

SOUTHERN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2023



As we come to the conclusion of my first academic year at SWU, the most enduring thought I have is one of gratitude. There are many things for which we are thankful. Our family deeply appreciates the warm and loving welcome shown by the SWU community. We are delighted to be a part of a Biblically faithful institution with tremendous theological and spiritual unity amongst its Trustees, Faculty, and Staff. This is a rare treasure not to be taken for granted; it is a precious part of our identity to be protected, grown, and cherished! We rejoice in some stellar Faculty and Staff who daily honor Christ and perform their service with humility and excellence. Our list could go on and on, yet we are most thankful for the prayers so many have offered for us and for Southern Wesleyan University. Among other results, these prayers ensure that our mission remains intact, vibrant, and growing. What is this mission? To see students shaped and matured by the Spirit of God.

In all of these labors of love, I am encouraged by the sublime nature of our calling to serve at a Christian university.

You see, it is not hyperbole to declare this truth: As go Christian universities, so goes the Church. When graduates leave Christian universities, they land in a variety of vocations in a broad spectrum of geography, culture, and socioeconomic demographics. Their impact is enormous, for good or for ill. This is an unparalleled and exciting opportunity for us! Strategically, if we want to reach the world for Christ tomorrow, then we must reach this generation of college students for Christ today! Thank you for being a part of this most important of missions for Christ and His Kingdom. I am grateful and honored to serve alongside of you.

Pro Christo et Regno Ejus!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'William D. Barker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

William D. Barker, Ph.D.
President, Southern Wesleyan University

This Year On Campus

15

nations represented in
the student body

13

students baptized

100+

significant student
commitments to Christ

72

initial full-time missions
commitments



PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

October 28, 2022

Dr. William D. Barker, 19th President of Southern Wesleyan University



LITTLE MERMAID

March 23-26, 2023

Four shows, 60+ characters, amazing music



AREA 13 SPECIAL OLYMPICS

April 21, 2023

Over 600 athletes from Pickens and Oconee Counties participated in the games



PASSOVER SEDER

April 6, 2023

Dr. Barker hosted a special Passover Seder for our SWU community

Clemson Engineering Partnership



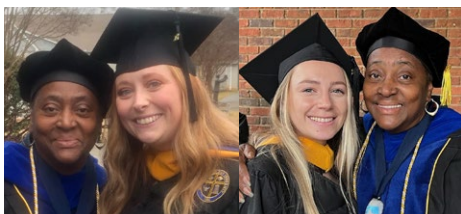
Clemson University and Southern Wesleyan University will begin a new and unique partnership this coming Fall. It will allow students an opportunity to

begin their academic career by pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Applied Mathematics at SWU, while preparing for an engineering degree from Clemson. Students will spend approximately two years at Southern Wesleyan, earning at least 60 credit hours toward a major in SWU's Applied Mathematics program. The student will then transfer over to Clemson University to complete their engineering degree. While at Clemson, the student will also complete the remaining credits needed for their Southern Wesleyan degree. Once the student completes the program, they will earn a Bachelor of Science

degree in Applied Mathematics from SWU and a Bachelor of Science degree in their chosen engineering discipline from Clemson.

"We are so excited about this partnership because of what it means for our students. We often have students inquiring about engineering programs. To be able to have the foundation of a strong Christian liberal arts university and an engineering degree from one of the top engineering programs in the country is a combination any employer would welcome in a graduate," stated Dr. Brian Swords, Vice President of Enrollment Management at SWU.

Master of Science in Counseling Psychology grads



The C. Clifton Wood Master of Science in Counseling Psychology started in January 2021. It was funded by Dr. Wood, who provided the lead gift and is recognized for his love of

Christ and generosity towards those following a call to serve in the field of counseling. This graduate counseling degree gives students essential academic and clinical training with a Christian worldview and biblical perspective. It leads graduates to serve as Licensed Professional Counselors, with a focus on evidence-based and integrative approaches that address the whole person. The MSCP degree responds to the mental health crisis

facing our nation and is making a significant impact in lives through counseling professionals who graduate from SWU.

In December 2022 Kayla Achenbach and Josie Edwards became the first two graduates of the Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from Southern Wesleyan University, and on May 5, 2023 we celebrate David Fields and Samantha Mason as they receive their diplomas.



