" be a part of the journey God has for me. This experience only enhanced my relationship with God because it showed me that no matter what men may think or say, God always has the final word.

I am now a senior, I help lead worship at Compass Christian Church Colleyville and Hope Fellowship in South Dallas. After graduation I plan on working on an album surrounding Christian contemporary music. Who knows what God has in store for me but I know He knows for sure, and that is alright with me.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11). ■■

**SHANANDOLAN REYNOLDS** IS A SENIOR AT DCC MAJORING IN WORSHIP ARTS.

# The Piedmont Lectures: An Afterthought

BY MATTHEW MEEKS

You won't find nearly as many expositional resources on the book of James as other, more-researched books in the New Testament."

With these words, Dr. William Baker, founder/editor of the *Stone-Campbell Journal* and director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Hope International University, opened the 12th Annual Piedmont Lecture Series at DCC.

According to Dr. Baker, both scholars and pastors have largely dismissed the theological and ethical importance of James's epistle; instead, they focus upon the Gospels or the Pauline corpus. However, Dr. Baker reminded his listeners that one must consider the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) and since James has been included within the canon of the New Testament, its words must be studied and its precepts applied.

Throughout the course of the lecture series, Dr. Baker not only presented 19 unique and valuable teachings within the Epistle of James, but he also made a persuasive case for the use of the book as an effective evangelistic tool.

Upon hearing Dr. Baker's claim that the book of James is "under-researched," I hesitated and thought: "Is it under-researched because of its simplicity?" Although Dr. Baker does not claim this to be the case, my mind wandered back to my early years as a believer. I could always relate to James: the book was clearly written and easy to understand.

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27, NIV). Yes, in many ways, this "pure religion" proved to be the starting point of my faith.

So why would such a book be neglected within academia? Why would reformer Martin Luther consider this book to be an "epistle of straw" and not worthy to be included within the New Testament? Why does James give people pause?

In his first lecture, Dr. Baker answered my question: "Perhaps James is under-represented because it does not present us with a clear soteriology." After all, the name "Jesus" appears within it only twice, and it is hard to find clear allusions to substitutionary atonement and salvation by grace through faith. In fact, James places so much emphasis upon works (James 2:14-26) that many have questioned whether the epistle runs counter to much of Paul's theology. When rightly understood, though, James and Paul harmonize rather than conflict.

Dr. Baker carefully showed that while Paul highlights the role of faith at conversion, James demonstrates the role of good works as the natural by-product of saving faith. In order to be a true disciple of Christ then, a believer should have both faith and good works.

"One defining characteristic of James is its special emphasis on ethics, including speech ethics," Dr. Baker explains. A person's speech is important, both theologically and practically.

As James writes, with the same tongue one can bless God and curse his brother; such behavior should not typify the Bride of Christ (James 3:9-10). Dr. Baker's reading of works on speech before James's have led him to conclude that no other writing before James was as direct or harsh in dealing with one of the most basic, practical difficulties encountered in everyday living: taming the tongue.

As a pre-evangelistic tool, the book of James offers Christians "a resource for creating a positive view of Christianity and perhaps for forging productive relationships." Dr. Baker noted James's emphasis on healing, support for the poor, and proverbial teaching; these principles can have a far-reaching impact on people of other faiths. He states, these are parallels that resonate with members of other cultures, and they can provide non-believers with an initial understanding of Christian concepts and the Gospel."

Dr. Baker delivered a practical, insightful, and informative lecture at this year's Piedmont Lecture Series. His participation reminds us that the Lord has given the DCC community numerous resources to grow in our Christian faith, and we should not take these opportunities for granted.

What made Dr. Baker's lecture series so effective was this: his objective was not simply to deliver another discourse full of esoteric, theological concepts for future academicians. He demonstrated how practical ministry should impact the academic community.

