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Montreat College recently completed its centennial academic year, which was themed “A Legacy for Tomorrow.”

In keeping with our centennial theme, the previous issue of Reflection was titled “Legacy” and was devoted to celebrating Montreat College’s rich, century-long history. This issue is titled “Tomorrow” and looks at our vision for the future for the college.

Our issue begins with an excerpt from Valencia College President Sandy Shugart’s excellent address, “The Future of Evangelical Higher Education,” which he delivered at Montreat’s Grand Centennial Celebration this past May. You’ll also read about the college’s new mission, vision, and faith statements, which will have a lasting impact on clarifying our identity for the future. And you’ll hear from both of our academic deans about our vision for the future of academics at Montreat College.

We hope that you will be encouraged and excited by the course we are charting for the future.

We are thankful for the good work God is doing at Montreat College. And we ask for your continued prayers and support as we look forward to tomorrow.

With gratitude,

Paul J. Maurer, Ph.D.
The Future of Evangelical Higher Education

BY SANFORD C. SHUGART, PH.D.
Let me begin by expressing what an honor and joy it is to be asked to join you at a signal moment in your history, a time of reflection on legacies past and purposes future even as you experience a rebirth as a Christ-honoring, flourishing college. I realize you have much to do before declaring victory, but I share such confidence in the future God is revealing to you and the enormous strides you have made in just two years under the energetic leadership of Paul Maurer and his vibrant team.

And it is this future to which I want to turn—not only Montreat College’s future, but the future of the larger enterprise of higher education in Christ-centered, independent colleges and universities.

To do this, I want first to make a few observations on the current challenges to independent higher education, and then try to place Christ-centered colleges in that context. All colleges and universities, but especially the independents, are facing unprecedented challenges with which we must contend. But we also have reason to harbor great hope for the unique charisms, the timely gifts of Christ-centered colleges.

First, let us consider the amazing new challenges which have emerged in higher education over the past decade in three areas: society, markets, and the business model.

**Society**
First, there has been a profound shift in the way society views our mission, which has moved from seeing higher education as a public good to seeing it as a private good. Thomas Jefferson’s vision of education as a public good has been all but lost in a world that no longer shares enough in common to make collective investments in shared values. Now the best we can muster as a collective societal value is the creation of a competitive workforce. So the enterprise of education is now subjected to standards that have everything to do with economic impact and efficiency, and little to do with anything else.

On May 5, 2016, Dr. Sanford “Sandy” Shugart, president of Valencia College in Orlando, Florida, delivered the keynote address at Montreat College’s Grand Centennial Celebration. The following is an excerpt from his address.
Market
Meanwhile, the basic characteristics of the market in which we serve have also shifted dramatically. This shift is marked by the reduction in absolute terms of the numbers of people coming through secondary schools to pursue college. Add to this the remarkable success of alternate models of higher education with which independent colleges must compete, those emerging from digital technologies and others that have grown into disruptors in the industry, most notably affordable, quality community colleges. The result of these changes and innovations in the market is a seismic change in the way most of America goes to college. Currently only 15% of Americans attend college in the full traditional model of linear progression, with four years of residence on or near campus, full-time study, and only part-time work.

Business Model
Perhaps most challenging of all is a business model in independent higher education that is no longer sustainable. The high tuition/high aid model was born out of a broken value proposition that said excellence is exclusivity and exclusivity is expensive. By setting a high sticker price and discounting the price to nearly all comers, giving the illusion of having been privileged on the basis of merit, colleges started down a road that had to eventually end badly. The shake up and shake out process has already begun in independent higher education: mergers to achieve scale, closures in the face of overwhelming debt, extraordinary turnover rates in leadership, and demoralized faculty and staff. Add to this grim picture a few additional challenges for Christ-centered colleges. These include denominational divestment, financial exhaustion of Christian families due to the high cost of sending their children to expensive Christian elementary and secondary schools, and a broader cultural revulsion toward even the word “evangelical.”

These are substantial challenges, but this conversation should begin not with challenges and threats. It should start with mission. And this is why I am so hopeful for the future.

Mission
When we gather, how shall we define the mission of Christ-centered higher education? It can be nothing less than the mission of the church: to equip the saints for the ministry of reconciliation. Not just for a job. Not even just for evangelism and ministry. Christ-centered colleges must not be havens, but challenging training and proving grounds for the work of redemption in the
midst of a society with competing challenges and ideas.

The church at its best over the centuries, led by the Holy Spirit, has been remarkably faithful to this mission and also remarkably creative and flexible in meeting this mission. As the times have changed, the challenges shifted,

“Christ-centered colleges must not be havens, but challenging training and proving grounds for the work of redemption in the midst of a society with competing challenges and ideas.”

...the church has been remade—its art and music, its agenda for missions, its organizational forms, its institutions. The model changes and adapts, the mission endures.

What model for evangelical higher education in the 21st century will be able to bear the mission with fidelity and endure the challenges of the times? I believe there are four principles upon which the new model will be built, each of which will summon the best in evangelical higher education as we seek a renaissance in Christian formation.

Be Personal
The first principle is to be personal. The great challenge to all of our institutions is to treat each person we serve as a person, not a number. To confront and undermine our mindless procedures, habits, policies, and tools in order to render a unique response to the unique human being before us. And what could be more like our Savior? If the mission is merely the transmission of information, acquisition of skill, or credentialing to some occupation, then let the automation begin—and cut the cost by 80% in the process. But if the mission is to equip a new generation of saints to transform the lives and the cultures they encounter, then the process is personal from beginning to end. Colleges that flourish in the Christian mission will have to reexamine all of their practices with an eye to personhood.

