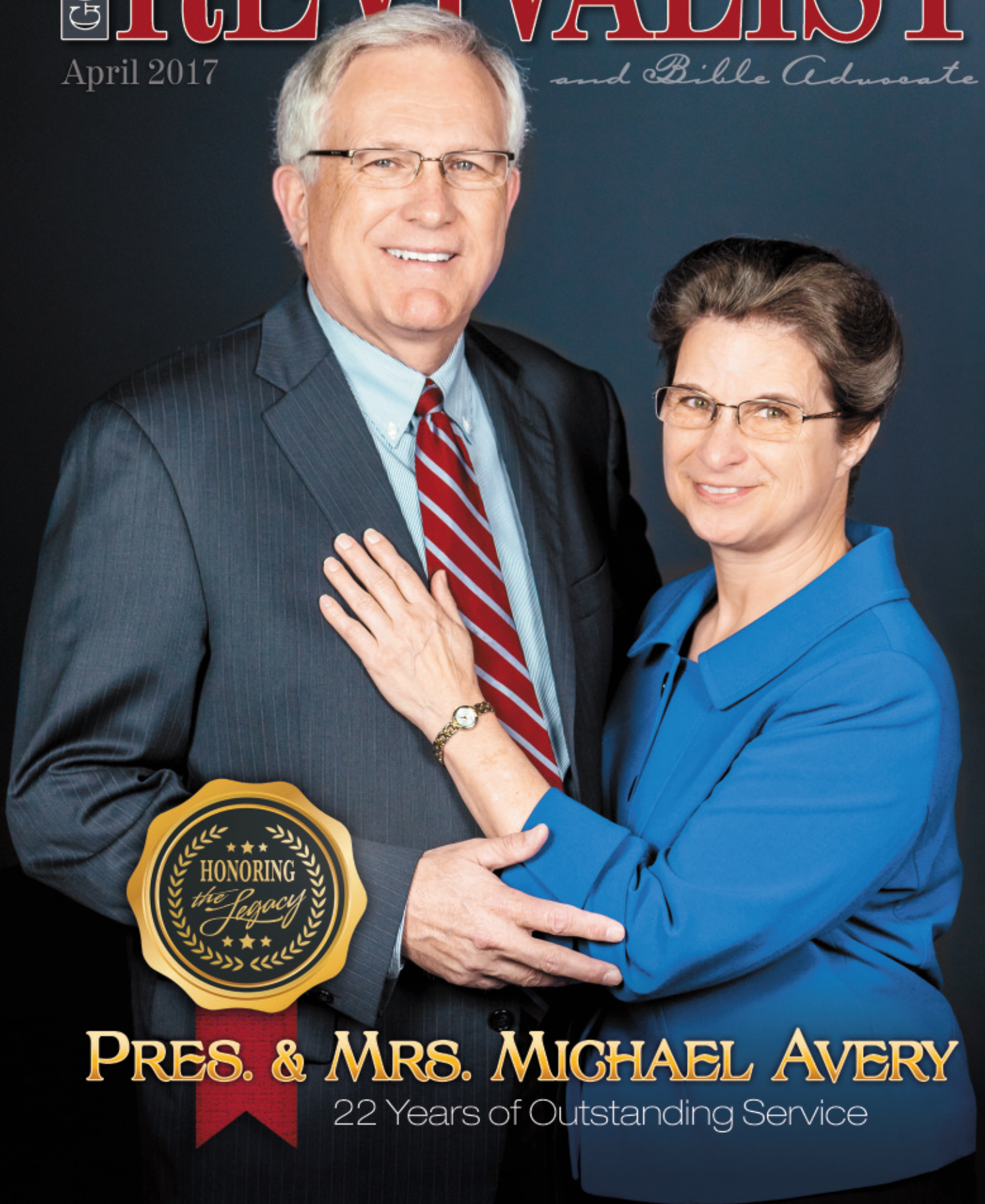


# GOD'S REVIVALIST

April 2017

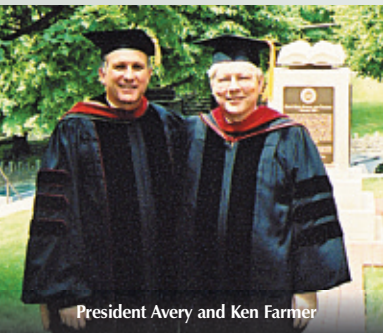
*and Bible Advocate*



**PRES. & MRS. MICHAEL AVERY**

22 Years of Outstanding Service





President Avery and Ken Farmer

# about this issue

## THANK YOU, PRES. AVERY

I distinctly remember the day I picked up the *God's Revivalist* which featured President Avery and several of the GBS staff on a red carpet that was rolled out down the walkway and steps in front of the Administration Building. As I looked at those assembled there, I told my wife, "I would like to be a part of that team." However, at that time it did not seem to be a realistic aspiration. I was chief academic administrator at another Bible college and I had plenty to do. In addition, there were other factors that complicated a return to GBS.

