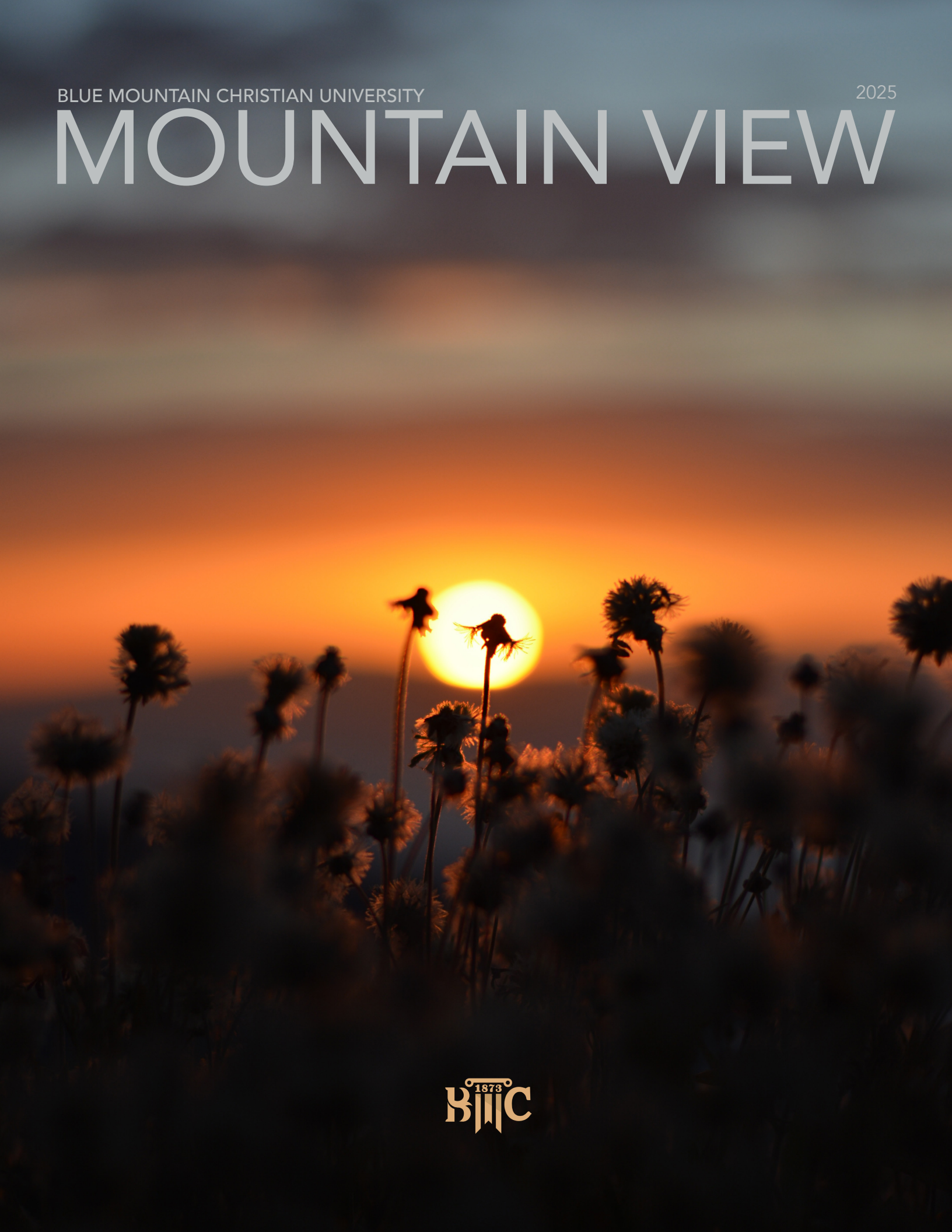


BLUE MOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

2025

MOUNTAIN VIEW



Message from the THE PRESIDENT

Barbara C. McMillin

Throughout Scripture and history, we encounter men and women who changed the future by choosing faithfulness, courage, and compassion. Joseph, once sold into slavery, became a source of provision and hope for an entire nation. Esther risked her life to intercede for her people. Paul, once a persecutor of the church, became a missionary whose letters still shape our faith today. In more recent memory, individuals like Florence Nightingale, George Washington Carver, and Corrie ten Boom dedicated their lives to the service of others—planting seeds whose fruit would bless generations to come.

At Blue Mountain Christian University, we are surrounded by such legacy-builders. The stories in this edition of Mountain View shine with the **light** of those who are making the future brighter for others through Christ-centered service and leadership. From Emily Carr, who brings healing and peace to frightened children in a pediatric ER, to Diana Cedeno Alcivar, who ministers to women and children in Ecuador, our graduates are living testimonies of love in action.

You'll read about faculty like Dr. Jenetta Waddell and Dr. Lynn Varner, whose dedication to teaching has shaped not just knowledge but lives. You'll meet alumni like Kody Rinehart, the "Christian Cowboy," whose platform boldly points others to Christ. And you'll celebrate milestones with young couples, new parents, and championship-winning athletes—all part of the tapestry of **light** God is weaving through BMCU.

As Romans 15:13 reminds us, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." This hope has a name. His name is Jesus—and it is His **light** that our students, alumni, and supporters carry into the world.

May you be encouraged by the lives represented in these pages. As Philippians 1:6 declares, we can be confident "that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

The future is indeed **bright**—because the **Light** of the World is at the center of all we do at Blue Mountain Christian University.



*"This hope has a name. His name is Jesus—and it is His **light** that our students, alumni, and supporters carry into the world."*

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*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope.
Jeremiah 29:11*

MEET OUR ALUMNI

From the Mountain TO THE MISSION

Nurses, teachers, and champions—our graduates are carrying the **light** of Christ into every corner of the world.



Emily Carr, RN
Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Memphis, TN
Blue Mountain Christian University School of Nursing,
Class of 2024

confidently say that my experience laid a firm and faithful foundation for mine.

After graduation, I was honored to be selected for my dream job: working as a Pediatric Emergency Department Registered Nurse at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Le Bonheur is a Level One Pediatric Trauma Center and one of the most respected children's hospitals in the South. I'm incredibly blessed to care for children and families in such a prestigious and purpose-driven setting.

That said, pediatric emergency nursing is not without its challenges. The work can be physically exhausting, emotionally intense, and spiritually demanding. Yet I've found that my education at BMCU uniquely equipped me to meet these challenges head-on—not just with clinical skill, but with compassion, resilience, and faith.