Be Authentic
Second, the model must be authentic. If you tell a person often and authoritatively that his real value in the world is contained in the magnetic strip on the back of a card, he will eventually believe you and act that way. And if this sin is compounded by the hypocrisy of couching the enterprise in claims to a noble mission, the alienation is complete—you will have students, alumni, and supporters who will disengage and even manipulate you in return. The challenge is that our evangelical colleges are part of an industry with standards and norms that...
are largely modeled on the way the world does business. So the question that must be constantly asked of the organization, and any new models it may develop, is how it is itself genuinely an agent of its Christ-centered mission.

Be Courageous
Third, the new model must be courageous. By this I mean fearless in engagement with the world, with emerging culture, with those who disagree with us—sometimes in unpleasant ways. To be engaged requires the courage to practice the very best scholarship, to tolerate others attempting to practice it, and to be willing to be criticized for it, both by the world and by our brothers and sisters. Often, parents and families come to a Christian college because they are seeking a protective enclave, a place to escape the very culture we want to engage and transform. This struggle is often felt keenly by our faculty, who come to the work courageously until they are called down because of a parental complaint or a trustee who thinks he is protecting the purity of the institution. The flight of great faculty from evangelical colleges is a stain on our mission. Surely we can entertain some uncomfortable ideas from time to time in order to challenge the culture we want to see reconciled to the God of all truth and mercy.

Be Transformational
Finally, the new model must be transformational, that is, we will be concerned first with long-term impact in the world, not just short-term financial or other success. Most of American higher education has driven down a path of lifestyle consumerism that would be just embarrassing if it weren’t so outrageous, competing for students on the promise of the latest lifestyle enhancements we can offer them in the near term and the riches that may be theirs in the long term. And Christian colleges have not been immune to this peculiar disease.

Can a model based on these four principles survive the challenges described earlier?

I think the answer is yes, if only the Christian community will re-engage our colleges as missions and encourage, support, and invest in them. There are nearly 5,000 colleges and universities of one kind or another in America, and so it is essential for evangelical higher education to carve out a unique niche. Wouldn’t it be a wonder of God if that niche was a college that lived out its Christian witness by making a radical commitment to personhood, by being authentic in its service to those it is called to serve, by having deep courage to engage challenging ideas and to tolerate the inevitable noise such courage will generate, and by embracing a mission to transform its students and its world for Christ? A century from now, such faithfulness will be worth celebration.
Earlier this year, the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) held its 40th Anniversary Gala in Washington, D.C. The keynote speaker for the event was best-selling author, New York Times columnist, and frequent NPR panelist David Brooks. As Brooks acknowledged in the opening of his speech, he was an unlikely candidate to be addressing such an audience. He grew up in a left-wing Jewish home in New York City’s Greenwich Village, and he has spent most of his life immersed in secular morality. “I think the most spiritual situation I would go into was Whole Foods,” Brooks quipped.

However, while writing his most recent book, The Road to Character, Brooks’ worldview began to change. “Writing the book...turned out to be more transformational than I could have imagined. There are moments of writing that book where I was expanding my knowledge of theology and God’s work. I was coming to new understandings of history.” And in his CCCU address, he said to an audience made up primarily of Christian college presidents and administrators:

“[Christian colleges] are the avant-garde of 21st century culture. You have what everybody else is desperate to have: a way of talking about and educating the human person in a way that integrates...”
faith, emotion, and intellect. You have a recipe to nurture human beings who have a devoted heart, a courageous mind, and a purposeful soul. Almost no other set of institutions in American society has that, and everyone wants it. From my point of view, you’re ahead of everybody else and have the potential to influence American culture in a way that could be magnificent.”

The trend in American higher education for more than a century has been a move away from the Christian liberal arts. All but one of the Ivy League schools were founded in the Christian liberal arts tradition, but they—and countless other colleges and universities—have slowly abandoned this tradition in favor of a secular or vocational focus. And the pressures of recent decades which Sandy Shugart outlined in his speech [on page 6 of Reflection] have only accelerated the move away from the Christian liberal arts. And yet, as David Brooks points out, Christian colleges have something uniquely valuable and vital to offer to our culture, something that all people—both Christian and secular—need and desire: “a way of talking about and educating the human person in a way that integrates faith, emotion, and intellect.”

Montreat College’s leadership agrees with Brooks’ assessment. We believe deeply in the unique value of the Christ-centered liberal arts and its ability to educate the whole person. It is who we are as a college and who we have been throughout our history. And so, as we plan for the college’s future, it is critical that we periodically review our identity as expressed in the college’s core documents in order to reaffirm our commitment to delivering a Christ-centered liberal arts education. We began such a review in the fall of 2014, with an eye towards three important principles: clarity, integrity, and unity.

CLARITY
As we enter our second century as a Christ-centered college, we believe it is important to clearly convey who we are as an institution to both our internal and external audiences. For our faculty, staff, and administration, clarity gives us focus and direction. For prospective students and their parents, clarity helps us communicate to them exactly who we are and, to echo David Brooks, why the kind of education we offer is so valuable.

