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The Living Church

Law-theology program planned

By Bill Lohmann
(UPI Feature Writer)

ATLANTA — Emory University is bringing together the pulpit, the boardroom and the courtroom in two innovative graduate programs that link theology with business and law.

The dual degree program are intended as a return to interdisciplinary studies and a move to inject professions often seen as bloodless with a shot of ethics and humanity.

"For most of the post-World War II period, education and professional life witnessed increased specialization and certification requirements," said Frank Alexander, a lawyer and professor who developed Emory's law-and-theology program. "That made it much more difficult for students in law school to probe questions of moral responsibility.

"What we're trying to do is break down the barriers created by specialization. We're not attempting to stop specialization. We're merely trying to make specialization something that can be broad as well as narrow."

The same goes in the business - and - theology program, where Larry Williams, 31, is the first graduate. Both Williams and Gregory Bushway, 27, the first law-theology graduates, completed their work in the semester that ended in December.

"I think there's been a gulf between the disciplines and a lot of misunderstanding on both sides," Williams said. "There's always been a suspicion between business types and the church."

Interestingly, both Williams and Bushway initially plan to enter the ministry.

"When I first entered, I was thinking of moving in the direction of practicing law for a few years," said Bushway, a native of Mayfield, Ky., who will become an associate minister at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Slidell, La. "I clerked last summer at a law firm. It was a great opportunity, but it just wasn't intrinsically meaningful. I missed being with people a lot.

"I like the opportunity the ministry gives me to deal with people directly. But I will use what I learned in law school. I see myself as an advocate, and I don't need to be in a courtroom to use that."

In the long run, Bushway hopes to maintain close ties to the church but also be "in a position where I'll have some kind of impact on public policy that will help the needs of the poor . . . or other people who aren't traditionally represented in the political arena."

Williams, hired as associate pastor at Webster Hills United Methodist Church in Webster Grove, Mo., sees his future in a similar light and hopes eventually to move into an administrative position in social services.

Said Williams, the son of a Methodist missionary who spent part of his childhood in Brazil, "Theology provides me with the 'why' of what I do. Business school gave me the 'how' to implement that 'why.' "

Only four other people are enrolled in the law - theology program and just one is on schedule to complete the business - theology program. However, high enrollment is not the goal of Emory officials. Their real hope lies in the broader interdisciplinary studies where students in business, law and theology can get a taste of other fields without being tied to a joint - degree program.

Born in the early 1980s, the programs at Emory, a United Methodist - related school, are unique since they offer full graduate degrees simultaneously — a Master of Divinity degree from the Candler School of Theology combined with either a Master of Business Administration or Doctor of Jurisprudence — a full - fledged law degree.

Emory was the first university to offer both joint - degree programs, and only a handful of other schools now offer similar programs. The law - theology program takes five years to complete; business - theology four. The cost in dollars also is high, particularly at a private university such as Emory.

With or without dual degrees, however, the program aims to provide day-to-day managerial skills and legal expertise for those heading into the ministry, and a sense of moral responsibility and a deeper understanding of religion for those going into the business or legal professions.

"As lawyers, we're known as counselors of the law, but we know precious little about counseling," Alexander said. "Ministers know about counseling but not much about law."

On the business side, Williams said modern times dictate that preachers know accounting, management and marketing as well as bible verses. In addition, Williams said, "Business people must know how to treat each employee as a person."

The Bible breakfast for the United Baptist Convention featured speakers (L to R) Mmes. Madge Cannon; Daisy Gillard; Ruby M. Puanell; Sandra R. Fergerson; Minnie Mason; Bessie H. Mason; and Isabelle Cole.

Ministers alliance elects officers

The new officers of the Baltimore Ministerial Alliance were installed in services at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church on Sunday, Jan. 4. Outgoing President Randolph Price, pastor of the Zion Hill Baptist Church, was the keynote speaker. Mrs. Mamie Price, outgoing president of the Women's Auxiliary was Mistress of Ceremonies.