In 1999 I knew I was on the move, but I was not sure to where. I had several interviews, but nothing seemed to click. For one of two interviews in Dayton, Ohio, during the Inter-church Holiness Convention, I sat with President Avery behind the GBS display. Mike said, "Ken, I want you to come back as academic dean and lead us into regional accreditation." What had previously seemed unlikely became a reality.

I was grateful for this opportunity. Serving 14 years as Vice President for Academic Affairs was both challenging and rewarding. We not only mounted a successful effort for regional accreditation, but we also made real progress in many areas that strengthened GBS. While I credit the great academic team for these accomplishments, support from the president was essential and gave us the confidence we needed as we met each new challenge.

I was always concerned about preparing the next generations of leaders. This was especially critical for my own position as I dealt with the uncertainties of multiple sclerosis. President Avery's approval of Aaron Profitt as my assistant VPAA provided Aaron with adequate on-the-job training and allowed us to develop a smooth transition. When that was effected, the president offered me another opportunity—the position of managing editor for *God's Revivalist*. I didn't realize how much I would enjoy this work! All of this illustrates how important President Avery's friendship has been to me. He has always been willing to invest in people and to give them the space they need to grow and to become productive in ministry.

President Avery, thank you for your service to our alma mater! During your 22-year tenure, you have taken GBS to new levels. There is no area of campus that has not been greatly improved, and we are better positioned to meet the challenges ahead. —Ken Farmer

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*God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate* (ISSN 0745-0788) is published monthly except for combined issues in January-February and June-July-August for **\$12.00 per year (\$28.00, Canada; \$60.00, other countries)** by the Revivalist Press of God's Bible School, College and Missionary Training Home, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Periodical postage paid at Cincinnati, Ohio, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER: send address changes to *God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate*, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.**

*God's Revivalist and Bible Advocate*, the official organ of God's Bible School, is a magazine founded by Martin Wells Knapp in July of 1888. We seek to proclaim the good news of salvation; to stir a revival spirit among Christians; to stimulate Christian growth and responsible Christian living; to present the happenings and interests of God's Bible School.

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God's Bible School and College seeks to glorify God and to serve His Church by providing higher education centered in Holy Scripture and shaped by Wesleyan conviction, thus preparing faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ and spread scriptural holiness throughout the world.

God's Bible School and College does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or against otherwise qualified handicapped persons in its admission of students or employment of its faculty and staff.

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COVER PHOTO: President and Mrs. Avery by Nathan Dahler.

# the president's page



**Since success never happens in a vacuum, I want to thank the dedicated people who have gathered around me. Those who have served alongside me are due every bit of gratitude I can muster.**

## THANK YOU!

by Michael R. Avery, President

I love to work with words. It has been my life for the last forty years. Yet, when I want to say something that I feel very deeply about, words seem to break down and squeak. I fear that is happening just now as I try to say “thanks” to all of you in the Revivalist and GBS Alumni families. I am deeply grateful for the “running conversation” we have had through The President’s Page. I have shared my heart, and you have listened. So many of you have written or called and expressed appreciation. Thank you! I am also grateful for the financial support you have given to the college. You have responded to my appeal letters with generous gifts totaling several millions of dollars over the last two decades! Each of you has been crucial to the success of the work here on the Hilltop! Thank you!

Since success never happens in a vacuum, I want to thank the dedicated people who have gathered around me to produce *God’s Revivalist* and administrate the school. I have enjoyed the wise governance of an outstanding board of trustees. These men and women have stood over me and behind me, giving guidance and long term direction for all the ministries connected with GBS. Larry Smith and Kevin Moser have worked tirelessly to make *God’s Revivalist* one of the best religious publications available today. Ken Farmer, who followed Larry, has only enhanced the paper and continued the tradition of excellence. The administrators and key faculty and staff people who have served alongside me in the day-to-day operations of the school are due every bit of gratitude I can muster. You will read about them in the extended narrative of this issue.

I also want to thank the students for challenging me, inspiring me, loving me, and “keeping me young” in my thinking. Pouring my life out for them has given so much back in return.

To all of you—thanks for 22 wonderful years! ■





Dear President Avery,

The Board of Trustees of God's Bible School and College has had the incredible privilege of working closely with you over these past 22 years and witnessing the gracious hand of God on this venerable institution. We are deeply indebted to you for your outstanding leadership on so many levels. You have given the best years of your life investing in the people, policies, and procedures that have made GBS a beacon of excellence spiritually, academically, and financially.

