

Fulfilling the Ministry

Brown Trail School of Preaching

An Exciting Time

Kevin W. Rhodes, Director



It is hard to believe that we have already begun the fourth quarter of the school year. In January we welcomed several new students who have proven to be both enthusiastic and flexible—two important traits as we

give them additional classes with additional work, challenge them to raise their academic standards, and make our transition to having students enter in July. The curriculum changes mean that this current group has had the challenge of taking several courses without the benefit of the proper prerequisites. However, they accepted this without complaint and responded with an interest that bodes well for the rest of their studies.

Last quarter students had their first experience with one of our new hybrid courses, classes where we combine the teaching of the text with the teaching of a particular topic or skill. I had the privilege of teaching Nehemiah: A Case Study in Leadership, and the interaction with the class was phenomenal. This quarter they build on that experience with two more similar courses. Life and Work of the Preacher uses the text of 1, 2 Timothy and Titus as the foundation to establish biblical principles and then making practical application to today in the life of young preachers in perfect parallel to their original intent. The second hybrid course this term is 1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Teaching Practicum. Last quarter I walked the students through the principles of teaching Bible class. This quarter they have the responsibility to study, prepare lesson plans, and then lead the discussion as we consider Paul's instruction to the church in Thessalonica. This provides practical experience in the classroom with the benefit

of critique, guidance, and mentoring that we are making a mainstay of our program. While these new students have not yet experienced the joys of studying Greek, I am teaching them 1, 2, and 3 John with the Greek fully in view to demonstrate the purpose and value of language studies. In the future this course will follow one full year of Greek grammar and be a hybrid Greek Exegesis class. But for now, the students are learning and growing—and keeping class enjoyable for those of us who have the privilege of teaching. Partly due to the transition, this quarter includes many textual courses, which means a lot of memory work, but the courses have enough related material to compound learning in some cases. In truth, we could not have asked for a greater group of students to work with throughout so much change. The second year students have embraced the new approach, and the new students have settled in well. The faculty is adjusting as well, making my work much easier.

This quarter also poses some interesting challenges due to some scheduling issues. We will conduct two campaigns during this quarter, one in Itasca, Texas, and the other in Tecumseh, Oklahoma. We will have a third campaign in Sedalia, Missouri in September. If your congregation would be interested in having Brown Trail conduct a campaign in your area, please contact the office to find our expectations and get placed on the schedule. We will be available to have these during the last two weeks of March so as not to disrupt our students' studies.

One of the great joys of this work is the relationships you can develop with spiritually-minded young men who are eager to learn and ready to serve. That makes driving to school every day, preparing classes, and even grading papers all worth the while. So if you know of such men, please encourage them to consider becoming gospel preachers. The Lord's church needs them, and it would be our privilege at Brown Trail to train them.

Elders

Stephen Alexander
Kevin Carroll
Russ Floyd
David Hamrick
Bobby Watts

Director

Kevin W. Rhodes

Director Spanish Department

Willia Alvarenga

Academic Dean

Pat McIntosh

Dean of Students

Roy Gafford

Director for Development

Heath Stapleton

Field Representative Spanish Department

Salvador Del Fierro



What is Best for the Students?

Although we have only begun the Spring quarter, we must look ahead to July and some of the challenges that accompany our transition into a new school year. Our goals in having students enter in the summer rather than the winter are manifold. First, relocating during the summer makes it easier on young families and all incoming students by not disrupting the holidays and allowing them more time with family, both when they enter the program and upon graduation. Second, a summer entry is more natural for many students who have been in school themselves, especially those who wish to enter our one year Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity Associate's program. Entering in July means that these students will not have to wait seven months to begin their studies. Third, a late spring graduation coincides historically with a greater number of congregations needing preachers and therefore more opportunities for our graduates. So the return to a summer entry and a June graduation are designed to enhance the student experience and make the transition both to and from school as easy on their families as possible. Attending preaching school is challenging enough. Our hope is that these changes will eliminate at least some of the additional burdens.

Some might wonder why we would not simply allow students to enter at both times, or even any quarter. The answer is simple. The order in which students take classes matters. In a program that condenses four years of study into two years, it is essential to ensure that students take all of the prerequisites first before continuing onto the more advanced courses. It matters to have courses teaching men how to prepare sermons before you have them take classes that require preparing and giving sermons. It matters to have them take classes in Biblical interpretation and exegesis before requiring them to write papers that require those skills. In fact, almost all of the practical courses in our curriculum are

designed specifically to build on those before them. This maximizes how much students can learn in their two years at Brown Trail by integrating course design and building skill upon skill throughout the program.

With this in mind, in July we will begin the practice of taking an entire week as an orientation—a type of mini-class specifically designed to prepare them for the rigors of preaching school. During this week we will teach time management skills, study techniques, policies and protocols, and memorization techniques—all with the design to provide an immediate practical benefit the moment students begin the program. We will devote three days to this introductory material and then finish orientation with a cookout at the Director's home and a one day seminar. This year brother Mike Vestal will speak all day Friday, July 5th, about preaching, which will be a treat to all in attendance.