Pastor Price, speaking on the subject "The Marks of a Good Soldier," inspired the new officers to "endure hardness" and perform their duties as "good soldiers; not draftees."

In his Challenge Address, Pastor William McCoy, encouraged the electees to continue growing spiritually and prayerfully. As founder and president emeritus, Dr. McCoy also admonished the new officers to use the resources God had given them. The Installation Prayer was offered by Evangelist Eva Sapp, president emeritus of the Women's Auxiliary.

Installed as officers for 1987 - 89 were the Rev. Nathaniel Sapp, president; Rev. George Cockrell, first vice president; Rev. Lindsey Reddick, second vice president; Rev. B. Dundee Holt, secretary; Rev. Billy Westmoreland, treasurer; Rev. Lawrence Banton, chaplain, and the Rev. Martin Jacobs, program director.

The officers for the Women's Auxiliary are Mrs. Blondina Cockrell, president; Rev. Ruth Hamilton, vice president; Mrs. JoAnne Stewart, secretary; Rev. Nell Chandler, treasurer; Mrs. Mamie Price, financial secretary, and Miss Michelle Wilson, care and concern director.

Founded in 1980 to promote spiritual unity among churches in the Baltimore area, the Ministerial Alliance is open to all pastors and ministers. Meetings are held each first and third Saturday, 9:30 a.m. at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 214 South Loudon Street.

For further information, contact President Nathaniel Sapp at 744-1996, or Rev. Dundee Holt, 298-4501.

Metro Church Briefs

Celebration at St. Mark

Celebrate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Thursday, Jan. 15 at 7 p.m. at Saint Mark's United Methodist Church, Garrison Blvd. and Liberty Heights Ave.

Guest speakers will be the Rev. Mark Saunders of New Psalmist Baptist Church and Mary Carter Smith. There will be a musical presentation by the Gospel Choirs and St. Mark's Chancel Choir.

For information call 542-0355 or 542-3895 after 4 p.m. The Rev. Henry Silva, pastor.

Prayer Breakfast

The 4th Annual Prayer Breakfast in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. sponsored by C.U.E.S. (Churches United for Emergency Services) at the Holiday Inn at the Inner Harbor on Saturday, Jan. 10 at 9 a.m.

The theme is "We Shall Never Forget." Guest speaker is Dr. Levi Watkins. Donation is $15.

King Observance

The second Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Observance will be held at Israel Baptist Church, Preston and Chester Streets on Sunday, Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.

A special film on the life of Dr. King will be shown and the featured speaker will be Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr., the well-known cardiologist of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and protege of Dr. King. Admission is free. The Rev. Dr. H. Walden Wilson, II is pastor.

Ghana minister cites problems

By Douglas F. Cannon

DALLAS — The Methodist Church in Ghana doesn't have the means to proclaim the Gospel to all people who want to hear it, the leader of the West African church said recently.

The Rev. Jacob S.A. Stephens, president of the 151-year-old autonomous church, said Ghanan Methodists need Bibles, landroving vehicles, a printing press and other "tools" for spreading the Christian message.

Most of what Ghanians need is not available in their country, Dr. Stephens said. Domestic inflation —running about 50 percent last year—and unfavorable foreign currency exchange rates limit what the church can buy abroad.

"These are among the roadblocks to translating our (evangelistic) vision into reality," Dr. Stephens said.

Dr. Stephens, who earned a doctorate at UM-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, said he is looking for help from United Methodists in the United States. He visited the Reporter's headquarters during December.

Despite its money shortage, the Ghanian church had doubled its membership during the past decade to 500,000, Dr. Stephens said. That makes it the largest Protestant body in the country of 13.8 million.

The Methodist Church of Ghana, founded by British Methodist missionaries, is pursuing a five-year evangelism and development program, Dr. Stephens said.

"We take an integrated program of ministry to the people," he said. It includes evangelism, education, medical care and agricultural instruction.

"You don't have to preach the Gospel and leave people hungry," he said. Instead, becoming a Christian leads to a new way of life in all aspects.