You have demonstrated great fortitude and unwavering perseverance through the challenges of meeting payroll, raising funds, recruiting new students and staff, mentoring the campus family, and modeling Christlikeness. Your vision has enabled us to realize a number of remarkable achievements that have stretched and strengthened us to fulfill even better the mission that God has given us. As significant as all of the public accomplishments that have been attained, we are eternally grateful for the personal investment that you have made into each of our lives. We are all better individuals because of your influence!

Thank you for 22 amazing years of gifted leadership at GBS! You have blessed us immeasurably, and now we bless you and pray that God will grant you and Ruth His wisdom and favor as you enter the next phase of His agenda for your lives!

With deep gratitude,

Robert E. England, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Trustees

David Crosley  
Brenda Herring  
John Manley  
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# Letters

## TO THE EDITOR

Letters should be addressed to the Editorial Office, 1810 Young Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202, or emailed to [revivalist@gbs.edu](mailto:revivalist@gbs.edu). Letters reprinted here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor of God's Revivalist nor those of the administration of God's Bible School. Names and locations of writers will be withheld at their specific request or at the discretion of the editor. We reserve the right to edit and condense.

I am not finished reading the December 2016 issue of *God's Revivalist*—I just keep coming back to pore over the cover—the loving grandmother [Mrs. Ruth Avery] with those precious grandchildren. Being a grandmother and great-grandmother myself, it simply tugs at my own heart strings. My mother, Lenos Bereman Perry, was a graduate of GBS (1926). Growing up, I loved to hear her stories of the education she received there. She passed on much of her knowledge to me. GBS continues to bless many, many people. Thank you for sharing with so many.

PHYLLIS ORMAN  
Indianapolis, IN

The December issue of *God's Revivalist* was like a personal visit from the Hilltop. We are like two children wanting to be the first to read, and usually keep it near to re-read and try to absorb the news and see the many improvements. How nice it would be to walk on those sacred grounds again! Enclosed is our monthly gift. What a blessing to be a monthly giver in this great work.

CARL & FRANCES DENNIS  
Nashville, TN

We are Nazarenes in Bethany, OK. Our pastor and wife are graduates of GBS. We are thrilled to have them. My husband's uncle, Noah Douthit, was principal of the high school at GBS in the 1930s. God bless you in your labor of love.

VIRGINIA ARNETT  
Bethany, OK

We enjoy the paper very much. Keep up the good work. We need more holiness papers in these wicked days.

ERNESTINE ACKLEY  
Owosso, MI

## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership



President Avery has led the faculty and staff, loved the students, launched board development, and lived strategic planning. His legacy and efforts will always go on. Connie and I celebrate with the Avery family twenty-two God-blessed years.

MONTE STETLER  
Member, GBS Board of Trustees  
Former GBS Campus Administrator

The IHC family salutes Mike Avery on his dedicated service to God's Bible School and College. His quest for excellence, integrity, and Christlikeness has marked a generation.

JAMES PLANK  
General Secretary, Interchurch Holiness Convention

**I was honored and blessed to be both a student and a student worker under the leadership of Dr. Avery. Rather quickly, I learned that he was a man of financial integrity and a leader who strove for academic excellence. My life was blessed by this exposure and experience.**

GREG HUDSON  
Pastor (GBS Class of 1996)

Dr. Avery assumed the leadership of God's Bible School at a very difficult and stressful time in its history. Across the years, he has provided strong, visionary leadership which has solidified both the present and the future of GBS. Our movement owes Dr. Avery a debt of gratitude for his effective leadership.

DAN STETLER  
President, Hobe Sound Bible College

**President Michael Avery brought with him to GBS intellectualism and financial professionalism and quickly impacted the holiness movement and beyond.**

PHILLIP DICKINSON  
Missionary (GBS Class of 1997)