We recently instituted a visitation program in which the students make weekly visits related to the Brown Trail congregation. In addition, students will also participate in area Bible camps during their break. These experiences, along with other practical courses within the program, are designed to ensure that students not only *hear* about the work of preaching but also, to some extent, *experience* some aspects of it. By involving them directly in conducting Bible studies, teaching classes, and having weekly deadlines, our plan is to make sure that they leave Brown Trail not only with biblical knowledge and a diploma but also with valuable experiences that will benefit them in the field for years to come.

All of these changes require a lot of administrative overhead, extracurricular time with students, a lot of planning, and a great deal of discipline. But we believe it is already paying dividends. We want to do what is best for the students, because we want to do more than just offer biblically related classes. We want to mentor preachers.

Notes and Needs

In Memorium

The following have recently made a donation to Brown Trail School of Preaching as a memorial or honorarium.

JOE ALLEGRIA

MaryLea Stephens

MAXIE BOREN

Kenneth and Judy Schoen

RANDLE BOYD

Jamestown church of Christ

JULIA BRIDGES

Merlene Day
Marcia Stapleton

MICKEY BLUNDELL

Nancy Hart

JIM COLWELL

Jamestown church of Christ

EARLENE DENTON

Marcia Stapleton

BILL HANCOCK

Ralph and Naomi Adkison

JIMMY HAND

MHS Class of 1961 c/o Hattie Ligon

JUDY KING

Patsy Ainsworth
Merlene Day
Mr. and Mrs. Danny Drennan
Sheree Hamm
Marcia Stapleton
MaryLea Stephens

BEVERLY MCKEY

MaryLea Stephens

DORIS PINSON

David and Sharon Robinson

IVA ZAJAC

Gary and Deborah Colhouer
Don and Etta Conger

Your financial contributions to Brown Trail School of Preaching, such as this, help immensely in the training of gospel preachers. Thank you so much for being part of our work in this way.

In Honor

FRAN BOREN

Gary Bodine

LLOYD AND BETTY OWENS

Kenneth and Judy Rowland

PHIL AND ROSA LEE POPE

Terry Malone

CARL AND DORIS POWELL

Terry Malone

ED STOVER

Highway 31 church of Christ

Please note...

- **Thank you!** Thank you all so much for your continued support. We have made tremendous progress in the last year and a half rebuilding our support and reaching out to others. Due to your generosity, our students have the support they need to study without a tremendous financial burden, though they do still make sacrifices. In addition, area congregations have volunteered to help us stock our student pantry—no small contribution for students and their families. But your support also makes it possible for teachers to teach, for the staff to handle all the paperwork, and for an untold number of administrative issues that seem a given but really add up in the end. Thank you for making all of this possible.
- **We Need You!** While we have made tremendous progress, we have not yet reached our goal. We have overcome our general debt through many one time contributions, but we still need to partner with other congregations and individuals so that we consistently meet our budget and begin to address other needs moving forward. That we have reached this point already testifies to the generosity and character of God's people and your interest in training men for the future.

Financial Needs

Circle One	Amount
Robert Stapleton Endowment _____	
Student Books and Software _____	
PTP Student Expenses	Goal Met
Willie Alvarenga Support _____	
Jesse Martinez Support _____	
Pat McIntosh Support _____	
Kevin W. Rhodes Support _____	
Heath Stapleton Support _____	
General Fund _____	
Student (English or Spanish) _____	
(Underline which)	
Tomorrow's Men Today _____	
(Future Leaders Camp)	
South Africa Travel Fund	Goal Met
(Cape Bible School)	
Where Needed _____	

Speaking Schedule

Apr 6-7 Marriage & Family Seminar
Rice Lake, WI

May 12 Briar Lectures

June 1-2 Show Me the Bible Lectures
Branson, MO

June 7 Back to the Bible Lectures
Dallas, TX

Aug 15-22 Polishing the Pulpit
Jacksonville, AL

Sept 22 Jacksonville, AL

Sept 23-Oct 9 Cape Town, South Africa

****Multiple Local Summer Series Engagements**

Calendar of Events

Apr 6-10 Itasca Campaign

Apr 29-May1 Tecumseh Campaign

June 10-14 Finals Week

June 17-28 Summer Break

July 1-3 New Year Orientation

July 4 Director's Cookout

July 5 Mike Vestal Preaching Seminar

July 8 Summer Quarter Begins

Aug 15-22 Polishing the Pulpit

Sept 8-11 Sedalia Campaign

Sept 23-27 Finals Week

Oct 7 Fall Quarter Begins

English Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
Dewayne Bryant
Bill Burk
Will Cammack
Robert Dodson
Roy Gafford
Ken Gardner
J.J. Hendrix
Bryan Hodge
Ken Hope
Richard Massey
Pat McIntosh
Randall Morris
Eddie Parrish
Rick Popejoy
Kevin W. Rhodes
Jason Sparks
Jeremy Sprouse
Heath Stapleton
Jon Warnes

Spanish Faculty

Willie Alvarenga
Marco Arroyo
Salvador del Fierro, Jr.
Jaime Luna
Juan Luna
Jesse Martinez
Rogelio Medina
Obed Rodriguez
Osbaldo Rodriguez

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