At BMCU, we were taught by instructors who not only shared their knowledge but poured into us spiritually. They prayed for us, mentored us, and taught nursing through a Christian lens. They modeled what it means to pursue nursing not just as a profession, but as a calling. Their example continues to guide me in how I care, advocate, and shine light in some of the darkest moments families face.

Each time I walk into a shift, I pray the same prayer: to do no harm and to be a light. That light has opened the door to meaningful moments with patients and families—praying with them in crisis, singing Jesus Loves Me during an IV placement, and leaning into faith when medicine has done all it can. I've had countless parents thank me simply because they knew a Christian was caring for their child.

I'm continuing to grow every day as a nurse, and I know this is just the beginning. But I will always be grateful to BMCU for giving me the knowledge, skills, and spiritual foundation to step into this sacred calling with confidence and compassion.



Graduate Spotlight: Martha Abbigail Faith Jones ('24)

A native of Corinth, Mississippi, Martha Abbigail Faith Jones, known as Abbie, recently celebrated a major milestone—earning her B.S. in Education from BMCU! Throughout her time on campus, Abbie experienced undeniable moments of faith, growth, and answered prayers.

Reflecting on her college journey, she shares:

"The first time I stepped onto the Blue Mountain campus, I had an overwhelming peace and knew this was 'home.' Coming to Blue Mountain Christian University was a blessing from God! Throughout my 3.5 years, God has provided for me and answered my prayers in many ways. I am thankful for the relationships with friends and professors that I have made and will cherish for a lifetime. BMCU is a special institution. Thank you for pouring into me spiritually and academically!"

We are proud of you, Abbie, and we pray for continued success in your future endeavors!



Graduate Spotlight: Laura Rakestraw ('21, '24)

From a community college transfer to an inspiring educator, Laura Rakestraw has made the most of her time at Blue Mountain Christian University. After receiving the prestigious Academic Excellence Scholarship, Laura pursued her passion for education, earning her bachelor's degree in 2021 and later completing her master's in 2024.

Now, as a dedicated teacher at New Hope Elementary, Laura is shaping young minds and making a lasting impact in the classroom. Reflecting on her journey, she shares:

"The Academic Excellence Scholarship at BMCU made it possible for me to pursue my dream of becoming a teacher without the stress of college costs. Through a Christ-centered education, I gained knowledge, strengthened my faith, and built resilience to navigate every challenge in my career and life. I am beyond grateful for this incredible blessing!"

Congratulations, Laura! Your commitment to education and faith is truly inspiring.



Graduate Spotlight: Kody Rinehart ('15)

Since graduating from BMCU in 2015, Kody Rinehart has made a name for himself in the rodeo world—earning his fourth world title with the International Professional Rodeo Association (IPRA) as a Saddle Bronc Rider. But beyond his incredible achievements in the arena, Kody is known as the "Christian Cowboy", using his platform to share his faith and disciple others.

Reflecting on his time at BMCU, Kody shares:

"I loved my time at college because of how much I grew as a person, but mostly because of how much I grew in my faith. Getting to understand more of the Bible and seeing God's love for His people throughout Scripture in a deeper way strengthened my love for Him."

In addition to his rodeo success, Kody recently celebrated another major milestone—marrying the love of his life, Chelsea Farmer Rinehart, on December 31, 2024.

Congratulations, Kody! Your dedication to faith and excellence continues to inspire the BMCU family.

Q&A

WITH ROSEMARY MACE



Shaped by Faith, SENT WITH PURPOSE

From BMCU to the World: An Alumna's Journey

BMCU has shaped the lives of many students over the years, fostering leadership, academic excellence, and personal growth. In this interview, we speak with a distinguished alumna who shares her cherished memories, the impact of her education, and her continued support for the institution.

A Legacy of Blue Mountain

Q: Can you take us back to your time at BMCU? What made it special for you?

A: When I was 16, my mother, a BMC graduate, was invited to speak at the May Day alumni meeting in 1955. I had always heard about Blue Mountain because my grandmother and two aunts also graduated from BMC. In fact, my grandmother had even sent a deposit when I was born, ensuring my acceptance 17 years later! Having lived in Connecticut my whole life, no one outside my family had ever heard of the college.

My high school principal visited every college his students attended, which meant he had to drive all the way to Blue Mountain. I loved the idea of traveling there and getting to know my relatives who had always lived so far away. When my mother and I arrived, I was greatly impressed by the friendliness of the students I met, and I went home declaring that I was going to BMC! I have no regrets.

At BMC, I learned about leadership, the importance of the honor code, and I cherished climbing up to Broach for the noon devotional messages given by students. I also discovered that, as a Presbyterian, I could be a member of the Interfaith Club. Most importantly, I made lifelong friends—both from the South and from international backgrounds.

Q: Were there any professors or courses that left a lasting impact on you?

A: I originally planned to earn a B.S., but by the end of my sophomore year, I decided to pursue a B.A., which required two years of a language. Miss Bess Hutchins was one of the finest teachers I ever had. I remember waking up at 4 a.m. just to study harder for her exams. Her passion and dedication left a lasting impression on me.

Preparing for the Future

Q: How did BMCU prepare you for your career and personal growth?

A: The Christian environment and the many leadership opportunities at BMCU challenged me to study hard and get involved in campus life. These experiences helped shape my career and personal development.

Q: Looking back, what advice would you give to current BMCU students?

A: Study hard. Take part in the many extracurricular opportunities on campus—they will provide valuable leadership experience. Broaden your perspective by engaging with international students and those with different life experiences. I never imagined that my husband would one day work for an Ecuadorian company, but looking back, I am grateful for Miss Bess and her Spanish teaching!

Giving Back to BMCU

Q: You've been a dedicated donor and supporter of BMCU. What inspired you to give back?

A: I received so much from BMCU, and it is a pleasure to give back to an institution that taught me so much and broadened my perspective.

Q: What would you say to fellow alumni considering giving back?

A: My husband and I feel honored to financially contribute to Blue Mountain. We know it plays a crucial role in the education of students in Northeastern Mississippi. I love to tell the true story of my interview for my first job shortly after getting married. When I met with the Superintendent of Schools in Charlottesville, VA, he told me I was hired—not because I was the smartest applicant, nor because I had a master's degree, but because, as he said, "Two of the finest women I know are graduates of Blue Mountain College."

Looking to the Future

Q: What are your hopes for the future of BMCU?