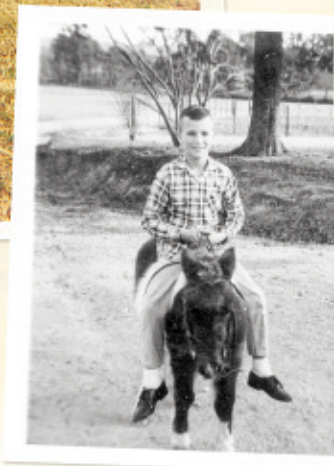
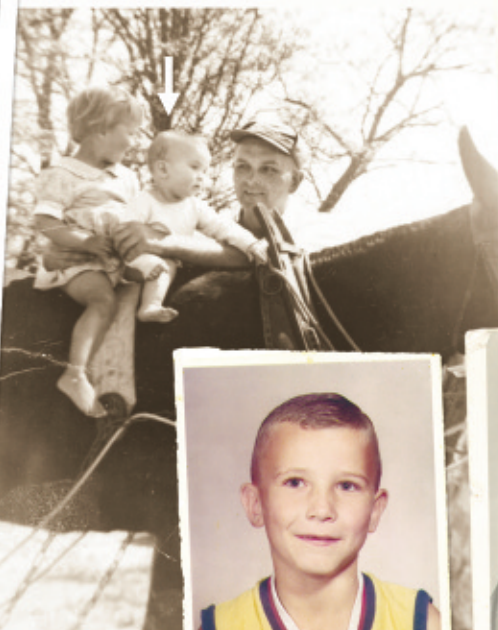
During his tenure as president, Dr. Avery has effectively reached out to the Great Lakes Bible Methodist Conference as a spiritual leader and mentor. To each of our children who were students at GBS, he has been a gracious and fatherly support. For me, he has been my friend and confidant. Thank you, Bro. Avery!

BLAKE JONES  
President, Great Lakes Bible Methodist Conference

I have long admired Michael Avery as a leader. He is flexible, fitting into a variety of roles, surrounding himself with good people, achieving excellence in every endeavor. God bless his continued ministry wherever He leads him.

STEVEN E. HIGHT  
President, Evangelistic Faith Missions





# MICHAEL R. AVERY

## a Legacy of Lifelong Leadership

*“The secret of leadership is simple: Do what you believe in. Paint a picture of the future. Go there. People will follow.” —Seth Godin*

It all began in the little community of Friendship, Alabama. There, in the home of Roscoe and Clara Mae Avery, a son, Michael Roscoe, was born August 15, 1956. Mike was the youngest of five siblings (Helen, Larry, Pat, and Rita) and had the privilege of growing up on the family farm.

### CHILDHOOD

Like most kids, he loved to play, which, for a country boy, meant pretending to be a farmer and riding his pony (and later, horses). Living close to a national forest opened up many options that were exciting—outdoor activities like hunting, fishing, and swimming.

Mike remembers spending a lot of time working with his dad on the farm. Many hours were spent cultivating the garden or tending the animals. His favorite

task was driving the tractor and the truck, which he began doing around age 10.

In those early years, his mother and father were the most important influences in his life. His mother was a godly woman with a very beautiful spirit and temperament. Remembering her fondly, he says, “She gave me a great sense of love and security and instilled a lot of confidence in me. She made me believe I could do almost anything.”

His dad taught young Mike to work. “Dad grew up in the depression years and lost his father when he was sixteen. His method of expressing love was not verbal, it was just working and giving and doing. Dad taught me to work, and I learned how to work—and work very hard.” Grandmother Avery was also influential. She lived nearby, and he spent a lot of time at her house “eating





homemade tea cakes and cheap vanilla ice cream. More than a grandmother, she was a real friend."

His first pastor, Rev. Ralph Burnett, influenced him, too. "He loved me, encouraged me, and let me speak in church when I needed a box to stand on in order to see over the pulpit." The Averys were a dedicated church-going family. That church was the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Friendship, Alabama.

Mike spent his elementary school years at Brent Elementary, where he recalls being a good student. His school day began early, for the Averys lived some distance from town, which required him to ride the school bus. "We had to board an hour before school started to make the journey. We were the first ones to get on the bus."

#### TEEN YEARS

After the sixth grade, Mike moved to the Bibb County Junior High where he stayed one year before transferring to Cahawba Christian Academy. He was very active in sports, lettering in basketball and football, and was involved in the student government, BETA Club, etc.

The work ethic instilled within him by his parents made him intense and ambitious. He worked in the local drug store, doing everything from making ice cream sodas to filling prescriptions and sweeping the floor. Later he started a lawn and painting business. At age 18, he was the county radio operator and jailer.

While in the eleventh grade, Mike had a life-changing experience. It was March 1974, and GBS graduate V.O. Agan was holding a revival at the Friendship church. Mike was converted and became a dedicated Christian. As he has often testified, he was

determined from the beginning "that Jesus Christ shall have all of me."

There were some noticeable changes after his conversion. His grades in school went up and his fellow students noticed that he had leadership potential and capacity.

Mike transferred for his senior year to Stanton Christian School, which had been founded a few years prior by the newly formed Bible Methodist Connection of Churches (which had come out of the Wesleyan Methodist Church when it merged with the Pilgrim Holiness Church to form The Wesleyan Church). At Stanton, he was reunited with Ruth Vernon, who had been a student with him at Brent Elementary.

Mike had known the Vernon family for many years. He recalls, "Ruth's father pastored in the little town of Brent. I lived about 10 miles out in the country from Brent, but Brent was our shopping town; and so I knew the Vernon family, but not intimately. I got better acquainted with Ruth after my conversion." While attending Stanton, they began dating.