For example, Dr. Stephens said church workers teach farmers about crop rotation for better stewardship of soil and about such agricultural techniques as using animal wastes for fertilizers.

The Methodist Church's elementary and secondary schools attract many people to the Christian faith, he said.

"Many fathers follow their children into the church," Dr. Stephens noted. That's because children must be baptized before they can start school. Classes include instruction in Christian discipleship.

Adult converts, too, must take a one-year catechism class before they can be baptized and join the church, Dr. Stephens said.

Ghanians in general respond to a "simple Gospel message," Dr. Stephens said. As a result, crusades by independent U.S. evangelists as well as by established churches bring many people to Christ.

Dr. Stephens estimates that 65 percent of Ghana's 13.8 million people are Christians. He said most churches in Ghana are growing.

The believers are spread among many denominations, he said. Yet only the Roman Catholics, with 1 million members, number more than the Methodists.

The Methodists are organized into 326 circuits served by 324 ordained pastors, Dr. Stephens said. Each circuit includes around 40 societies (local congregations).

A shortage of ordained ministers limits the church's outreach, Dr. Stephens said.

"Only a minister can serve the Lord's Supper," he noted. "One minister may be in charge of 20 to 40 churches."

The Methodist Church doesn't have the "tools" to train more ordained ministers either, he said. That's because it is allotted only 15 seminary seats a year in Ghana's ecumenically run Trinity College.

Methodists share the 200-student school with Presbyterians, Anglicans and independent churches, he said. Methodists have the largest bloc of seats.

"Every year we receive applications from more than 100 young people with qualifications for seminary training," he said. "But we have no place to send them."

Some 11,000 lay pastors carry out most activities in the local societies, Dr. Stephens said.

Besides Sunday worship, he said, those societies conduct prayer services at 5 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and healing services on Wednesday evenings.

"Most of our people try to attend these services," Dr. Stephens said. "We feel it is very important to start the day with the Lord—before going into the secular world."

Freedom and Social Justice

By Alexander R. Jones

Nineteen Eighty-Six was a tumultuous year for religious freedom. There were suits brought by dissident members of various churches, controversial jury awards, and angry protests by ministers.

But out of all this fiery conflict, there was much good, for in 1986, churches of different denominations started to work together to preserve religious freedom like never before.

For example, the National Task Force on Religious Freedom Legislation and Litigation got into full swing, bringing together churches of various denominations around the country to fight attacks on religious freedom.

The Task Force, chaired by the forceful Rev. Dr. Isaac Brooks, Jr., quickly lashed out against psychiatrists and psychologists giving their opinions on the validity of a person's religious beliefs.

According to Brooks, both "psychology and psychiatry view man as an animal and disclaim the existence of God. They have no business giving their opinions on religious matters."

The Task Force represents some 200,000 churchgoers of different denominations throughout the country.

On the international scene, the World Council on Religious Liberty, an organization founded by the Rev. Dr. Joseph C. Paige, got into full swing.

Paige, who is also Vice President of Shaw Divinity School, the oldest Black divinity school in the country, believes that different denominations must work together to end religious discrimination and intolerance throughout the world.

The Council just completed their first major international conference in Geneva in early December during which religious leaders from various countries discussed religious liberty abuses, and what must be done to stop them.

Nineteen Eighty-six was a year of growth; a year which made the religious freedom movement more powerful and organized than it has ever been in recent history.

Alexander R. Jones is the Director of Minority and Third World Affairs for the Church of Scientology International.

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THE GREATER NEW HOPE TOWERS SENIOR CITIZENS BUILDING
2725 Walbrook Ave. at Ashburton
Sunday, January 11, 1987 at 3:30 p.m.

Guest Speakers:
11 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.
Dr. Silas B. Holmes
St. John's Baptist Church, Kilmarnock, Va.

3:30 p.m.
Clarence Du Burns
Mayor-Designate, Baltimore City

Zelma A. Brown
Vice President of Administration Advance Federal S&L Assn.

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We urge all to come and hear the dean of America's preachers proclaim the word about our prophet of hope, Dr. King
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