Now, as a result of his life-long research, Dr. Baker's insight affords us the opportunity to enhance our missionary efforts to spread the Gospel. Using this knowledge, we must go and fulfill the mission of James: to be doers, not just hearers, of the Word (James 1:22). ■■

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# Saving Your Marriage

Knowing the fundamentals of living within a happy home – love, respect, finances, sex, chores, careers, children – isn't enough. Knowing how to bring those fundamentals to life through God's grace and mercy gives every husband and wife a healthy base on which to build years of marital happiness and to weather the storms of challenges that inevitably arise.

BY BARRY D. HAM

Dakota and Martha had been married just a few years when it began. Martha was a Christian while Dakota was not. From the commencement of the marriage, Martha knew that this might pose a problem, but she always felt that, with time, Dakota would come around. At first he just ignored her prayers and her church involvement. However, with time this grew to resentment. He didn't like it that their Sunday mornings were interrupted with Martha always going to church.

At first he just told her how he felt, but with time his tone turned angry and developed into regular verbal abuse. This became such a struggle for Martha that she eventually pulled back from the church until she had separated herself completely.

Dakota liked to go out drinking on the weekends and wanted Martha to go as well. She tried to do this for awhile but found the whole bar scene pretty distasteful and eventually stopped going. This led to more resentment and more verbal abuse from Dakota.

By the time they had been married five years, Dakota



was drinking every day and it was beginning to affect his job performance. Martha attempted to talk with him about her concerns, but this just sent him into a rage, escalating both his drinking and his verbal abuse.

One night, actually early morning, Martha received a call from one of Dakota's friends at the bar asking her to come and get him, as he was passed out. Dutifully she went, with help she got him to the car, and then somehow managed to help him into the house, where he passed out again on the couch.

As she was taking off his clothes, she came across

**“Well-meaning friends encouraged her to get out of there as quickly as possible and divorce the bum. They told her that she didn't have a marriage anymore.”**

**“Dakota could not understand why Martha was still around. Her behavior baffled him. As he watched her deal with him, he became convinced that either she had a dozen screws loose or there was something to this ‘God thing.’”**

a woman's phone number. With the help of a friend, she began to investigate, and the results just about crumbled the remaining bits of her world. She discovered that Dakota had been having an affair with this woman and that she wasn't the first. She also learned that he had been using heroin with her regularly.

Martha was devastated. Her husband had become an unfaithful, drug-abusing, alcoholic. He degraded her constantly, expressed contempt and disdain for her, and on top of all of this, had recently lost his job because he couldn't stay sober long enough to go to work. She was at the end of her rope.

Well-meaning friends encouraged her to get out of there as quickly as possible and divorce the bum. They told her that she didn't have a marriage anymore. She initially agreed, but something inside kept gnawing at her – she had married Dakota for better or worse, for richer or poorer, and in sickness and in health for the rest of their lives. She knew that right now he was worse, poor, and sick. It would have been easy to leave – very easy. But she just knew that it wasn't that simple.

Martha contacted the minister at her old church and poured her broken heart out to him. He listened intently, saying very little. When she had just about emptied his Kleenex box, she said, “I don't think that I have any tears left. I want to be faithful to God and my husband, but I just don't know where to begin. I am spent.”

This wise minister began to lay out for her God's desire and design for restoration in her marriage. Without going into all of the logistics of Martha's daily routines and struggles, I will tell you that she set out on a course to save her marriage when only she was willing to come to the table. She reconnected with the body of believers. She joined an Al-anon group, and she began to set in place boundaries with regard to Dakota.

He didn't come around quickly. Actually, the drinking and verbal abuse became even worse for a while. But Martha continued loving her husband through godly actions, tough

love approaches, and an unwavering faith that her husband could change, with the power of God.

The day finally came when Dakota hit rock bottom. He had spent the night at another woman's house and had become violent. The police were called and Dakota found himself in jail with no one to call except his wife. Martha was there. This was a beginning.