He graduated salutatorian of his class. It was also during his final year of high school that he received a call to preach. He admits, "I didn't know at the time that this call encompassed a lot of things, but, at that time, I felt that God wanted me to be a preacher."

#### COLLEGE YEARS

Having received the call to preach, Mike knew he had to prepare, so during the late summer and early fall of 1974, he began to explore school options, and GBS was one of those. He recalls, "Through my relationship with the Vernon family, I learned about God's Bible



School and College. During my senior year, a group from my school attended the Creation versus Evolution Debate at the University of Cincinnati, and we stayed on the GBS campus in order to attend the debate. That was my first exposure to the school."

In the spring of 1975, one of Mike's friends was graduating from high school at another Bible college, and he made the trip to attend the graduation. He had planned to turn in an application while there, but that didn't happen. "Once I got there I felt a sense of restraint from the Lord and spent some time praying, and I actually called GBS to get an application. I applied, was accepted, and came in the fall of 1975." At first he had some adjustments to struggle through. For three days he suffered an acute case of homesickness but soon became acclimated to life in Cincinnati.

"Probably the greatest influence on my life from my GBS years would have been Dr. L.D. Wilcox. Brother Wilcox was a fairly reserved and quiet man, but a man with a powerful intellect. I looked to him as an academic and spiritual leader. He gave me some personal time which had a strong influence on me. Professor J. Wesley Adcock and Dr. R.G. Flexon were also very influential. Brother Adcock's preaching style and devotional life was challenging to me. Brother Flexon's pulpiteering and passion for evangelism was also a challenge to me. I had the privilege of driving him to various meetings. So I got to spend some personal time with him as well."

Also, just after arriving on campus, he was recruited by some of the students to work in the inner-city missions. During the three years he lived in the dorm, he was involved in the Freeman Street Mission as an asso-

ciate pastor, and later as pastor. He also became a monitor in the men's residence hall and, later, assistant dean of men. Throughout all of this, Mike's academic performance at GBS was very good—in fact, many semesters his GPA was 4.0.

#### THE NEWLYWEDS

During his sophomore year, Ruth Vernon arrived on campus as a new student. So in the fall of 1976 they "started dating again and never stopped." They got engaged over Easter vacation of 1977 and were married on June 24, 1978, in Pell City, Alabama.

Upon returning to Cincinnati, they moved into Petherloo—the historic Georgian-style home of Cincinnati developer and arts patron John J. Emery who had recently died. The Averys became the caretakers of the house, which had 36 rooms, 19 fireplaces, 21 baths, and included a wing of guest rooms. Originally sited on 1,200 wooded acres in Indian Hills, the house was built in 1928 to rival the grandest houses of America and Europe. It was now home for the newlyweds.

The young couple began attending Mt. Carmel Bible Methodist Church pastored by Glenn Elsey. During his first year there, Mike taught the youth class and occasionally preached. After asking Mike to be his assistant the following year, Pastor Elsey was diagnosed with cancer and had to retire from the church.

Meanwhile, Mike graduated from GBS with a Bachelor of Religious Education degree in 1979. As the top ministerial student, he received the department's premier award—the Floyd J. Goins Ministerial Award (now called the Oswald Chambers Ministerial Award). After graduation, Mike agreed to become





pastor of the Mt. Airy Friends Church and continued in that capacity while Ruth completed her Bachelor of Arts degree (with a major in psychology and a minor in missions) in 1980.

#### A RETURN TO ALABAMA

In July 1980, an offer from his “home conference” came, and Mike and Ruth moved to Selma, Alabama, to pastor the Bible Methodist Church. When they arrived, the congregants numbered only in the 40s, so they had their work cut out for them. They also started a family. Joshua was born in 1982, and Jonathan in 1985. Although Selma had played an important part in the civil rights movement, and there was some continued racial division, it still was “a great town and a great place to raise kids.” The boys grew and so did the church, increasing in attendance to around 100. God was good!

As a Bible Methodist pastor in the district, Mike served as a trustee on the board of Stanton Christian School. He and Ruth, both graduates of the school, had returned to serve their alma mater. Ruth taught, Mike became board chairman, and their two sons attended. During these years, he was also holding revivals, camp meetings, and youth camps.

Mike’s ministry involvement expanded. He was elected General Missions Secretary (director) at the General Conference in June of 1990. A month later, he was elected Vice President of the Alabama Conference. That month he also became a trustee of the Society of Indian Missions.