A: My hopes for BMCU are that it will continue to grow while remaining faithful to its Christian foundation. By becoming a university, BMCU can offer a broader range of vocational choices to its students, and I am excited to see what the future holds.

**BMCU remains
a beacon of
excellence, shaping
lives and fostering
strong leaders. This
alumna's journey is
a testament to the
enduring impact
of Blue Mountain
Christian University
and the importance
of giving back to
ensure its **bright**
future.**



PLANNING TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S IMPACT

Discover the peace of mind that comes with preparing for the future with purpose.

Do you know what kind of person plants an oak tree? Oak trees grow slowly. It takes many years for them to reach maturity; in fact, they don't even produce their own acorns for the first twenty years! But what else are oak trees noted for? Their strength—their ability to weather the storms of life. They are also known for their shade, for the shelter they provide to others. Oak trees can live over a thousand years.

So, who would plant an oak tree? Someone who is looking into the future. Someone who is thinking more about the benefit to others than to themselves. In other words, an extraordinary person. Similarly, those who plan gifts through their estate are people with an eye to the future. Whether they are thinking of their family, their church, or

other causes, their gift planning focuses on the future. Roughly two-thirds of Americans die without a will. Whether through procrastination or the mistaken notion that they have no "estate," too many people allow the state to determine what will happen with their assets after passing. Planning your estate does not need to be complicated, and the peace of mind of having taken care of those details, regardless of your age, is rewarding.

For more information about gift planning, contact our partners at PhilanthroCorp at 800.876.7958 or online at www.philanthrocorp.com. There is no cost associated with contacting PhilanthroCorp in association with Blue Mountain Christian University.

WHY WE GIVE

Investing in Tomorrow's CHRISTIAN LEADERS

Dear BMCU Family,

I wanted to take a moment to share why Blue Mountain Christian University holds such a special place in my heart—and in the heart of my wife, Stacy.

When we both felt the Lord calling us to BMCU to begin preparation for vocational ministry, we couldn't have imagined the profound impact it would have on our lives. The educational experience we received was truly invaluable and unlike any other. BMCU didn't just equip us academically; it nurtured our spiritual growth and prepared us for the realities of ministry in ways that continue to resonate with us today.

The university was instrumental in shaping us into the Christian leaders we are now. The faculty and staff invested deeply in us, offering mentorship that went beyond the classroom. We were part of a community that lived out Hebrews 10:24: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." This supportive environment challenged us to grow, to serve, and to lead with integrity and compassion.

For me, as a pastor, and for Stacy, as a pastor's wife, the lessons learned and the relationships formed at BMCU have been foundational. We've been able to shepherd others with wisdom and grace, drawing upon the rich experiences and training we received during our time at the university.

That's why we're passionate about ensuring that others have the same opportunity. We believe in the power of collective giving. By coming together—even through small monthly contributions—we can make a significant impact. Your contribution to the General Scholarship Fund can help remove financial barriers for students who are eager to follow God's calling, just as we did.

As it says in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful



Jon Tyler R. and Stacy White

giver." If you feel led, please consider joining in on this mission. Together, we can invest in the next generation of Christian leaders and make a lasting difference for the sake of the gospel.

Thank you for your time and consideration. May God bless you abundantly.

Until the Whole World Hears,

Jon Tyler R. White
Pastor, Jamestown First Baptist Church
Jamestown, Kentucky

ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

Sharon Ball Enzor

Sharon Enzor, a distinguished alumna of BCU, is the deserving recipient of the Alumni of the Year Award. An active member of Flat Rock Baptist Church, she serves as a Sunday school teacher, demonstrating her commitment to community and education. Sharon earned a Bachelor of Science in Natural Sciences from Blue Mountain College in 1966, a Master of Combined Science in Biology and Chemistry from the University of Mississippi in 1971, and a Doctor of Education in Science Education from Peabody College at Vanderbilt University in 1990. Over her 35-year career at BCU, she held key positions, including professor of science, Chair of the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, and Vice President and Provost, leaving a lasting impact on the academic community.



DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

Diana Cedeno Alcivar

Diana Cedeno Alcivar is a recipient of the Young Alumna of the Year award, and she is honored for her community dedication and efforts to spread God's love. With a degree in Business Administration, she returns to campus to encourage current students and alumni in their Christian service. As a member of Iglesia Biblica Cristiana, she supports women and children in Ecuador by focusing on healing from trauma and abuse. Since relocating to Milagro in March 2022, she and her husband, Ronnie, have partnered with New Jerusalem Church to provide counseling and practical assistance to families. Diana exemplifies the characteristics of a Titus 2 woman, nurturing others with compassion and inspiring many through her service.

ALUMNI AWARDS

Celebrating Faithful Lives, Lasting Legacies



FAITHFUL DAUGHTER AWARD

Susan Bolding

Susan Bolding, recipient of the Faithful Daughter Award, exemplifies servant leadership through her dedication to her community and church. She fosters connections with her BCU family, including her Big Sister, Vicki Price, and her daughter, Natalie Copeland. Susan's passion for fellowship shines at gatherings like "Mall Crawls" and cake decorating events, turning every occasion into a celebration. As the Director and lead teacher at FBC Preschool in Belmont for 38 years, she nurtures young minds with kindness. Her roles in the church, including Youth Minister and Music Minister, reflect her commitment to shaping lives in her community. In addition to her professional contributions, Susan cherishes time spent with her seven grandchildren. She actively promotes BCU, where she serves on the Alumni Board for the Northeast Mississippi chapter, inspiring future generations to seize its opportunities. Her mission is to encourage others to find meaningful paths guided by the principles that have enriched her life.



ED LUDLOW AWARD

Kathy Voyles

Kathy Voyles, the Ed Ludlow Award recipient, exemplifies dedication and service. A BCU graduate from 1971 with a degree in Music, she has been a cherished pianist at First Baptist Church in Ripley, MS, for nearly 40 years. Kathy leads worship music, participates in BCU Alumni events, and showcases her remarkable talent. Known for her hospitality, she opens her home during reunions and offers her Airbnb, The Cagle Place, at no cost. As the owner of the Kathy Voyles State Farm Agency, she embodies the values of Truth, Knowledge, and Virtue, while generously supporting BCU and connecting alumni. Kathy's unwavering faith and servant leadership truly make her deserving of the Ed Ludlow Award.



