

# Fulfilling the Ministry

*"Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5)*

Faculty and Student Newsletter of the Brown Trail School of Preaching

July 2018  
No. 105

## ELDERS

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Russ Floyd  
David Hamrick  
Bobby Watts

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Heath Stapleton

**DIRECTOR  
SPANISH  
DEPARTMENT**  
Willie Alvarenga

**ASSISTANT  
DIRECTOR FOR  
DEVELOPMENT**  
Heath Stapleton

**DEAN OF  
ADMISSIONS/  
STUDENTS**  
Tavaris Armstrong

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Pat McIntosh  
Phil McIntosh  
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Kevin Rhodes  
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Jason Sparks  
Jeremy Sprouse  
Heath Stapleton  
Richard Stevens III

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## From the Interim—Director's Desk

Heath Stapleton

### Robert Stapleton Endowment Fund

When my father suddenly passed in December, he was prepared to leave this realm and stand in judgment; however, he left behind several goals that he was not able to accomplish or finish. One of his desires was to set up a fund that would eventually be able to pay for the director's salary at the school. This fund was something he not only thought about, but also discussed with a financial director. However, nothing ever materialized.

Recently, a good friend of mine contacted me about his desire to help get the **Robert Stapleton Endowment Fund** off the ground. He said he would love to donate \$12,500.00 to establish the fund and mentioned he would like to ask congregations and individuals to unite together and match this gift, starting this endowment fund, with the goal of eventually getting the director's salary off the books.

I am honored that this dear brother would be thoughtful enough to make this gesture to not only honor my father, but to help make one of dad's desires a reality. If you would like to donate to help match the \$12,500.00, please note so along with your gift.

### Tavaris Armstrong

**Tavaris Armstrong** graduated the school of preaching in 2014 and promptly started working for the school as our **Dean of Students** in charge of student welfare and recruiting. On the 20th of June, **Tavaris** took a pulpit position with the Swan congregation in Tyler, Texas.



Tavaris came to Brown Trail to prepare himself for pulpit work and has had a desire to get into preaching full-time for a couple of years now. But, due to the illness of my father, Tavaris stayed and labored faithfully with us during the illness and throughout the transition after dad's death.

I publicly want to share my gratitude toward Tavaris. He is a great man, who, like so many of our graduates, will continue to do great things for the kingdom! Him leaving the school is bittersweet, bitter because he is already missed, but sweet, because he and his beautiful bride will have a congregation to serve and grown with. I am also grateful for all his help and support during the transition in January. Things would not have been so smooth without his knowledge and help. Tavaris is a great man, a great friend, I am proud to say I was able to perform the marriage ceremony between he and his wife Kim, and I can't thank him enough for the work he has done with the school. Please keep him in your prayers as he and his wife Kim begin this new journey in their lives.

### "Brown Trail Radio" Recordings

In the April issue of "Fulfilling The Ministry," I mentioned that we are working with our web-host to add all of our past radio recordings to our website. On the 19th of June, 1,200 of my father's radio sermons were placed online for everyone. The lessons are found at <http://www.brown-trailsschoolofpreaching.com/sermons-robertstapleton.html>. We still have a couple thousand more sermons to upload, but this is a start. Please feel free to share this information with the congregation you attend and with your friends. When all is said and done, we will



have an impressive audio library online, and we want to share it with all. I want to thank the ladies who work with Church of Christ Web Design, LLC for going above and beyond uploading all these lessons to the internet.

## Dean of Students

With the departure of **Brother Armstrong**, we will begin a search for a new Dean, along with continuing our search for a new director. After several discussions with some of our experienced teachers, we would like to find a retired, or close to retirement graduate of the school, or a school of preaching, who may already have some retirement income, who can serve as Dean, recruit, travel for the school and teach some classes. One of our adjuncts, Brother Ken Hope, said, "that will not be easy." He is right, but we feel, for our needs, this is an ideal person and I firmly believe this will all work out.