Dakota could not understand why Martha was still around. Her behavior baffled him. As he watched her deal with him, he became convinced that either she had a dozen screws loose or there was something to this “God thing.” He asked her if she could set up a time for him to talk with her minister.

That meeting was the beginning of a changed life. Over time, Dakota gave his life to Jesus, checked himself into an alcohol treatment center, and began individual and marital therapy. Dakota's heart was changed, but it took more time and the love of his wife for the bad habits and mistreatment of her to be healed completely.

As a result, this couple not only salvaged their marriage, they restored it to a level beyond what their original dreams had been. And they spent their fifteenth anniversary speaking and leading a marriage retreat. Because one person remained faithful, and the other was able to see enough to eventually come to the table, God was able to do an amazing restoration.

This is great story in part because there are so many difficult components in it. But it is just one story. There are thousands more out there., stories of seemingly broken irreparable marriages about to be added to the divorce junk heap, pulled from the landfill in time for God to bring healing. I don't care what ugliness you have going on. I don't care how different your personalities may seem. I don't care if the two of you represent the term “oil and water,” every marriage is salvageable – if two people are willing to submit and do the work necessary to achieve true peace and harmony. God is here to tell you that reconciliation and restoration are within your grasp. Come to Him and be surprised.<sup>1</sup> ■

<sup>1</sup> As taken from Chapter Twelve, “Saving Your Marriage” from *God Understands Divorce* by Barry D. Ham, Ph.D. Published with the author's permission. *God Understands Divorce* is due for release on January 17, 2012. The book can be pre-ordered at [www.godunderstandsdivorce.com](http://www.godunderstandsdivorce.com).

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# PLANTING RANCHLAND

BY JASON DUKE

“God, I can’t do that again! I’ll never let another church be shut down that I’m involved with.” Those were the words I spoke to God after being very upset with Him and the situation I found myself in at the church I was serving. I was involved with a multi-site church, and a very tough and painstaking decision was made to close down the campus. A lot of things had not seemed to go our way, but there was an incredible group of people there that I hadn’t felt released from.

**S**o, how do you keep a church going when you have to start from scratch? I found myself feeling very helpless, but also I had this weird feeling that God was going to do something amazing.

In the process of closing down the campus, the leadership informed me of a new church plant through Nexus. It was in McKinney, TX, exactly 2.5 minutes from my house.

“What is this? God, what are you doing?” In a matter of just a few days, I was now going to be on staff at this new church plant called Ranchland Church. The way it all came together was somewhat of a dream situation and the greatest thing was that all those families that I hadn’t felt released from were able to stay together and now be a part of this work. On October 10, 2010, at 10 a.m. we launched. And away we went.

What I found over the next few months is that church planting is no glamorous task. Even though it worked in *Field of Dreams*, there is no “build it and they will come.” Many people are innately searching for that one thing that completes them or makes them whole, but so often they don’t know it’s God they’re looking for.

So, even though people need to be a part of a church, a body of believers, to help them grow closer in their relationship with God, they don’t automatically come. Just

because you’re now there to serve them doesn’t mean they’ll come busting down the doors and pack the building.

Church planting is hard, but it’s one of the most fulfilling tasks I’ve ever been involved in. There is so much outside-the-box thinking that goes on, and that’s not natural for me. Establishing a DNA that you feel God desires of the church takes time. Getting people to be a part of your church is no easy task. Heck, getting people to come to your church is no easy task!

Since we didn’t have a permanent facility and we were planting from scratch, we had to evaluate what the needs of our community were and what our best fit would be. What kind of church was God calling us to be?

A good pastor friend once told me, “In order to know what you’re going to do, you’ve got to know what you won’t do.” I can’t tell you how many times those words have run across the ticker board of my mind. In turn, “In order to know what kind of church you’re going to be, you’ve got to know what kind of church you’re not going to be.” I’ve found it’s so easy to say “yes” to everything, but you’ve got to say “no,” to not lose your focus. For Ranchland, it all comes down to three words: Serve, Engage, Worship. How can everything we do align with one or more of these goals?