INTEGRITY
Montreat College offers a distinctive promise to our students and their parents:
to deliver an independent, Christ-centered, liberal arts education through intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career. Making and fulfilling this promise is central to who we are. And our ability to authentically deliver on this promise is essential to maintaining our institutional integrity with our students and parents, and with the wider marketplace.

UNITY
Our ability to deliver our promise is dependent on our personnel’s willingness to embrace the college’s identity. Montreat College educates students not only through our faculty, but all employees, who each serve as a front-line educator. And so the unity of all of our employees in support and affirmation of our identity is essential to our success as an institution.

With these three principles in mind, the Board of Trustees appointed a task force of trustees, faculty, and staff to review the college’s core documents in October of 2014. After more than a year of work, the task force brought recommendations to the Board of Trustees in January of 2016, who approved a new Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Statement of Faith, and Community Life Covenant in draft form. The college then moved into a season of listening to receive feedback from employees and alumni. Thirteen listening sessions—totaling more than 30 hours—were held in Montreat, Black Mountain, Asheville, and Charlotte. After incorporating revisions based on the feedback from the listening sessions, the board unanimously approved a Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Statement of Faith at its May 2016 meeting. The board asked the task force to continue its work on the Community Life Covenant, which will be presented to the board for final approval at its October 2016 meeting.

The work the college has done on these documents has gone a long way towards clarifying our identity as a Christ-Centered liberal arts institution. As such, we set the stage for the future, one in which Montreat College can, to paraphrase David Brooks, influence culture in a magnificent way.
Following the May 2016 Board of Trustees meeting, the college’s new mission, vision, and faith statements were announced in a public letter from Board Chair William Haynes and posted to the college’s website. We are pleased to share them with you here:

**MISSION STATEMENT**
Montreat College is an independent, Christ-centered, liberal arts institution that educates students through intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career, all to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

**VISION STATEMENT**
Montreat College seeks to be a leader in Christ-centered higher education regionally, nationally, and globally.

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**PREAMBLE**
The trustees and employees of Montreat College constitute an academic community of caring believers committed to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Students are welcomed to this Christian community regardless of belief. The trustees and employees commit themselves to the following faith statement drawn from the college’s Reformed tradition:

1. We believe in one sovereign God, eternally existing in three persons: God the Father; His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior; and the Holy Spirit, the giver of life. (Daniel 4:25, 35; Mark 12:29; John 1:1, 14, 18; 14:28; 15:26; 16:28; Romans 9:15-23; Revelation 4:11)

2. We believe the Bible, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the infallible Word of God, completely inspired and authoritative, and is to govern Christians in every aspect of life and conduct. (I Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21)

3. We believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, whom the Father sent into the world to atone for the sin of humanity. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and lived a life without sin. He was crucified and rose victoriously from the dead. Through His gift of grace, we as believers are redeemed for all eternity and are reconciled to the Heavenly Father. (Luke 1:26-37; 2:6, 7; John 3:16; Romans 3:21, 23; Romans 5:12-15; I John 3:8)
4. We believe the Holy Spirit is a free gift to believers from the Father and the Son to live within us and to empower us to love and obey the Lord and His Word. (John 14:15-17; John 16:5-15; Ephesians 1:13-14)

5. We believe the Triune God is the sole Creator and Sustainer of the universe. God created all things and declared all He created to be good. After creating Adam and Eve in His own image, in a state of original righteousness, and distinct from all other living creatures, the Lord gave to all humanity the responsibility of caring for His world. (Genesis 1-2; John 1:1-18)

6. We believe God’s good and perfect creation became tainted in every aspect by sin from humanity’s rebellion against God. We acknowledge the existence, evil power, and influence of Satan. (Genesis 3; Ephesians 6:12)

7. We believe the Church is all who believe in and confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and receive God’s grace. We are called by God to be His one body of believers, gathered in communities. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Church’s call is to declare His Good News of salvation to the fallen and lost world, to make disciples, and to serve all who are wounded, broken, and neglected. (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18; Romans 10:9-10; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 2:8-9; 4)

8. We believe all those who profess Jesus as Savior and Lord are to follow in His Way and are to live as those who magnify and glorify Him, the Head of His Church. As forgiven followers, we are called to live holy and blameless lives through the power of the Holy Spirit until that time when Jesus Christ shall return in all His glory. (I Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 4:22-24; Hebrews 10:14; I John 3:4-9; 4:4; 5:1-5)
As Montreat College begins its second century, one of the keys to the college’s future will be the strength of its academic programs. And so we sat down with Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College Greg Kerr and Vice President and Dean for Adult and Graduate Studies Susan DeWoody to talk about their vision for the future of Montreat College academics.
Greg Kerr, Ph.D.
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College

What is your vision for the future of Montreat College academics?

Greg Kerr: First, everything we do centers around our Christian mission. As educators, we believe that the most important thing to develop is that God is at the center of the universe, and then we structure our whole educational program with that understanding. That knowledge affects everything we do. It affects how we understand mathematics, how we understand living things, how we understand psychology and interpersonal relationships, how we should engage in business and the ethics of cybersecurity, why we should care about health care. There’s a framework there that comes from our Christian foundation. That’s why I came to Montreat. That’s the central point of my educational philosophy. Within that framework, my vision would include each of our academic programs having a reputation for excellence in the community, the region, and beyond. That means that we’ll be investing in our academic programs, investing not just in facilities, but in the faculty, making sure that what we do, we do well. What does that mean in terms of the specifics and programs? It means we’re going to have the best technology available. We’ll continue to have faculty who are very current in their fields. We’ll continue to increase the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees in their fields, faculty with professional experience. We’ll have programs that are of interest to both students and to prospective employers.