JOHNNIE ARMSTRONG AWARD

Lecia Stubblefield

Lecia Stubblefield, recipient of the Johnnie Armstrong Award, exemplifies exceptional leadership and dedication to physical education. Her commitment to the Champions of Character values—integrity, responsibility, sportsmanship, servant leadership, and respect—is evident in both her professional and personal life. As a member of Ecu Baptist Church, she has enhanced physical education programs by making them more inclusive and securing grants for community activities. With a strong educational background and administrative experience, Lecia prioritizes the well-being of her students and staff. As a mother of three sons involved in education and coaching, she actively promotes sportsmanship. Her ongoing mentorship with Ms. Johnnie and her dedication to student health through athletics demonstrate her lasting impact on the community.





BETTY HEARN AWARD

Chandra Hisaw

Chandra Hisaw is the recipient of the Betty Hearn Award, reflecting the values esteemed by BMCU. With a Bachelor's in Secondary Education and a Master of Science in Biology, she has dedicated her career to high school and community college students. Her commitment to servant leadership is shown through her support for an inclusive classroom that respects diverse learning styles, encouraging active student engagement. Chandra's deep-rooted Christian values and genuine care for others make her a role model in both her personal and professional life, embodying the spirit of BMCU and deserving of this prestigious award.



FAITHFUL SERVANT AWARD

William "Ray" Burks

William "Ray" Burks is the recipient of the Faithful Servant Award for his dedication to ministry and community. A member of First Baptist Church in Belmont, he answered the call to ministry early in life and aimed to equip himself with the necessary skills. As an active pastor and Tishomingo County Associational Mission Strategist, Bro. Ray promotes BMCU and leads mission efforts, strengthening ties between educational institutions and local churches. With several degrees and ongoing studies toward a Doctor of Ministry in Leadership, he has positively impacted many lives through teaching and missions, inspiring others to share the Gospel at home and abroad. His commitment to ministry embodies the true spirit of service.

JOIN THE FUN

Reconnect, Remember, Reignite!

From unforgettable campus moments to joyful reunions, Blue Mountain Christian University alumni have shared countless memories—and the best is yet to come! Don't miss your chance to be involved in exciting alumni events for 2025-26. Whether you've been away for a while or never left at heart, now is the perfect time to become an active part of the BMCU alumni family.

Your story continues here — join us and be a part of the memories still to come!

2026 NOMINATIONS



It's never too early to recognize excellence! Please help us celebrate remarkable alumni by using the QR code to submit your nominations for the 2026 Alumni Awards. Whether they've made a difference in their profession, community, or alma mater, your nomination ensures their contributions don't go unnoticed. Submit today and honor those who inspire!





A foundation of knowledge. A future full of **light**.

Blue Mountain Christian University (BMCU) officially broke ground on the Center for Grace and Healing, a transformative facility designed to prepare future healthcare professionals. The May 2 ceremony brought together board members, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and local community members to celebrate this historic milestone.

The Center for Grace and Healing will serve as the new home for BMCU’s School of Nursing and the Department of Natural Science. The \$15 million facility will include classrooms, faculty offices, simulation labs, science labs, and a 200-seat lecture hall—significantly enriching the university’s academic infrastructure and student learning experience. Construction of the building will be led by Worsham Brothers of Corinth in collaboration with Oxford Architecture of Nashville, Stamps Design Group of Knoxville, and supported by USDA Rural Development.

“Groundbreaking for the Center for Grace and Healing launches the construction of a beautiful addition to our already picturesque campus, but more importantly it marks the beginning of a new era of Christ-centered academic excellence at BMCU,” said Dr. Barbara Mcmillin, BMCU President. “We praise God for the opportunity that this new facility affords us for educating healthcare professionals who are equipped to minister to patients with skill, compassion, and grace.”

This marks the first new building to be added to the BMCU campus since the completion of Fisher Washburn in 2005.

For more information about the Center for Grace and Healing, please contact Haley Carpenter at hcarpenter@bmc.edu.



PHOTOS BY DELISE TEAGUE



*“Plant the seeds now, and tomorrow
will bloom with possibility.”*
— Unknown

Thank you for your years of **light**, leadership, and lasting impact.

A LEGACY THAT **LIGHTS** THE WAY



Dr. Jenetta Waddell is known for being a life-long learner and an educator. Her career as an educator, which began in the mid-1970's in Alabama as an elementary teacher, spanned approximately 50 years. Dr. Waddell advanced in her career as she had opportunities to serve in various roles in Alabama, which included instructional supervisor, acting superintendent, and adjunct instructor of graduate courses. In 2003, she transferred to Delta State University and served as Chair of the Division of Teacher Education and Doctoral Coordinator.

Following these distinguished positions, Dr. Waddell came to BMCU and served as Associate Professor of Education, Professor of Education, Dean of the School of Education, and Dean of Graduate Studies. During these years, she received numerous prestigious awards, which included, but were not limited to, BMCU Faculty Member of the Year and College of Education Award for Outstanding Teacher.

Dr. Waddell consistently devotes her waking hours to serving others. During her time at BMCU, she was known for maintaining long office

hours and for conveying life's most important lessons to her students, all the while promoting academic excellence. Her influence and expertise were recognized beyond the classroom, as she presented and conducted workshops for local, regional, and national organizations. As an active member of the Methodist Church, Dr. Waddell's interests center around children as she aspires to serve her Lord with responsibilities focused on them. She has had the privilege of serving as a Sunday School Teacher, member of the Children's Council, and Chair of the Child Center Enrichment Board.

As her assistant, I had the opportunity to daily witness her quiet, soft-spoken, and gentle spirit as she diligently worked to complete her tasks timely, proficiently, and accurately. Co-workers have described Dr. Waddell as: "a progressive educator who keeps abreast of current trends in education, and provides the necessary training and resources to enable faculty to adequately prepare teacher candidates;" one who is "a pleasure to work for and learn from;" and "eager to share her vast knowledge and experience." Finally, Dr. Waddell was depicted as "always professional, both in and out of the classroom."

As someone so aptly remarked, Dr. Waddell, "Your influence extends far beyond the confines of the classroom. The knowledge you've imparted, the values you've instilled, and the inspiration you've provided will echo through generations, creating a legacy of wisdom and compassion."

Dr. Waddell and her brother Sam reside in Tuscumbia, Alabama.