Looking back on that time he says, “My ten years of pastoring were preparation for working with people at GBS. I guess my five years as General Secretary of

Foreign Missions for the Bible Methodists was a preparation for fundraising and for a much larger view of Christianity. All those years I worked with various boards and committees, I was also deeply involved with helping raise money for our local Christian school.” God’s plan continued to unfold in his life.

#### THE CALL TO THE GBS PRESIDENCY

Mike was active in many aspects of ministry and his work ethic, learned years ago, was very evident. There was a sense of satisfaction in being busy in the Lord’s work, and it seemed he had “settled in”—but that was all getting ready to change.

Returning to GBS in some administrative capacity “never crossed my mind, quite frankly,” even though, while serving as one of the camp meeting evangelists in May 1993, he noticed that there was “a little buzz” about the possibility of his following Bence Miller as president. The next year, board member L.J. Cherryholmes died and Mike was asked to take the open seat on the GBS Board of Trustees. He was also serving as a member of the school’s National Alumni Executive Council. That put him at the center of things that were happening on campus.

A search committee was formed to look for candidates for the soon-to-be-vacant presidency, as Bence Miller had announced his retirement. Mike was one of those candidates. He went through the interview process and became one of the three finalists. He recalls, “I was actually sitting on the board when the search committee submitted my name as the only candidate to consider. I stepped out of the room, and they voted unanimously for me to come.”







Brent Miles confers with Executive Assistant Brenda Herring and President Avery

"Some few months before that time, as Ruth and I prayed, we both felt that GBS was where God was taking us—even prior to the vote. The vote certainly confirmed that."

The move to Cincinnati required many adjustments. "You know, when you are committed to Christian ministry and the call of God, you don't think about the difficulties, the changes, the transitions...you just think about following God—and that's pretty much the way we saw it."

#### THE MOVE TO GBS

As a trustee, Mike was aware of some of the situations on campus, and God already had begun to help him formulate a rough strategic outline to focus on meeting the school's needs. "The first was financial stability. The school had gone through so many years of financial crisis. There was so much debt, and I was determined to do whatever was necessary to liquidate the debt, stabilize the school financially, and get the payroll caught up and kept current. The next focus was to recruit new faculty. GBS needed fresh academic talent, and we began working on that. The third focus was students. Enrollment had fallen to an all-time low, and I knew that we had to breathe new life into the student body and into the recruiting process, especially for the ministerial and missions organizations."

Just a few weeks into his new job, the school received notice on a Wednesday that \$88,000 was due the following Monday morning to the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation. The notice also ominously mentioned the Bureau's intention to put a

lien on the property and start seizing and selling assets. Mike recounts that he was "scared, broken, and didn't know what to do." He decided to pray and fast, but as he was kneeling down on the corner of the carpet in his office, just one knee hit the floor when he sensed God telling him to "get up, lighten your countenance, go home, and eat. I am going to show you what I can do."

It was a miracle how God came through for the school and its new president (see *A Century on the Mount of Blessings*, by Larry D. Smith, pp. 381-382 for complete account). But that situation was only one of the problems. Others came. In fact, they piled up. But God proved Himself to be bigger than any challenge facing the new administration.

In President Avery's own words, "Success never happens in a vacuum. It involves those around you, those under you, and those above you." He knew that to be a successful president, he had to concern himself with building the right team. That started with the board. The board's role in informed governance is crucial. "I worked hard to keep them informed, and they have developed into a great board giving appropriate oversight."

Bringing in an administrative team that shared his vision was also crucial. "I needed strong administrators around me with the right gifts to develop their departments."

The first hires were Dave Frederick and Monte Stetler for the financial area. "They focused on the goals of liquidating debt, stabilizing cash flow, and building cash reserves; and they were quite successful. Harold Fourman was added to this team later and focused on





2011-12 Administrators: Richard Miles, Ken Farmer, Mike Avery, David Frederick, Tom Butcher, Faith Avery



Preaching in Papua New Guinea



Doctor of Divinity



Master's Degree

budgeting and internal auditing. Dave has remained and brought stable, dependable leadership to the school's finances. In my second year, Dick Miles came as Vice President for Student Affairs to develop and make us far more effective and relational in that area. In my fourth year, Ken Farmer came as Vice President for Academic Affairs to improve academics and to help implement a vision to enhance all of the academic processes and move us into an area of excellence. He was also crucial in our quest for regional accreditation.

"Some other key people in mid-level management were Allan Brown, Dan Glick, Brent Miles, Steve Harms, Keith Waggoner, and Josh Avery. Allan and Dan rebuilt the Ministerial and Missions Divisions. Brent and Steve started our Information Technology Department and moved us into the world of high tech. Keith was our first full-time student recruiter and started the enrollment trajectory that broke historical records. Josh took our library out of the horse-and-buggy days into the 21st century of information services. I can't stress enough the importance of getting 'thoroughbreds' on the team and letting them run!"