How did your experience as a student shape your educational philosophy?

Greg Kerr: So I started out at Cornell University, an Ivy League school, for my undergraduate studies. I found that many Cornell students were there to get ahead. I was in a class with pre-med majors and I remember one student standing up and telling the professor, “I have a resource people need, but I’m not telling anyone where it is because this is a cut-throat school and I need to do everything I can to get ahead.” And I knew right then that I didn’t want anything to do with that model of education. Montreat College is so opposite of that. If you want to talk about philosophy of education, I’m in favor of inclusive excellence. I want our faculty to push for excellence in the classroom and do it in a way...
that can bring everybody up to that standard. If students are willing to work, if students have the drive to get there, we will do everything we can to help them achieve that excellence. I call that inclusive excellence.

**Are there any programs in particular that you feel will be models for the future of the college?**

**Greg Kerr:** I think the programs that are going to be in the future of the college will be ones that have strong ties to real-world applications: programs that give students immersion in their chosen discipline, programs that give them internship experience and practicum experience. Many of our majors already include internships, practicums, and field experiences, and our future programs are going to need to have these elements included in them. When I think of our graduates, I think of both their first destination after they graduate and then their long-term career. So we need to focus on giving students skills and competencies that will help them get in the door, but our liberal arts core also gives them a breadth of understanding, the breath of skills that will allow them to be adaptable in a changing marketplace, because people rarely end up in the field they choose to pursue as college freshmen.

**Susan DeWoody, M.S.**

Vice President and Dean for Adult and Graduate Studies

**What is your vision for the future of academics in Montreat College’s School of Adult and Graduate Studies?**

**Susan DeWoody:** Our vision for the School of Adult and Graduate Studies is to strengthen and expand our academic offerings, thereby reaching a wider audience. As with our traditional student market, we offer something unique to the marketplace, namely an education that combines intellectual strength, spiritual formation, and career enhancement. We currently serve students in Asheville, Charlotte, Morganton, and online. While we’ll initially focus on these locations and an online delivery mode, we’ll remain open to expanding our physical locations if this seems wise. As we have for over 20 years, Montreat College will continue to offer convenient and flexible programs that allow adults to finish their
undergraduate degree or attain a master’s degree. Our students pursue their educational goals in a format that recognizes the work and family demands on them—and most importantly, engages them with a Christ-centered framework. Another differentiator for the future of Montreat College’s adult programs is the decision to embrace the liberal arts core which is the foundation of the traditional program. In adult education, people often think that the liberal arts cannot be combined with professional training programs. We disagree. We believe that combining the two provides a better, and more practical education for our students. Statistics show that adults change careers more frequently than they used to, so we want to prepare our graduates to be better communicators and critical thinkers who apply reason and adaptability in the ever-changing world we live in.

What is your vision for the future of graduate programs?

Susan DeWoody: When you look across the current landscape of higher education, it’s clear that graduate programs are really growing. We are seeing a trend in students coming to our undergraduate programs as a means to continue into a graduate program. We will increasingly provide ways to engage students in graduate-level thinking to help prepare them for their call. We have begun the process of retooling our graduate programs in business, which include both our MBA and MSML (Master’s in Management & Leadership). We will also add cybersecurity to our graduate offerings, which will address a rapidly growing marketplace need. Beyond these particulars, we will continue to explore additional programs that would meet demands in the market.

How important is online education to your vision for the future of Adult and Graduate Studies?

Susan DeWoody: I believe we are still in the early stages of the online revolution. As such, online education is central to our future. Adult students have jobs, children, church life—a million things going on—so the flexibility that online classes can offer is incredibly valuable. Even for students who don’t want to take all of their classes online, we will remain flexible for our students and give them options for a hybrid approach, combining both seated and online classes. Every class that we offer is going to be increasingly impacted by the online world through the use of online platforms like Moodle, which we use in all of our classes, both seated and online. This means we will deploy more resources to our students, create more opportunities to connect and build community, and take discussion to the next level in online discussion boards, even if students are in a seated class. Online education will increase access to higher education and help our students to be more engaged in all of our programs.
40 Years in the Wilderness

40 Years of Montreat College’s Discovery Wilderness Expedition

by Dr. Brad Daniel
Chair, Outdoor Education Department
2016 marks the 40th anniversary of Montreat College’s Discovery Wilderness Program. Since 1976, Discovery has conducted annual 21-day expeditions in the backcountry of Western North Carolina. Students participate in backpacking, orienteering, whitewater and flatwater canoeing, rock climbing, a solo experience, a group expedition without instructors, and a final challenge, often in the form of a 14-mile run/walk down the highest peak east of the Mississippi River.

These components challenge participants mentally, physically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially. Over the 40 years of the program, some challenges, such as dealing with pack weight and fears (of heights, the dark, etc.), have remained consistent. Other challenges have changed with the times. Today, for example, participants often struggle with being disconnected from Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media, since cell phones are not allowed on the trip. Discovery values face-to-face interaction as a means for understanding how to live in community, resolve conflict, and communicate authentically. Students are empowered to make their own choices and manage the consequences of those decisions.