## School Update

Besides looking for a new Director and Dean, things at the school are going great. We just finished our second quarter and all our students finished strong. The new teachers, **Jeremy Sprouse** and **Philip McIntosh**, who stepped in and taught classes last quarter were just amazing. And **Jeremy's** class, **Fundamentals 1**, on **How We Got The Bible**, is recorded and in the slow editing process. We hope to have it online soon!

**Becky** (my wife), our children, and I, are all up in Indiana area for the break between second and third quarters. My wife is from Indiana, and we can stay with her family and use their farm as our hub while reaching out to congregations and potential students in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Our families are both from up north, and dad was converted and preached in Ohio and Indiana for many years. Plus, my first works were in Ohio and Indiana. So, we have many contacts up here, and it is just not feasible to visit to show presentations and recruit the area unless we are on break. We have already visited three congregations and showed the presentation at two, in Corydon, Indiana and Hanoverton, Ohio. Now, for you history buffs!!! Hanoverton is on the famed Lincoln Trail, the path he took once elected to the Capital. Hanoverton is a small village of 300-400 people, but it is famed for the Spread Eagle Inn, which has been operating since 1837. It is famed because this is where President Lincoln stayed during his initial trip to the capital. Since then, many politicians, who have just won office have stopped and stayed there on their way to Washington.

Also, we showed the presentation in Corydon, Indiana last night, and this is where the **John Wright Restoration Movement** was back in the early 1800's. He and his family actually started a congregation in Corydon. History records that by the time **John Wright** and his family passed on, that there wasn't a Baptist denomination left in southern Indiana, they had converted them all. On the 3rd of July, we will be showing the presentation at the church in **Palmyra**, Indiana. Originally, this was a Baptist group back in the early 1800's, and **John Wright** moved there and worked with them for two months, and they were all then baptized into Christ. They then took the name Baptist off their building and added the name Church of Christ. They have been worshipping there in Spirit and Truth for almost 200 years now, and it will be an honor to show the presentation there in a few days.

## Highlighting A Graduate Brother Rick Popejoy

I am very proud to introduce our graduates to you each month. I am particularly grateful for Brother Popejoy. He has been there for advice, and to answer questions for me, and to help point me in the right direction on several occasions this year. He is a great man of God! And evidence that this school is a great training institution!

**Brother Popejoy** has been married to **Mrs. Mona** for 36 years. Together they have four children and seven grandchildren. **Rick** graduated from the **Brown Trail School of Preaching** in 1984 and has been preaching for over 34 years in Texas, Oklahoma, and Wyoming.

He presently serves the **9th & Main Church of Christ** in San Angelo, Texas as a shepherd and a preacher. Rick is also an instructor for the **Online Academy of Biblical Studies**. He teaches classes on **First Principles, The New Testament Church, and Jeremiah**.



He directs campaigns where he leads a team of workers from several states in evangelistic door-knocking campaigns every year. He conducts gospel meetings and seminars on the family, leadership, teaching, and evangelism. Rick is also a co-director of the **Young Men Development Conference** held at the **BCS Church of Christ in College Station, Texas** each year. He is the co-host of a daily radio program entitled, **Reflections Upon The Precious Book Divine** that can be heard on **The Gospel Radio Network** (M-F, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM).

**Rick** has also published two periodicals during his 34 years of preaching: **Apostolic Echoes** and **Reflections** upon the precious book divine. The later reaching 62,000 in publication.

**Rick** is also employed by a private, non-profit foundation as a researcher and teaches a PowerPoint class for the Tom Green County Library System. Rick also serves on the board of directors for **Tullstar**, a media archive institute designed to produce CD's, DVD's, Tracts, and books.

## Azael Alvarez

In December 2011 **Azael** and **Dinora Alvarez** moved from Mexico to attend the **Spanish Department** at **Brown Trail**. After graduating in 2013, he and his wife moved to Marshall, Texas to serve with the Lord's Church there.