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With God's guidance and help, both stability and competence began to permeate the various departments on campus. As the goals established at the very beginning of his presidency were being realized, other areas needing attention came into focus and were addressed.

Major accomplishments are described in more detail throughout this issue: strategic planning (p.18), finances (p.20), facilities (p.22), board structure and function (p.25), academics (p.26), and student life (p.29).

#### EDUCATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENDEAVORS

President Avery has remained an avid lifelong learner, challenging himself with a voracious reading schedule. In 1998, the Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, in recognition of his significant contributions to Bible college education, conferred upon President Avery a Doctor of Divinity degree. As he continued to expose himself to scholarly materials, he enrolled at Cincinnati Christian University and received a Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership in 2008. He periodically taught ministerial and leadership classes at GBS and mentored many students who took advantage of his open-door policy.

Honing his writing skills, he produced more than 200 articles for *God's Revivalist* and co-authored two books: *The Call: Essays to the Conservative Holiness Movement*, Revivalist Press (2013) and *The Journey: Biblical Principles for Teens Taking the High Road*, Revivalist Press (2002).

President Avery has kept a busy speaking schedule. In the U.S., he has spoken in hundreds of revivals, camp meetings, youth retreats, men's retreats, marriage seminars, Bible conferences, ministerial conventions, missions conferences, and Deeper Life Conferences in 30 states. Internationally, he has held revivals, camp meetings, conferences, and conventions in 17 countries. By being active in these many speaking engagements, he not only has been a blessing to those to whom he has ministered, but he has also been an excellent representative of GBS, renewing acquaintances with old friends of the school and making new friends.



President Avery has also maintained a high level of activity on boards of various organizations. He served as Convention Committee Chairman of the Inter-Church Holiness Convention from 2008 to 2016. He served on the Board of Directors of the Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities from 2010 to 2017. He has continued his work with his denomination, the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches, by serving as its General Chairman since 2014, after first having served as General Vice-Chairman (2010-14). Since 2014, he has been on the Board of Directors for both Bible Methodist Missions and Shepherds Global Classroom.

#### FAMILY PARTNERSHIP IN THE WORK

Josh was 12 years old when the Averys moved to Cincinnati. Jon was 10. Their young ages did not keep them from being involved. Both boys immediately went to work weeding the shrubbery beds all around the campus, and Mike paid them \$.50 an hour from his own pocket. The next summer Josh began working with Maintenance Director Bud Dickinson to remove old heating systems from the campus buildings. This necessitated Josh buying his first pair of work boots. "He worked in the dormitory from six in the morning till five in the afternoon, four days a week. I paid him \$.50 an hour to cart out those old heavy steam radiators and all of that nasty insulation. Josh loved working with the maintenance guys, and particularly with Bud. Jonathan continued to work on grounds for \$.50 an hour, weeding and mowing. Later we increased their salary a little bit—eventually up to \$5.00 an hour. But they put a lot of skin in the game, working here at GBS."

President Avery remembers the boys being aware of the needs of the school. Back in Alabama they had

had a go-cart which gave them hours of fun as they raced all across the Pell City campground where they lived. They reluctantly sold it when they realized they were moving to Cincinnati and put their \$235 in a little envelope and brought it to GBS, thinking that they could buy something else later.

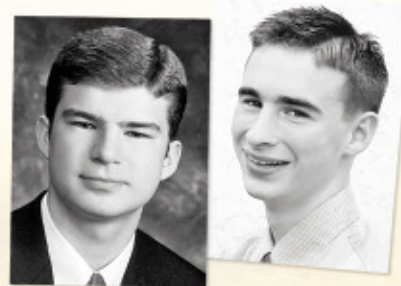
Upon their arrival, President Avery discovered that the summer issue of the *God's Revivalist* had not been printed because there was no money for the ink—about \$200. In family devotions that evening, President Avery asked the family to pray for money to buy ink. A day or two later, as he was in his office, the secretary opened the door and announced that two young men were there to see him. "I looked through the door and I could see the front of the guest chairs, and there were two sets of tennis shoes swinging in the air because their corresponding legs weren't long enough for their feet to hit the floor." He recognized those tennis shoes. His secretary ushered Josh and Jonathan into his office. They walked over and stood in front of his desk, laid something on it, and said, "Daddy, here's the money from our go-cart to buy ink for the *Revivalist*." That's how the Summer 1995 issue got printed. The two Avery boys "bought in" early and deeply to the ministry at GBS.

Both boys graduated from the GBS Aldersgate Christian Academy, Josh in 2000 and Jon in 2003. Both also attended and graduated from college at GBS: Josh with an AA in Bible/Theology in 2002, and Jon with two AA's, one in General Business and the other in Bible/Theology, in 2005.