With a pastor's heart and decades of experience in ministry, Pastor Quint Pitts was born and bred in West Virginia and has served for the last twenty-five years as the founding pastor of one of the largest churches in the state. After completing his Bachelor's degree, he earned his Master's at Regent University School of Divinity. This was followed by years spent as a youth pastor, during which time he developed a passion for church planting. For over two

Quint Pitts

UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE

decades, until his military retirement, he also served as a chaplain in the military as part of the Navy Reserve, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve. During this time, Pastor Pitts was deployed numerous times to Iraq and Afghanistan, serving as an embedded chaplain with both the U.S. Marine Corps and Special Operations Command. Demonstrating his love for people, building healthy community, and helping others overcome hardships in their lives, Pastor Pitts is the National Director of Celebrate Recovery's outreach to veterans and has touched innumerable lives over the course of his ministry. Starting with a group of five people in his living room in 1997, he founded Horizons Church, which is now home to over 4000 people meet-

ing at ten locations. Pastor Pitts has passed the baton to the next generation of leadership at Horizons out of a deep sense of calling to Southern Wesleyan University. His favorite earthly possession, other than his Bible, is the complete set of John Wesley's works his mother gifted him as a teenager. He has read it cover-to-cover three and a half times and counting. His wife Sarah will be serving as the new Residence Hall Director for the North and South Apartments on campus. He and Sarah are the parents of six children in their young adult years: Josiah, Jenna, Jonathan, Jordan, Joshua, and Jessica. Pastor Pitts and his family are transferring their membership to ALIVE Wesleyan Church, where they will be worshipping when they arrive in June.

Rob McFarland

PROVOST

A thoughtful educator and administrator with a deep love for the Lord, Dr. Rob McFarland grew up in the shadows of the Ozarks in Springfield, Missouri and has spent the last twenty years in Montgomery, Alabama. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Oklahoma Christian University and his Juris Doctorate from Pepperdine University School of Law and has practiced law in Texas as an associate at Winstead,

Sechrest & Minick and in Arizona as a member of Ekmark & Ekmark. For the last 18 years, he has taught and provided leadership at Faulkner University's Jones School of Law where he has served over the years as the Vice Dean, Associate Dean of External Relations, Director of Advocacy Programs, and Associate Professor of Law. Dr. McFarland and his wife, Anita, have four children: Ian, Lily, Seth, and Silas.



Andrew Beckwith

CHIEF OF STAFF

A devout Christian, faithful husband and loving father, Dr. Andrew Beckwith grew up in New England and received his Bachelor of Arts from Gordon College in International Affairs and Foreign Languages. He received a Juris Doctor from the University of Minnesota Law School. He represented the U.S. Department of Homeland Security practicing immigration law for five years, in addition to being an allied attorney with Alliance Defending Freedom focusing on religious liberty cases. Over a fifteen-year career

in the United States Marine Corps, Dr. Beckwith served as trial counsel and judge advocate, attaining the rank of lieutenant colonel. For the last nine years, he served as the president of the Massachusetts Family Institute, a nationally-connected research, education, and advocacy nonprofit dedicated to strengthening the family. He and his wife Karen have four children: Jacob, Gabriel, Abigail, and Anna. They have lived in Wenham, MA for the last sixteen years.

Michael Shannon

AVP FOR STUDENT LIFE AND ASSISTANT CHAPLAIN

A military veteran with a passionate heart for ministering to young and old, Pastor Michael "Mike" Shannon grew up in a small farm town in Kansas, just outside of Kansas City, and traveled the world while serving in the United States Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Air Force. After completing his undergraduate degree and Master of Divinity at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, Pastor Mike served for six years as a pastor before becoming a chaplain in the U.S. Air Force. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel and the Deputy Command Chaplain for USAF Special Operations Command, but is known first

and foremost amongst his peers as an outstanding leader, pastor, theologian, and as a paragon of Christian faith and virtues. Pastor Shannon and his wife, Imelda, have been married for 35 years. They have two adult children, Elisa and Nathanael, and they are the proud grandparents of three lovely grandchildren. On this side of military retirement, Pastor Shannon and Imelda both love spending time with their grandchildren, laughing with friends, and studying God's Word. They are transferring their membership to ALIVE Wesleyan Church where they will be worshipping when they arrive in July.