- Written by Jean Harrington, Administrative Assistant in the Office of Graduate and Continuing Education, School of Education

Dr. Lynn Varner was a mainstay in the School of Education at Blue Mountain Christian University for twelve years. She taught both undergraduate and graduate courses and served as a supervisor for student interns while completing their teaching internship. During her time at BMCU, she was actively involved in many activities and committees. She led Literacy on the Lawn, was sponsor for Kappa Delta Pi, Co-sponsor for Apple Club, Chair of the Core Curriculum Committee, a member of the Graduate and Honors Councils, and a participant on the Assessment and Academic Freedom Committees. Dr. Varner served as Principal at Indianola Academy, a guidance counselor and an elementary school teacher.

Before coming to BMUC, Dr. Varner served as an Educational Leadership faculty member at Delta State University, Doctoral Program Coordinator, NCATE Coordinator, and the Director of the Thad Cochran Center for Rural School Leadership and Research. Dr. Varner has served as a team leader for numerous accrediting agencies and review boards including the CAEP National Board of Examiners, the Educational Leadership Constituent Council, NCATE National Board of Examiners and the Mississippi Board of Examiners.

Because of the various roles and positions that Dr. Varner has held, she has received numerous awards including the Delta State University S.E. Kossman Outstanding Faculty Award, the College of Education Overall Faculty Award for Teaching, Service, and Research at Delta State University; Who's Who Among Professional Women in Education; Cambridge Who's Who Among Professional Women in Education and the Phi Delta Kappa Dissertation Award.

As important as education has been in her life, she found time to be involved in activities at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Oxford, Habitat for Humanity, the Crosstie Arts Council, the Delta Arts Council, the Delta Arts Alliance, the Grammy Museum of Mississippi, the Backpacks for Education, the Oxford food pantry and Thacker Mountain Radio.

Since Dr. Varner's retirement, she enjoys traveling with her husband, daughters and sons-in-laws and spending time with her grandbabies. Dr. Varner's wisdom is missed in the School of Education, but we know that she is grateful for time with her family.

- Written by Stephanie Clausel, Assistant Professor of Education, School of Education



MEET THE FACULTY

Continuing the

LIGHT FORWARD



Blue Mountain Christian University is excited to welcome Dr. Ashley Coleman as the new Dean of Education. A native of Pontotoc, Mississippi, Coleman brings over 15 years of experience in education, along with a deep passion for student success and curriculum development.

Coleman’s journey in education began with a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary English Education from the University of Mississippi. She later earned a Master of Education in School Leadership and Supervision from Belhaven University and a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Freed-Hardeman University.

Her career has been marked by dedication and innovation in K-12 education, including 12 years with the Pontotoc County School District. She spent a decade as an English Language Arts teacher before transitioning into leadership roles, including Curriculum Specialist and MTSS Director. Additionally, she played a vital role in mentoring new teachers throughout the district.

As she steps into her new role at BMCU, Coleman is eager to inspire and equip the next generation of educators.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP!

Don’t miss this extraordinary opportunity to further your education while receiving substantial tuition assistance.

APPLY TODAY
and continue your path to excellence for His glory.

We can’t wait to welcome you back to BMCU, where faith and learning go hand in hand!



PHOTO BY DELISE TEAGUE

As a proud member of the BMCU family, you already understand the life-changing impact of a Christ-centered education. We invite you to continue your journey with us by enrolling in one of our distinguished master’s programs, tailored to help you grow academically, professionally, and spiritually.

To make your graduate education even more accessible, we are excited to offer exclusive scholarships for BMCU alumni pursuing advanced degrees in Master of Education, Business Administration, and Master of Science in Kinesiology.

Master of Education Scholarships

100% Tuition Scholarship for BMCU graduates who:

- Earned 120+ credit hours at BMCU
- Completed their degree within four years
- 50% Tuition Scholarship for BMCU graduates who:
- Earned 61+ credit hours at BMCU
- Completed their degree with a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- 30% Tuition Scholarship for BMCU graduates who:
- Earned 30–60 credit hours at BMCU
- 25% Tuition Scholarship for certified teachers

Master of Business Administration & Master of Science in Kinesiology Scholarships

50% Tuition Scholarship for BMCU graduates who:

- Earned 61+ credit hours at BMCU
- Completed their degree with a GPA of 3.0 or higher
- 30% Tuition Scholarship for BMCU graduates who:
- Earned 30–60 credit hours at BMCU



LIZ THURMOND
Associate Dean of Graduate & Distance Learning Enrollment

HONORING THE PAST. LEADING THE FUTURE.



HARLEY GONZALES
Instructor of Education



AMY TATE
Assistant Professor of Education



LIBBY YOUNG
Instructor of Education
Director of Clinical Experience

At BMCU, we equip graduates for leadership and service—always keeping CHRIST at the center.



FAITH. GRIT. GLORY.

A championship moment that shines beyond the win.

ONE TEAM.
ONE PURPOSE.
ONE
UNFORGETTABLE
SEASON.

CHAMPIONS RISE

Lady Toppers Make History with
First-Ever SSAC Championship Victory

The Blue Mountain Christian University Lady Toppers have etched their names in history, capturing their first-ever Southern States Athletic Conference (SSAC) Championship with a thrilling 62-53 victory over the University of Mobile. This monumental win secures their place as champions and marks their first trip to the NAIA National Tournament in the modern era.

The Lady Toppers, entering the tournament as the No. 8 seed, defied the odds and became the lowest-seeded team to win an SSAC Tournament Championship. Their resilience and determination culminated in a spectacular fourth-quarter comeback that stunned the Rams and secured the program's first conference title.

The Road to Victory

The championship game was a battle, with Mobile jumping to multiple 10-point leads throughout the contest. The Lady Toppers struggled offensively in the first half, managing 19 points before halftime. However, they refused to waver, maintaining belief in their process and commitment to teamwork.

The turning point came in the fourth quarter when Blue Mountain moved. Kathryn Echols ignited the rally with a clutch three-pointer, giving the Lady Toppers their first lead. From there, the momentum shifted decisively in their favor. Charnita Brooks, who led the team with 15 points and six rebounds, sealed the victory with a late three-pointer, followed by an 8-0 closing run that left no doubt about the outcome.

Isabella Carlson played a key role, scoring 15 points, including the team's first nine on three-pointers. Crystin Guy, outstanding throughout the tournament, contributed 11 points and secured her place as a consistent force in all four games, tallying 77 total points for the championship run. Maddie Kirk added 10 points, while McKenzie Williams dominated the boards with 11 rebounds.