They had a wonderful work and were very grateful to serve God together. However, the family suffered a terrible tragedy, a week after **Dinora** gave birth to their second child in East Texas she started having complications. She was quickly comatose, and after three weeks of fighting, they moved her to Torreon, Mexico, where within a few days she passed away, on May 30th. Not only has he lost his wife, and now must raise their children on their own, but **Azael** has decided to stay in Monterrey, Mexico and not to return to Texas. His life has been turned upside down. Please keep **Azael** and his two daughters, **Mia** and **Zoe** in your prayers.

## In Honor \* In Memory

The following have recently made a donation to BTSOP as a memorial or honorarium. Please keep in mind that your financial donations to BTSOP, as a honorarium or memorial, go a long way in training men to be gospel preachers.

**John Balescu**  
Julia Bridges

**Joni Benoit**  
Julia Bridges

**Denise Cooper**  
Sandra McCellon

**Dr. J. C. Davis**  
Patty & Randy Reagan

**Henry Hart**  
Julia Bridges  
Hayden Coe  
Donald & Lila Crank  
Paul & Elane Crosby  
Owen Miller  
David & LaJuana Pennington  
Bill & Jo Ann Sharbine  
Marcia Stapleton  
Mary Lea Stephens  
Alicia White  
Jim & Shirley Wilcox

**Gene Hessley**  
Mary Lea Stephens

**Cheryl Holt**  
Julia Bridges  
Marcia Stapleton  
Mary Lea Stephens  
Bobby Watts

**Josephine Miller**  
David & LaJuana Pennington

**Eva Poe**  
Julia Bridges

**Jo Ann Painter**  
Julia Bridges  
Guy & Virginia Elliott  
Bobby & June Watts

**Robert Stapleton**  
Donna Brinkley  
David & Patsy Calvert

**Kristy Turnbow**  
Julia Bridges

## Highlighting A Student

Leonardo Enriquez is \_\_\_\_\_, and came to us in December 2016 from \_\_\_\_\_, Mexico. He is single and planning to return to Mexico as soon as he graduates in December to preach. As of right now, he doesn't know where he will be serving in Mexico, but he is now looking. While in school he has been not only taking a full load of courses, but he is also preaching for the Rylie Iglesia de Cristo, in Southeast Dallas. Please keep him in your thoughts and prayers as he finishes his last two quarters and searches for a place to work in Mexico.



## Recording Classes

I am very grateful to announce that we have raised all the money needed to purchase recording equipment and new lighting. This last quarter we started recording some of our classes in HD, to put online for brethren to watch and learn. Right now the recordings are in editing, and I will let everyone know when they are online.

The first recordings were part of our learning curve. We have to discard a couple of classes, because of human error, lighting, and sound issues. During this break, Brother Derrick Baker will be adding new LED lights to the classrooms, and fixing a huge sound issue. The motor in the room blower had a bearing going out and had a whine to it. We are convinced the recording quality will be much better starting the 3rd quarter.

## This Form Is Provided For Your Convenience

In Honor Of/Memory Of \_\_\_\_\_

Send Acknowledgement To:

Mr./Mrs./Miss \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Donated By \_\_\_\_\_

## Sermon Starters

### *The Reality of Jesus* *Colossians 1:16-23*

Introduction:

1. Until the reality of what Jesus has done for us, and what he has sacrificed dawned upon us, we will not function as real Christians should.
  - A. Only after we face the facts of what Jesus has done for each of us will we ever be pleasing to Him.
2. We are living in a time in which churches are producing a brand of religion which humanizes God, deifies man, and compromises sin.
  - A. Far too many pulpits are soft peddling the gospel as the church desperately dies from spiritual diabetes.
    - 1) Our spiritual diet consists of too much sugar!
  - B. This attitude has produced a generation of spiritual dwarfs who stand for nothing and fall for everything.
  - C. This anemic program has produced a wave of professing Christians, 95% of whom never win a soul to Christ.
3. The answer to the problem is a return to the right conception of what the cross of Christ really stands for.
  - A. Far too many of us basically have little or no understanding of what the cross really stands for.
    - 1) And we desperately need this understanding.
4. I want to suggest several things that will help us better understand the reality of Jesus.