Discovery is one of the oldest Christian wilderness programs in North America. Jake Wetzel, a veteran wilderness instructor from the High Roads Wilderness Program at Wheaton College, created the program in mid 70s and launched the first Discovery expedition in 1976. It was designed to be a Christian-based, Outward Bound-type expedition. Wetzel created an experience that
gave students the opportunity to grapple with real, challenging, and value-forming situations. In a 1982 promotional brochure, Wetzel described the philosophy of the program:

"Through challenging experiences, students are encouraged to make self-discoveries that are basic to self-esteem, self-confidence and an insight into the qualities of their own being. Individual growth is attempted by impelling willing participants to overcome a series of unique problem-solving tasks in a natural environment. Uniquely, the wilderness training program emphasizes stress-directed involvement which demands that the individual excel beyond which they believed they were capable. By accepting these challenges, it is believed the participant is led to a re-evaluation of the potential of himself and others. Students do not face these challenging activities alone, but rather in a small group of eight to 10 people. The nature of this group life, because of the activities that the group confronts, brings new discoveries in the value of people, relationships, and God. The group also serves as a mirror to give each member a self-image of his/her own strengths and weaknesses and the impact that he/she makes. Discovery has become an opportunity for personal exploration, for greater sensitivity to self, others, and the wilderness."

Discovery provides opportunities for solitude, adventure, cooperation, teamwork, character building, and interacting with God’s creation. Daily life is reduced to the basics of eating, sleeping, and working together to travel safely to the next destination. A typical day begins with breakfast followed by a devotion and reflection time.
Participants might choose to pray, sing, meditate, write in their journals, or simply contemplate the day. The devotion usually centers on a theme connected to the day’s activity. For example, if rock climbing is scheduled for that day, the devotion might center on overcoming fear or the importance of trust – trusting God, trusting others, and trusting self.

The central theme of Discovery and the underlying goal behind each activity is growth and maturity in Jesus Christ. The program emphasizes leading safely, learning by doing, embracing challenge, encouraging problem-solving and decision-making, reflecting on the experience, cooperating and working together while living in community, and respecting God’s creation.

Is Discovery effective? In my research, I have found that the lessons learned on Discovery continue to be applied in other contexts throughout life because the expedition served as a reference point, a reservoir of life lessons, and/or a life metaphor. Discovery also refined and changed the way that participants viewed themselves, other group members, and their circumstances. This was attributed to challenging situations whereby participants had to contend with stress, dissonance, uncertainty, and new experiences. Finally, Discovery encouraged spiritual growth by providing opportunities for participants to contemplate and interact with God, to face and overcome challenges related to faith, and to contemplate biblical teaching while immersed in an inspirational wilderness setting.

For 40 years, students and staff have been stretched, challenged, and transformed by the Discovery Wilderness Program. No two people experience Discovery in exactly the same way, for God meets each person according to his will and his or her needs. Participants learn, grow, and see life from a different perspective. That, after all, is why it is called Discovery. Here’s to the next 40 years in the wilderness! ♫
Order a Limited Edition Centennial Book!

In honor of the centennial year, Montreat College released a full-color, limited edition coffee table book that captures the institution’s rich, 100-year history.

Over 500 photos from the Montreat College Archives

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To order, visit bookstore.montreat.edu or call 828.669.8012 ext. 3603.
On October 29, 2015, The Economist released its first-ever rankings of American colleges and universities, titled “The Value of University.” Montreat College ranked an impressive 5th among the 48 North Carolina-based schools included, and 9th among the 103 schools included from the Council of Christian Colleges & Universities. The Economist’s rankings are unique in that they reflect a comprehensive attempt to assess the financial impact of each school’s education on its graduates. According to its website, “The Economist’s first-ever college rankings are based on a simple, if debatable, premise: the economic value of a university is equal to the gap between how much money its students subsequently earn, and how much they might have made had they studied elsewhere.” Using a comprehensive statistical formula, schools are ranked according to how much each school adds to (or subtracts from) its graduates earning potential, relative to other colleges and universities. According to The Economist’s criteria, Montreat graduates earn, on average, $4,231 more per year than they would if they had attended another college or university.

On January 15, 2016, Montreat College announced that it had received a $50,000 grant from The Cannon Foundation towards the ongoing renovation of Anderson Hall. The grant helped make possible the $100,000 repair, modernization, and refurbishment of the Anderson Hall elevator, which was completed in July. “We are grateful to The Cannon Foundation for their generous grant toward this project,” said Montreat College Vice President for Advancement Alex Miller. “Keeping our student housing facilities up-to-date is a top financial priority for the college, and these kinds of grants make it possible for us to do so.”
Montreat College reached the semifinals of North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities’ 5th annual Ethics Bowl, held February 5 and 6, 2016, on Meredith College’s campus. Montreat was defeated in the semifinal round by eventual winner Barton College. Twenty-two colleges and universities from throughout North Carolina participated in the event, including Wake Forest University, High Point University, and Campbell University. Montreat College’s team included students Joseph Madsen, Elizabeth Garner, Molly-Kate Garner, and Coach Mark Wells, a professor in the college’s Bible and Religion department. “I could not be more proud of the team,” said Dr. Wells. “We were certainly one of the smallest colleges at the competition, but we really showed how great Montreat College is at this competition, earning the respect of every team we faced.”