A Testament to Teamwork and Faith

Reflecting on the team's achievement, Head Coach Tracy Rice praised the grit and heart displayed by her players. "We believed even when things weren't going well today," Rice said. "We trusted the process and kept grinding away. I am so proud of the toughness this team has shown. This proves what a group of young ladies can accomplish when they put the team first and play to honor God. I am so thankful."

The journey to the championship was filled with challenges, but the Lady Toppers proved that perseverance, teamwork, and faith can lead to extraordinary accomplishments. Blue Mountain Christian University and its community celebrate a victory that will be remembered for years. Go Lady Toppers!

Stay Connected with BMCU Sports

Be sure to follow all Blue Mountain Christian University sports on our website to keep up with everything God has done this year and continues to do through our sports programs. Scan QR code to see more Topper updates!

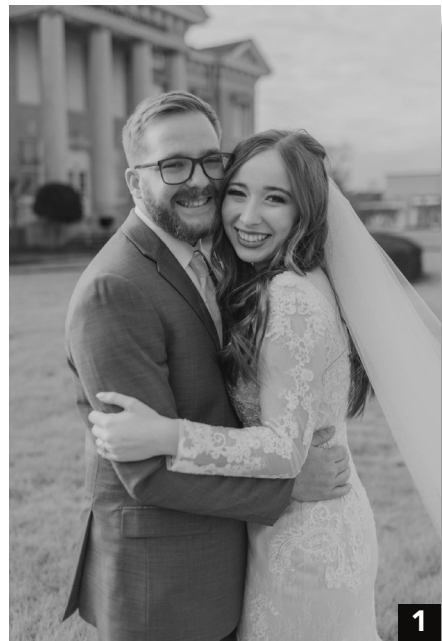


“Being at BMCU has been a life-changing experience for me. God has worked miracles in my life throughout my entire time here. One of my highlights was winning the 2025 SSAC Conference Championship. Being able to experience that with my teammates and amazing coaches is something that I will never forget!”

Charnita Brooks

NEW LIGHT, NEW LIFE

Honoring joyful milestones that **brighten** our community.



WEDDINGS

- ❶ **Tyler Golden** (2024) married **Jenna Landers** (current student) on January 4, 2025
- ❷ **Elias White** (2022) married **Margaret McCain** (2022) on December 11, 2024
- ❸ **Josiah Sowell** married **Carys Easterling** (2022) on December 21, 2024

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❹ **Nolan** (2020), **Journey** (2017) and **Gus Bennett** welcomed **Beatrice Britton Bennett** on March 20, 2025
- ❺ **Michael** (2021) & **Faith** (2020) **Graves** welcomed **Magnolia Ann Graves** on March 19, 2025
- ❻ **Dustin** (2018), **Anna** (2018), **Colt**, **Shae**, and **Lula McCoy** welcomed **Loretta Tate McCoy** on December 20, 2024
- ❼ **Michael & Anna Million** (2018) welcomed **Lyla Paige Million** on February 8, 2025
- ❽ **Blake Smith & Liane Riles Smith** (2021) welcomed **Riley Blake Smith** on March 3, 2025
- ❾ **Danny**, **Carlye** (2015), **Liam**, **Sammy**, and **Nora Ruth** welcomed **Charlotte Faye Ruth** on January 6, 2025
- ❿ **Jon Tyler** (2014), **Stacy** (2010), **Jovie**, and **Lucy Mae White** welcomed **Johnnie Anne White** on April 1, 2025



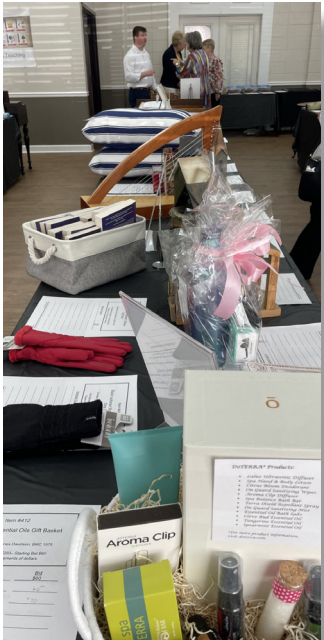
Every child
begins the
world anew,
a **bright**
promise
of hope,
joy, and
tomorrow.



Greater Memphis Alumni Chapter celebrated its 40th year of providing scholarships to one or more incoming freshmen to BMCU. Since its establishment in 1985 through the 2023-2024 school year, the GMAC has provided annual scholarship funds to 63 students. In 2014, the GMAC fully funded our endowed scholarship, Memphis Area Mary Louise Cox and Mary Louise Oakley Merrill Scholarship. For many years, those who received the Greater Memphis Annual Scholarship (formerly, the Memphis Area Annual Scholarship) were selected from freshmen entering BMCU from Shelby County. Several years later, our area grew to include Fayette, Shelby and Tipton Counties in TN and Desoto, Marshall, and Tate Counties in MS.

The GMAC has been faithful to continue the vision of those ladies who hosted the first scholarship luncheon. Through the years, we have made some changes to encourage the younger generation to support our efforts. The luncheons are no longer formal sit-down meals, but more casual with hors d'oeuvres which cost is covered by the late Dr. Jerre Freeman and his wife Anne. A 2011 addition to our luncheons - a silent auction with items of all shapes, sizes and prices- has given a boost to our scholarship funds. The GMAC wants other students to have the opportunity to receive a Christian education like we did. All local alumni and friends are encouraged to join the chapter in “paying it forward.”

Join us in continuing a legacy of generosity and faith—your involvement can help open the door to a Christ-centered education for future BMCU students.



In 2002 soon after Dr. Bettye Coward was installed as the seventh president of Blue Mountain College (BMC), she attended a welcome luncheon in Huntsville, AL. Thirty enthusiastic Alabama alumni attended. Later that year Dr. Coward returned and attendees suggested that they meet monthly for lunch to stay in touch. And, thus, the North Alabama Area BMC Fellowship was born with a group of 17 women from various walks of life who loved BMC and each other. Today we have a core group of nine energetic, dedicated women who love Blue Mountain Christian University (BMCU) and do all we can to insure it continues for another 150 years. We return to Blue Mountain as often as possible participating in Founders' Day, Homecoming, Reunion and Palmer-Donald House activities. We support each other through the sad times and rejoice with each other in the good times.