On a Sunday morning, October 9, we celebrated our

one-year anniversary in a unique and special way. The events of that day would typify the experiences we’ve had over this past year.

As a church, we have adopted the Lloyd-Owens Site of the McKinney Housing Authority (MHA). These are the “projects” of urban McKinney. We had planned on canceling service at the junior high we normally meet at, cooking breakfast for the residents of MHA, having a mini-worship service, and then doing some much-needed repairs and painting of one of the duplexes. The idea was to go to them and serve, and not just pat ourselves on the back and congratulate one another for making it through one year.

Everything was planned out perfectly, and it was going to be great. Then, God decided He wanted to catch us up on all the rainfall that we hadn’t received in the past six months.

Over this past year, Ranchland has experienced some rather difficult things that could have affected the future of this church for the worse. We’ve taken our hits and fallen down hard, but we’ve stood up stronger than before. For our first anniversary why should I expect anything less?

When the rain threatened to cancel the events of the day, God provided us a four-hour window and held back the rain. We were still able to serve breakfast and conduct a mini-worship service for the residents of MHA. It was great!

Once again, God proved himself faithful. Just when we thought things were going to turn really bad, God provided for us exactly what we needed at that exact moment. Why do I continue to be surprised when God shows me that He’s got it all under control?

I told you at the beginning about my conversation with God, that I would never allow another church to be shut down that I was involved with. Never did I know that I would be forced to hold true to my promise only

six months later. The short story is this: six months after launching Ranchland we found ourselves without a lead pastor and me saying, “Okay, God, if this is what you want, then I’ll do it.”



Why do I continue to be surprised when God shows me that He’s got it all under control?

Quite frankly, I was scared to death at what I felt God was telling me to do. I didn’t want to. I didn’t feel capable leading a church, but if this is what I was supposed to do then so be it.

It’s been six months now, and the church is being the church. We’re not perfect, but we’re sure doing some great things for God. I have the privilege of being called “pastor” by a group of people that God has called me to. I can’t help but continue to be overwhelmed by God’s promise never to leave us, or forsake us. When I thought that God was distant, He’s shown me time and time again that He is there. It may not be the way I want it to be, but who am I to tell Him how to be Him. 🙏

**JASON DUKE**, BS '03 (DALLAS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE), IS THE LEAD PASTOR AT RANCHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH. DUKE IS ALSO THE GREAT-GRANDSON OF FOUNDER VERNON NEWLAND.

## alumni updates

**'11 Ryan and Daimi (Horton) Shirck**, '11, announce the birth of their daughter, Ayla Ridglee Shirck. She was born July 30, 2011, at 2:41p.m. She weighed 7 lbs 6 oz and was 20.5 inches long. (1)

**'10 Tyler Stowe**, '10, and **Camille Arrington**, '11, wed on May 28, 2011. They reside in Carrollton, TX, and attend Bridgeway Church. (2)



1

## faculty news

**Mark Berrier**, Professor of Bible

Berrier moved into semi-retirement with DCC. He continues to teach on a part-time basis. Berrier and his wife, Paula, recently moved to Sherman, TX, where they have taken the ministry of the Central Christian Church.

**Mark Fish**, Professor of Bible

Fish successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation in American history at the University of North Texas. The title of his dissertation is "Mary Jones, Living Symbol: First Lady of the Republic of Texas, Professional Widow, and First President of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Workers."

**James Gorman**, Adjunct Professor of Church History

*The Restoration Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (2011) has an article by Gorman entitled, "The Sacred Writings and Alexander Campbell's Contentions with the KJV."

**Gincy Hartin**, Adjunct Professor of Bible

Hartin was ordained into the ministry on September 4, 2011 at First Christian Church of Chicago, where he currently serves as an associate minister. He was a presenter at the National Freedom in Christ Conference at Abilene Christian University in Abilene, TX, September 16-18.