On February 26, 2016, Montreat College announced that Ben Long’s fresco The Return of the Prodigal, located in Montreat College’s Chapel of the Prodigal, has been named one of 70 stops on the Blue Ridge Heritage Trail. A sign commemorating the honor has been installed in front of the Black Mountain/Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce Visitor’s Center in Black Mountain. Visitors with a smartphone can scan the QR code on the sign to access information about each heritage site—in this case, the fresco. Long’s fresco at Montreat’s Chapel of the Prodigal is site #38 on the Blue Ridge Heritage Trail. Other stops on the trail include architectural examples such as the Biltmore Estate and a 16th century Native American village in Morganton; geographical sites such as Grandfather Mountain, Linville Gorge, and Looking Glass Rock; and annual events celebrating cultural heritage, including the drama “Unto These Hills” in Cherokee and the “Shindig on the Green” concert series in Asheville.

On April 5 and 6, 2016, Montreat College hosted VeggieTales Creator Phil Vischer as its 2016 Calvin Thielman Lecture Series speaker. Nearly 50 million VeggieTales videos have been purchased worldwide, and Vischer’s faith-filled stories can be found in one-third of all American homes with young children. Although his original company, Big Idea Productions, collapsed in bankruptcy in 2003,
Vischer continues his creative involvement with VeggieTales through its current owner. He actively develops new ways to integrate faith and storytelling through Jellyfish Labs. “Many of our students grew up watching VeggieTales, and Phil’s personal story, including the rise and fall of his film empire, is both educational and inspirational,” says David Taylor, Montreat College dean of spiritual formation.

6Montreat College held its 4th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium on April 15, 2016, with most of the college’s 19 undergraduate majors represented. The poster session was held in the L. Nelson Bell Library. During the poster session, students stand along-side easel-mounted posters which detail their particular research project. Guests were able to go from poster to poster and ask questions about the projects. “This event is an excellent opportunity for our students to participate in the kind of research that many of them will continue in grad school,” says Montreat College English Professor Dr. Rich Gray, faculty coordinator for the event. “It is one of the highlights of our academic year.”

7Montreat College hosted the Conference on Christianity & Literature’s annual Southeast conference on April 28 to 30, 2016. This year’s conference was titled “The Walker Percy Centennial: Pilgrimage in
Literature," in honor of the 100th anniversary of Percy’s birth. The conference included over 50 papers, presentations, and panels, featuring scholars from over 40 prominent colleges and universities. The keynote speakers were Dr. Farrell O’Gorman, professor of English at Belmont Abbey College and author of Peculiar Crossroads: Flannery O’Connor, Walker Percy, and Catholic Vision in Postwar Southern Fiction, and Dr. Jim Wildeman, former professor of English at Covenant College and chair of the Southeast chapter of the Conference on Christianity & Literature.

Montreat College celebrated the culmination of its Centennial Year with a special Centennial Pops Concert on May 1, 2016, in Montreat’s Anderson Auditorium. The concert’s theme was “Music through the Decades” and featured music composed throughout the college’s 100-year history, including compositions by everyone from Johann Strauss to Dave Brubeck to Coldplay, as well as a “Movie Spectacular” featuring music from the James Bond movies, Schindler’s List, and Star Wars. The Centennial Pops Concert featured performances by the Montreat College Choir, the Montreat Chamber Orchestra, and the college’s contemporary ensemble, The Movement. The concert was preceded by an Ice Cream Social in Howerton Dining Hall.

On May 5, 2016, Montreat College hosted a Grand Centennial Celebration dinner at the Billy Graham Evangelical Training Center at The Cove in Asheville, N.C. The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Sanford “Sandy” Shugart, president of Valencia College in greater Orlando, Florida, the largest community college in the United States. Dr. Shugart’s keynote address was titled, “The Future of Evangelical Education,” addressing the critical role of Christ-centered education in the next 100 years (see page 6 for an excerpt from Dr. Shugart’s address). Proceeds from the event went towards Montreat College’s Keystone Scholarship fund, which provides vital financial assistance to over 450 Montreat students. Over $260,000 was given to the college for student scholarships by generous dinner sponsors.
Montreat College celebrated Spring Commencement on May 14, 2016, in Montreat’s Anderson Auditorium. The college welcomed Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary President Dennis P. Hollinger as the keynote speaker for Commencement. Montreat College awarded diplomas to 132 students who had completed undergraduate, graduate, and associate degrees. Tara Johnson, School of Adult and Graduate Studies graduate, and Mary Willis Bertram Fife, School of Arts and Sciences graduate, gave addresses to their class. Honorary doctorate were conferred on Commencement Speaker Dennis Hollinger and Andrew Horner, a successful entrepreneur who supports ministries and missionaries in 60 nations around the world. The college also honored Jay Guffey ’89 and Marsha Barnes ’13 with the Distinguished Alumni Service Award.

On July 14, 2016, Montreat College announced the hiring of Dr. Lisa Toland to be associate professor of history and director of the Honors Program. Dr. Toland came to Montreat from Indiana Wesleyan University, where she was associate professor of humanities and history and the associate director of the John Wesley Honors College. “We are excited to welcome Dr. Toland to Montreat College,” said Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the College Greg Kerr. “She comes to us with the highest of academic reputations, and her experience with Indiana Wesleyan’s honors college will be an invaluable asset as we continue to build and improve our own honors program at Montreat.” Dr. Toland received her D.Phil. in Early Modern British History and her M.St. in Early Modern British History from the University of Oxford in England, her M.A. in European History from Miami University of Ohio, and her B.A. in History and English Literature from Indiana Wesleyan University.
Mary Frances Luke Whitmer ’56
Mary was a teacher at a Presbyterian boarding school in Glade Valley, N.C., then was director of Christian education at the First Presbyterian Church in Danville, V.A. where she met her husband, William Whitmer. They moved from Danville, V.A., to Raleigh, N.C., to Potomac, M.D., to Kalamazoo, M.I., and finally to Alabama in 1976, where they have lived for the past 40 years. Mary and Bill have two sons, Bill and John, and three granddaughters. Mary went back to school at Samford University when her boys were in college and got her nursing degree. She was an OB/GYN nurse at Brookwood Hospital for six years. Mary and Bill are both retired.