At an early meeting of the North Alabama Fellowship, Lynne Heaven (Class of 1971) suggested that establishing a scholarship for a North Alabama student would help to attract Alabama students to BMC. The group agreed and set a goal of raising \$10,000 to endow a scholarship for an Alabama student. In 2004, as a first step toward achieving that goal, \$750 was donated by the members to the general scholarship fund, and they were on their way. By 2016, through individual contributions and fund raising projects such as estate sales, the goal was reached. On March 3, 2017, the North Alabama Scholarship endowment fund was officially fully invested.

In 2016, Gay Rutherford (Class of 1959) came up with the idea of an annual fern sale to continue growing our endowment. We have sold ferns every year since, increasing our sales each year. This year we sold 380 and will make \$3695 thanks in part to the super salesmanship of Charlotte Madison (Class of 1969) who sold 197. Our endowment has grown from that first \$750 donation to \$26,731 as of 30 June 2024; seven Alabama students have received scholarships. As the fund grows each year, the scholarship grows and we are able to give a deserving student the same opportunity we had to grow at Blue Mountain. Though we are small in number, we have big hearts for BMCU and BMCU students. We invite you to join us and help us grow if you live in North Alabama or join a group in Mississippi or Tennessee or start a new group if there is not one where you live. BMCU is in need of our support, and you will find that rediscovering and working together with old Blue Mountain friends is great fun and highly rewarding.

BMCU needs our support—and reconnecting with Blue Mountain friends makes giving back deeply rewarding.



This Is Where **Bright** Futures Begin.

At BMCU, we prepare students not just for careers—but for lives of purpose.
Whether in classrooms, labs, or service, our students are equipped with
knowledge, character, and vision.

The future is bright—and it starts here.

Discover what your
future could look like.



PHOTO BY DELISE TEAGUE

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

1948

Kathryn Jewell Ayers

1949

Virginia Rutledge Taylor

1950

Betty Braddock Henry

1952

Eddie Elrod Durham
Margie Gregg Sizemore
Martha Huggins Fisher

1953

Betty Vandiver Lindstrom
Sue Garner Phillips

1954

Mary Ann Wacker Freer
Annetta Ray Kies
Betty Lou Crawford Martin
Ida Faye Todd Oglesby
Margaret Allen

1955

Molly Murrell White
Elizabeth Buchanan Newcomb
June Newcomb Boyd

1956

Betty Watts
Beverly Mabry Hannaford
Jimmie Trussell Rogers
Nancy Browning Galatas

1957

Jean Shurden Davis
Elizabeth Bruce Smith
Pat Horton Stanford
Ann Hall Vickery
Leora Geer Duce-Byrd
Lucretia Majure Burton
Mary Lowry Reavis

1958

Faye Walker Pepper
Mary Ellen Cockrell Borchert
Mary Jane Stokes Okan
Alva Wright Brent
Marlene Stuhmer Garrity

1959

Betty Walters Clarke
Shirley Nickell McBeath

1960

Carolyn Mounce
Carolyn Eubanks Barr
Ann Guntharp Blanchard
Sally Hewlett Taylor

1961

Anna Jackson Quinn
Billie Hutchison Martin
Nancy Buchanan Hart
Rachel Hamilton Emery

1962

Martha Stokes King
Sylvia Lovell Braddock
Betty Woodruff Ward
Dot Raymer Jackson
LaDoska Bennett
Martha Sisk Randolph
Norma Ruth Robbins Lee
Wanda Greene Robinson

1963

Tommye Bryant Harris
Guyla McGee Gould
Pat Jett Rogers
Susie Jackson Butler

1964

Janice Nicholson
Judith Skelton Swanberg
Margaret McCully Blinn
Sarah Spain

1965

Carol Cliff Blasi
DeeDee Brantley Davis
Gayle Lee Smotherman
Pat Ledbetter
Donna Butler Conklin
Fran Magers Massey
Gail Heitman DeBurgh
Hope Summerour Stone
Susan Caldwell Pitts
Wayne Gullett

1966

Joanna Hill Carter
Rose Lazenby Kemmer
Carolyn Childers Saunders
Dorothy Duncan
Katherine Smith Dye
Laura Grisham Medley
Mary Brister Shadburn
Temple Triplett Lauer

1967

Noveta Smith Nellums
Leeba Roy Griffin
Leslie Cowart Todd
Connie Russell
Gloria Glover Gates
Jane Clower Bryant
Jim Futral
Shirley Moore Futral
Lana Hill Anderson
Linda Wong Lim
Lynne Knight Fooshee
Margaret Davis Houpt
Myra Harrington Langley
Nancy Furnish

1968

Sandi Perry Morris
Lana Yarbrough Thompson
Norma Boyce Washington
Robbie Crissey
Carolyn Olive Rhodes
Elsie Jackson Norgard
Hazel Tucker
Janie Martindale Coombs
Linda Bishop Johnson
Martha Smart Prather
Mary Ann Everett
Susan Dobbs Nations

1969

Martha Childers Cappleman
Donna Walker Brown
Charlotte Palmer
Charlotte Bryant Madison
Hope Green Inman
Kathie Wessels Wilson
Sandra Murphy Owens
Tillie Nolan Gullett
Barbara Strickland McConville

1970

Rex Yancey
Kathy McKinney McCarthy
Linda Kirby Underwood
Pat Alred Smedley
Ruby Rorie

1971

Audrey Snow Caldwell
Barbara Rahrer
Roxanne Tucker King
Genie Henderson Kerr
Joy McCreary Nanney
Lynne Mayhall Heaven
Shirley Mohundro Gustman

1972

Belinda Allen Pearce
Patricia Smith Crews
Ann Mauney Little
Lyn Bennett Melton
Pamela Baker Drake
Sherrell Ivy Settlemires
Kitty Sanders King

1973

Linda Hall Brooks
Margo Chrestman Terry

1974

Jan Tucker McCrary
Larry McCrary
Doris Jackson Sanford
Sandy Freeman Coutoumanos
Brenda McGee McMurray
Carolyn Marks Ketchum
Jerry Beaty
Joy Hurt Hill
Lea Smith Bennett
Teresa Lafarlette Julian
Wanda Weatherly Chalk

1975

Shirley Siler Harrison
Anita Crump Eddings
Kathy Justice Hunter
Bruce Cappleman
Beverly Hemphill Moffitt
Barbara Hall Goodwin
Beverly Pipkin McNeal
Cindy Boyd Steen
Bonnie Byrd
Linda Nolan Hill

1976

Dwalia South
Anita McCormick Russell
Janie Waggoner
Susan McKee Hill
Cora Jones Davidson
Emma Ainsworth
Lisa Nix Knight