Body:

1. His Position
  - A. No matter what man is teaching, believing, or doing today, Jesus is the head of the church, Col. 1:18.
    - 1) When we start understanding that Jesus is the head of the church, and not us, we will begin to appreciate what He has done for us.
  - B. Also, regardless of what man may believe, Jesus is the maker of the universe, Col. 1:16.
    - 1) The only "big bang" that ever came about was the bang momma heard when she dropped those who believe in evolution, or the so-called "big bang theory," on their heads when they were babies!
    - 2) When Moses wrote, "Let us make man in our image....," Jesus was there, Gen. 1:26.
    - 3) If we can comprehend the fact that when we disobey Jesus we are disobeying our Creator, we will do it less.
  - C. He is the image of the invisible God, Col. 1:15.
2. His Possessions
  - A. The universe is His, Col. 1:16.

## News from Alumni

**Azael Alvarez (2013)** Has returned to serve in Monterrey, Mexico. His wife, Dinora, passed away on the \_\_\_\_\_ from complications after delivering their second child, Zoe.

**Matt Bransford (2014)** Has accepted the position in Hermleigh, Texas.

**Corey Johnson (2014)** Is the new preacher in Allen, Oklahoma.

## Sermon Starters, cont.

- B. Christians are His by right of ownership through:
- 1) Creation, Gen. 1:26; Col. 1:16.
  - 2) Purchase, Acts 20:28.
- C. We need to understand that we are a possession of Christ's, and we will therefore serve Him.

### 3. His Power

- A. Matt. 28:18
- 1) Not some, not almost all, but ALL.
- B. As possessor of all power, He is King of kings, Lord of lords, Rev. 19:6
- C. As possessor of all power, He is the head of the church, Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18.
- D. Surely a proper understanding of the power of the Lord will get us going, if anything will.

### 4. His Permanency

- A. The kingdom and the power of the Lord will never be destroyed.
- 1) It is permanent, Dan. 7:13-14.
    - A) No matter what one may say, the power that Jesus has is here to stay until He turns over the kingdom to God, 1 Cor. 15:24.

### CONCLUSION:

1. The position, the possessions, the power, and the permanency of Christ ought to cause us to see His reality.
  - A. We cannot ignore the Christ of the cross.
  - B. We cannot destroy Him.
  - C. We cannot change His terms of discipleship.
    - 1) They must remain the same.
    - 2) If anything must change, it is us, Acts 3:19.
2. It is time for us to take up our cross (Lk. 9:23), and follow Jesus.

**Note to all alumni:** If you have a change of address, family news, work news, unusual experience or anything else that you would like to share with other alumni, please let us know. You may e-mail the information to Heath Stapleton at [chimalaheath@yahoo.com](mailto:chimalaheath@yahoo.com), or fill out the form on our Web Site. Either way, be sure to include name, address, graduation year, congregation you work with and the news item you would like to have included in the newsletter.

## Financial Needs

Check One		Amount
	Robert Stapleton Endowment	
	Student Enrichment Week	
	Willie Alvarenga Support	
	Tavaris Armstrong Support	
	Jesse Martinez Support	
	Heath Stapleton Support	
	General Fund	
	English or Spanish Department Student (Underline which)	
	Where Needed	

## Specific Financial Needs

You will see below a reminder of some of the specific financial needs of *The Brown Trail School of Preaching*. We wish we could say there are no such needs, but we cannot. Please help where you can. Thanks!

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount Needed</i>	<i>Amount on Hand</i>
<b>Future Preachers Training Week</b>	\$ 00.00	\$ Funded
<b>Recording Equipment</b>	\$ 00.00	\$ Funded
<b>Student Books</b>	\$ 00.00	\$ Funded
<b>Student Enrichment Week</b>	\$1,500.00	\$1,200.00

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