Jane Howard ’62
In September, Jane began an administrative leadership position with Bible Study Fellowship, and a position with Young Life as Volunteer Prayer Coordinator for Park City, U.T. She is currently training for certification in prayer ministry with Wellspring Ministries in Anchorage, A.K. She loves what God is doing and how He cares for all.

Gerry McDade ’70
After Montreat, Gerry went on to finish at a four-year school, then graduate school, and had a career with the North Carolina Judicial Department, mostly working as a counselor with the juvenile court. He is retired and lives near Blowing Rock, N.C. He enjoys travel and outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, and kayaking.

Kenny Chow ’71
Kenny is retired after working in banking for over 35 years in the Bay Area of California. He currently lives in Sparks, N.V., and opened a small business there a year-and-a-half ago.

Mark Emblidge ’73
Mark and his wife, Robbie, have lived in Richmond, V.A., since 1987, where they raised their daughters Catherine and Caroline. They became “empty nesters” last fall when their youngest daughter went off to college. Mark works on education public policy issues (Pre-K – post secondary) with governors and state legislators through the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta. Most of this work is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He also has a faculty appointment at the University of Virginia, where he received his master’s and Ph.D. He attended a meeting in Asheville several years ago and could not believe what a wonderful place it has become.
He occasionally gets together with John Furman ’73 who lives with his wife, Martha, in the Roanoke, V.A., area.

Jill (Barnes) Mercado ’76
Jill lives in Louisville, K.Y., and is in business for herself at Louisville Rock Shop, which just opened this year. She has four children, three of whom live in K.Y. near Jill with their families. Jill is married to Wito Mercado; they were in high school together and recently reconnected. Jill treasures her days at Montreat.

Rev. Dr. Stephen “Steve” Hundley ’76
Steve is the pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church, Great Falls, M.T., where he lives with his wife, Elaine. He is presently finishing up a book titled Tales of the Holler and starting on another titled Backwoods Saints. Elaine is the director of “Peace Place,” a nonprofit, free daycare for children with special needs. Their daughter, Bethany, and her husband, Eric, live in Spokane, W.A. Bethany is expecting their first grandchild on Labor Day (no pun intended). Their son, Matthew, lives in Billings, M.T. Steve and Elaine enjoy camping, rafting, fly fishing, and exploring the beautiful state of Montana. Their door is always open, and they would love to take any visitors rafting, fly fishing, or exploring.

Muriel L. Pippin ’76
Muriel lives Miami, F.L., where she has been a substitute teacher at Linda Lentin PreK-8 center for the past 12 years. She still loves gardening and baking. She wishes she could attend her 40th anniversary Homecoming at Montreat, but will probably not be able to make it. But she sends God’s blessings to all her classmates.

Kristi L. Servies ’76
Kristi’s son, J. Riley Rigg, married Jennamari Dumproff Dec 27th, 2014, and gave Kristi her first grandchild, Audrey Cheryl, September 29, 2015. Her daughter, Sekuria E. Rigg, married Ryan Seto on October 31, 2015. They have taken the last name Fox.

Darwin Glassford ’78
Darwin currently lives in Grand Rapids, M.I., and serves as director of online learning for Kuyper College and executive pastor for Harderwyk Ministries.

Abby Bates ’78
Abby continues to love her job as floater/teacher at the child care center of First Presbyterian Church, Asheville, where she has been for three years and four months. She is also in the same apartment in South Asheville where she has been for almost eleven years.

Carole Hoffman ’79
After 22 years in marketing and public relations for Mission Health in Asheville, Carole is now writing independently for a number of national and regional magazines and the web. In addition, she coordinates the Lincoln County Apple Festival, an annual event drawing more
than 80,000 visitors. She and her husband of five years, Billy, have four children and two grandchildren between them (and one on the way), and they belong to the First Methodist Church of Lincolnton where Carole plays handbells.

**Kerrie (Morgan) Scruggs ’79**
Kerrie lives in Maynardville, T.N., and works at Paulette Elementary as a 1st grade teacher. She has been married for almost 35 years to her husband, Steven, and they have four sons, two daughters-in-law, and a precious six-month-old grandson. Kerrie enjoys reading, baking, and hiking the beautiful Great Smoky Mountains.

**William Haynes ’85**
William was accepted into the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Busines program, a program to help entrepreneurs create jobs and economic opportunity by providing access to education, capital, and business support services. The three-month mini-MBA program includes online classes and two full weeks at Babson College. The curriculum was designed by Babson’s Business Department, and the Goldman Sachs Foundation covers all expenses and travel.