1977

Linda Aston Person
Sara Stephens
Gerry Jones Hood
Marla Costner White
Alvis Cooper
Lee Allen Gaskin Jefcoats
Nebra Counce King
Rose Alldridge Bear

1978

David Hamilton
Deborah McCarty Taylor
Donna Abel
James Towery
Judy Crawford Rutledge

Renelda Pharr Owen
Susan Sparks Bolding
Christopher Burrows
Donna Smith Burrows
Tommy Peters
Emily Crump Hayes
Pamela Bush Cain

1980

Beth Walker Bailey
Kim Hill Waller
Shelly Steward Parker
Ouida Fulgham Gnall

1981

Ellon Yancey
Joyce Hodges Peters
Marcia Plunk

1982

Marla Bell Ledbetter
Glynda Hall
Pam Barnett Golding

1983

Jeff Ginn
Terri Yarbrough Stanford

1985

Soyrietta Ross Valentine

1987

Stephanie Sanders Clausel

1988

Dawn Lowery
Beth Davis Robertson

1989

Mary Ann Pannell Epting

1990

Bevin Gregory Wilder
Leslie Jarvis Holliday

1991

Royce Wilder
Jan Brownlee

1992

Rebecca Trusty Brown

1993

Stephanie Seward Hart
Laura Bryant Baker

1994

Jennifer Enzor Chambers
Lisa Gay Calhoun

1996

Fancy Bennett Fowler

1999

Leah Blunt Denson

2002

Ashley Ball Berry
Shanna Wilbanks Vaughan

2003

Heather Carpenter Whitehead
Maria Teel
Martha Bending

2004

Nicole Booth Hitt
Cristy Turner Underwood

2005

Natalie Bolding Copeland
Tonnie Johnson Gray

2006

Renee Elizabeth Juarez Boswell
James Underwood

2007

Louie Williams
Carol Peters

2008

Susan Hamilton

2012

Jay Parks
Jeff Adams

2013

Tommy Doughty

2015

Kody Moore

2017

Andrea Lewis

2018

Jacob Worley
Julianna Garner
Mallorie Sweat Lyles

Spouse

Tom Moffitt
John Stanford
Douglas Nellums

**This list reflects active members between
March 31, 2024, and March 31, 2025.*

IN MEMORIAM

1931 Dora Murphy Wilson	1952 Nadine Capwell Smith Fannie Ben Pieritte	Linda Herring Buckner Billie Covey Johnson Linda Edwards Lewis Linda Dowdy Martin
1932 Mary Dickens Carruth	1953 Rita Duke Dean Helen Henderson Mears Creely Myatt Wilson	1972 Edward Gregory
1934 Louise Curtis Campbell	1954 Marianne Colvert Rollins	1973 Dianne Willard Rapp
1935 Doris Hamilton Crocker Doris Thompson Bobo	1956 Vera McCauley Perkins	1974 Judith Nichols Demico
1936 Alice Warren Nunn	1957 Ann Deavenport Baker	1975 Don Hulsey Shirley Tigrett Smith
1937 Nell Crews Wesch	1958 Elizabeth Galbreath Elizabeth Morris Morris Mary Cox Rush Lourenda Stack McKinney	1976 Sue McPhail McPhail William Dowdy Wayne King
1938 Ruth Farr Stanford	1959 Sara Martindale Billingsley	1979 Jimmy Russell
1940 Grace Philpot Nelson	1960 Gail Johnson Furr Yvonne Stone Hill Dorothy Bell Hughes	1981 Tina Phillips Bennett
1941 Dorothy Harpole Gilliland	1961 June Dorrough Ezell	1984 Dale Funderburg
1943 Edith Taylor Paschal Susie Hacker Strunk Bebe Welborn Welch	1963 Melton Mason Martha Stone Thompson	1986 John Huddleston
1944 Patty Davis Ellis Erin Guyton Mauldin	1964 Danny Bryant	1989 David Parrish
1945 Marguerite Dulin Alexander Arlena Smith Hasel	1965 Ann Longest Smith	1992 Patricia Throckmorton Anderson
1946 Nancy McKinstry Ellis	1966 Sandra Mitchell Harris Ruth Mayhew Wood	2000 Stephanie Jones
1947 Jean McCarty Kittrell Kikuno Miyagi Nakamura	1968 Bitsy Bynum Gilliland Patsy Henry Highland	2003 Roxieann Walton Foster
1948 Emily Clements Moffatt	1970 Excail Burleson Patricia Austin Mercer	2006 Heather Harville Mayo
1950 Lula Counce Wood		2020 Angela Spears
1951 Lola Riddle Sorrells		

This list reflects those deceased between April 30, 2024, and February 28, 2025.

BRIGHT DAYS AHEAD

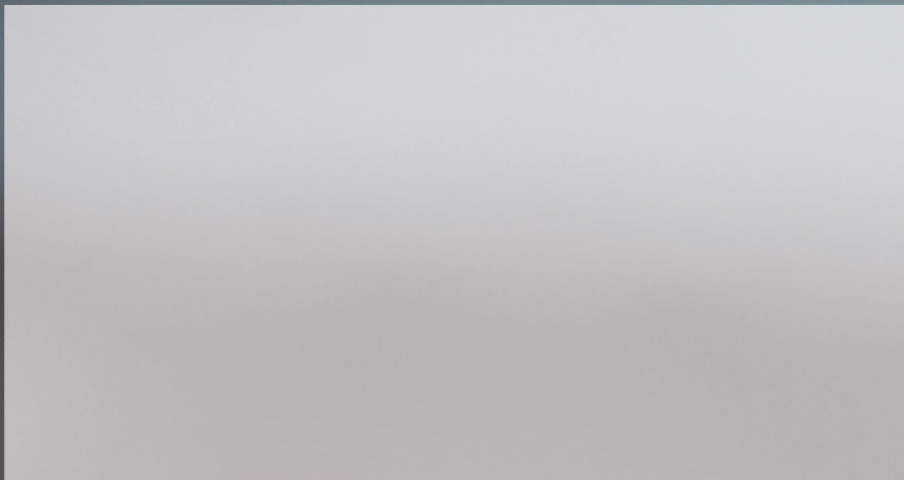
Shining a *light* on what's next—don't miss it!





BLUE MOUNTAIN
CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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Blue Mountain, MS
38610



NOTE: This publication contains dated material
and needs to be mailed as soon as possible.

A sunrise is God's way of saying, 'Let's start again.'
Unknown