**Jerran Jackson**, Adjunct Professor of Bible

*The Lookout* published an article by Dr. Jackson entitled "Sabbath Rest Today" in the September 4, 2011 issue.

**Kurt Johanson**, Adjunct Professor of Bible

Johanson will be graduating with a D.Min. from Christian Theological Seminary in May 2012. His dissertation project is entitled "A Homiletic of Courage: Preaching with an Absence of Fear: An Examination of Nine of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Sermons." In spring 2012, a joint project with



2



3

Regent College will see the release of two volumes on preaching, one on G. Campbell Morgan and another on A.J. Gossip. Fall 2012 will see the release of a volume on never-before-published pieces by T. F. Torrance, with a major introduction written by Alister McGrath.

**Bruce Long**, Associate Dean of Distance Learning

Long is in his third year serving on the ABHE Commission on Accreditation. This year, Mr. Long served as the chairman of the Criteria Committee, leading the committee in the creation and revision of criteria and policies to improve the ABHE's application for continued recognition by the U.S. Department of Education. Mr. Long traveled to Ontario in October on an ABHE evaluation team to an ABHE school.

**Michelle Nietert**, Adjunct Professor of Psychology

The Nietert family welcomed a son, Nolan, in July 2010. Pictured is Nolan enjoying some summer fun with his sister, Sophia. (3)

**Danny O'Connell**, Adjunct Professor of Business

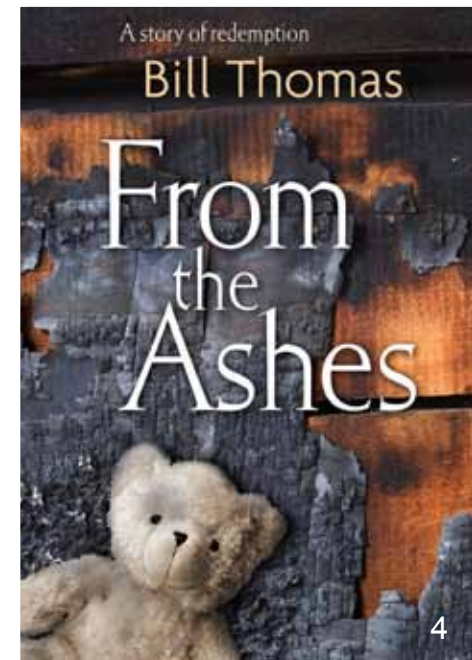
Last year, O'Connell qualified for Top of the Table, an exclusive forum for the world's most successful life-insurance and financial-services professionals. The 3,000 members of Top of the Table are selected from the Million Dollar Round Table, an international organization with members in over 100 countries. Top of the Table members are committed to providing exemplary client service while displaying the highest standards of ethics and professional knowledge. O'Connell was also asked to moderate this year's annual meeting in Palm Springs, California.

**Bill Thomas**, Adjunct Professor of Bible

Thomas has recently published a Christian fiction novella coming out in December with White Feather Press entitled *From the Ashes*. (4)

**Derek Voorhees**, Adjunct Professor of Bible

After a rich ministry experience as the spiritual formation and lifeGroups minister at LifeBridge Christian Church (Longmont, CO), this summer Voorhees joined the faculty of Boise Bible College (Boise, ID) to teach full time in New Testament.



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Let us know about the milestones in your life - weddings, births, retirements, honors, publications, and awards. Send your updates to run in *The Cornerstone Magazine*, delivered to more than 3,500 of your DCC friends and family. Email the editor at [stran@dallas.edu](mailto:stran@dallas.edu) or mail your letters to **The Cornerstone Magazine, Dallas Christian College, 2700 Christian Pkwy., Dallas, TX 75234-7299.**

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## KINGDOM WEEK 2012

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