**Tom McMurtry ’92 and Kim (White) McMurtry ’92**
Kim just completed a Ph.D. in computing technology in education from Nova Southeastern University; the subject of her dissertation was online teaching effectiveness, and she teaches online in her spare time. Tom has completed coursework for a Ph.D. in information systems with a concentration in information security; his current research focuses on social media security, and he plans to graduate from Nova Southeastern University in 2017. Tom and Kim worked in higher education for more than 20 years, most recently at Averett University in Danville, V.A., where Tom served as chief information officer and Kim served as instructional technologist. In 2014, Tom and Kim opened a gift shop in Black Mountain, N.C., called Europa. Inspired by their European travels, they are importing Polish pottery, German Christmas ornaments, French soaps, Scottish tartan accessories, Italian glass, and more. Be sure to stop by and say hello next Homecoming!

**Tracey Morrison ’94**
Tracey moved back to her hometown of Charlotte in 2007. She currently volunteers at the Billy Graham Library and works at the NASCAR Hall of Fame, a job that she loves. She gets to serve great people from around the world in both places. She also enjoys volunteering at the annual Wells Fargo Golf Championship each May, living with her cat Lido, and enjoying the life that God has given her.

**Mark Baker-Wright ’96**
Mark now works at Azusa Pacific University, a Christian college in Azusa, C.A., as the special assistant to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
Ronald (Rick) Turner ’98
Rick lives in Matthews, N.C., with his wife of 27 years, Debbie. He is celebrating 15 years with Jones and Frank Corp. as a retail sales manager. His son, Austin Turner, attended Montreat for two years in 2012-2014 and recently married Becca (Bowland) Turner on June 11. His son, Hayden, is a junior at Hickory Grove Christian School.

Katelyn Octavia Pollet Chapman ’08
Katelyn and her husband, Reynolds, have been involved in different types of community development ministries over the past seven years. These ministries pursue racial and socioeconomic reconciliation through church-based neighborhood ministry in often neglected parts of our cities. They recently relocated to a new neighborhood in Durham, N.C., and have been partnering with neighbors and churches to begin to mobilize deeper Christian community throughout the neighborhood and to explore developing new initiatives to help meet some of the needs of their neighbors. They appreciate prayers as they partner with Jesus in getting to know His heart and experience, His hands and feet, through giving and receiving love in tangible ways with their neighbors.

Tifaney Jones ’12
Tifaney is currently pursuing her DVM (Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine) at Ross University in St. Kitts in the Caribbean. She has been there since August 2015 and plans to finish her clinical rotations in May 2019. So she

has packed away to live on a Caribbean island for two-and-a-half years of her life, which has been challenging and rewarding at the same time.

Chase Brouthers ’12
Chase is a missionary and has been working in Slovakia with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) since 2015.

Lori Breland ’15
Lori graduated from Montreat in August 2015 with a bachelor’s in human services and psychology and is currently finishing her first year in the master’s program for clinical mental health counseling. She is also getting ready to be a great-aunt again and working part-time at a privately owned psychology practice in Morganton, N.C.
Jay Guffey ’89
School of Arts and Sciences

Jay Guffey is a 1986 (A.S.) and a 1989 (B.S.) graduate of Montreat College. After graduate school, he became a professor and subsequently director of Montreat’s Discovery Wilderness Program. He also served in the Advancement Office as the alumni director. He considers his greatest reward at Montreat College witnessing students graduate and respond to God’s calling to affect the world for transformation and renewal. Guffey currently works as a financial advisor with Edward Jones and is a member of Christ Community Church in Montreat, where he has served in a number of leadership and service capacities. He has been married to his high school sweetheart, Laurie, for 27 years and is the proud father of seven children. Jay has distinguished himself as a Montreat alumnus by modeling Christlikeness to all that he has come into contact with and has represented his family, his alma mater, and his Lord in a humble and genuine manner.

Marsha Barnes ’13
School of Adult and Graduate Studies

Marsha Barnes graduated in 2010 from Montreat College with a B.A. in Business Administration and completed her M.S. in Management and Leadership at Montreat in 2013. In 2014, Barnes founded the widely acclaimed “Finance Bar,” a retrofitted school bus turned mobile financial planner’s office. Barnes serves her community by providing education and services which help individuals gain control of their personal finances. Her mission is to help people in all walks of life to be able to manage their resources and become better stewards of what God has given them. “Montreat taught me strategy, to think outside of the box, and to be creative. Having a faith-based education and background helped me a ton,” she says. “It’s helped carry me through the entire process. Montreat had a great impact on me and still does to this day.” Marsha’s community involvement and dedication to helping others has distinguished her as a Montreat alumna.
As Montreat College moves forward, we need partners to help us continue the momentum, leading us into a thriving second century as a Christ-centered institution.

You are invited to join President Maurer and the college leadership in advancing Montreat College by becoming a member of the President’s Circle today. This growing partnership of donors who invest $1,000 or more annually helps sustain our efforts through their finances and through prayer.

As a member of the President’s Circle, we will regularly communicate with you about the latest happenings on campus, engage with you at special invitation-only events, and lean on you for prayer.

Please join us today with a gift to Montreat College, and partner with us in our pursuit to provide a Christ-centered education that encourages our students to wrestle with the meaning of life and take ownership of their faith. Your investment in the future of Christian higher education will change lives for generations to come.

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Montreat College is an independent, Christ-centered, liberal arts institution that educates students through intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career. Montreat College’s main campus for four-year traditional students is located in Montreat, N.C. The college’s School of Adult and Graduate Studies has locations in Asheville, Charlotte, Morganton, and online.

PARTING SHOT

An overhead shot of the new Pulliam Stadium on Montreat College’s Black Mountain campus.