Josh's interest in history took him to the University of Cincinnati (BA '06) and then to Miami University of



Josh and Jon,  
high school senior photos





Ohio (MA '08). It was also during this time that a GBS student caught his eye. Faith McManaman had already completed a bachelor's degree and was taking some classes at GBS (2003-05). After they were married in 2008, they moved to Albany, New York, where Josh enrolled in the State University of New York at Albany. Concurrently, Faith was getting valuable experience working for British American, a diverse real estate, property management, and media corporation, where she served as the human resources and benefits administrator, executive assistant to the chairman and president, and was extensively involved in publishing, marketing, development, and tenant relations. When Josh completed an MS in Information Science, he and Faith returned to work at GBS—Josh as Director of Library Services and history professor, and Faith as Director of Institutional Advancement. Josh also chaired the Division of Education and Professional Studies from 2010 to 2016.

Similarly, Jon continued his education. While he was working on two AA's at GBS, he began classes at the University of Cincinnati. In 2006, he married Elisabeth (Beth) Clemens (HS '02; BA '06). Jon received his Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting in 2007 and began working for the firm Deloitte and Touche the following year. He completed an MBA at Xavier University in 2015 and is now a senior manager for Luxottica. However, Jon still makes time to give advice concerning GBS accounting and donates to various projects, and he and Beth both serve as adjunct professors at GBS.

Ruth, always supportive of her husband's ministry, has been an active alum, working on various projects for the school. She was instrumental in securing the necessary funds for a new fountain that once again

brought beauty to an unsightly bare area of campus where for decades the landmark "fish pond" had stood. Perhaps her greatest contribution, however, has been in bringing order to the mailing lists at GBS, first by consolidating multiple lists, and then by verifying the data's accuracy. She took charge of all the donor records, including the receipting and acknowledgement of contributions, as well as the *God's Revivalist* subscription list, which she has continued to keep up to date; and she continues to assist in processing incoming mail.

### CONCLUSION

The entire Avery family has played a big part in the renaissance at GBS. The GBS family is grateful for their contributions toward making the Avery presidency a success.

So what is next for Dr. Michael R. Avery? He responds, "I have planned to have a year for taking it a little easier than the last 22. I have a number of speaking engagements, revivals, camps, Deeper Life Conferences, special services, etc.; then, beyond that, we will see."

God bless you, President Avery! We hold you in high esteem for your inspired leadership and your devotion to your alma mater. Although you will be missed, rest assured that you will always be part of God's Bible School and College! ■

*Beginning July 2017, Michael Avery will be available for revivals, conventions, Bible conferences, leadership training, strategic planning sessions, conflict resolution, ministerials, and other special events. He especially enjoys "Deeper Life Conferences" (teaching on personal holiness). He can be reached at 513-218-8502, [mavery@gbs.edu](mailto:mavery@gbs.edu), or 3739 Moorhill Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45241.*



above: Wedding of Jonathan and Elisabeth (Clemens) Avery  
below: Wedding of Joshua and Faith (McManaman) Avery



Ruth Avery at work in her office



# Family Tributes

The Joshua Avery Family

Dear Mike,

Congratulations on 22 years of faithful and successful service to GBS! I still remember the shock waves that went through us on first hearing your name mentioned for this job. It was not on your long, or short, to-do list. God helped us to become aware that it was His plan, and you approached this task like all of the others – you went at it with all your strength. People might think I'm a little prejudiced in my opinion, but I probably know better than most what you've put into this job, and it has been your absolute best. You once again proved to be a man who exemplifies Ecclesiastes 9:10, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

God has helped you to set and reach some big goals. Never satisfied with looking back on what has been accomplished, you have constantly looked for new and better ways to improve GBS. I know there were times you did not feel adequate for the job, but you just kept giving of yourself – your time, your efforts, your love for our school – and you've given it unselfishly.

But now, once again, it's time to make a change. So as you look back on your days of ministry here, I know it will be bittersweet. You have had the rare privilege of leading this great and historic institution. GBS is a place that we both will always love! Thanks for leading it with dignity and integrity. As a fellow alum, I just want to say thank you. I'm very proud to call you my husband and our seventh president.

Even though we don't yet know where life's road is taking us, I am confident that I can link hands and follow you as you follow the Good Shepherd.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Your wife,



The Jonathan Avery Family





# PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

Dear Dad,

It seems like only yesterday that we were preparing to move to Cincinnati. At the time, it seemed to me like a remarkable change from what I had always known you to be—a minister. I'd always known that you believed that one of God's most sacred and serious callings was to the ministry. Little did I know that my understanding of what it meant to be a minister would grow and develop over these past 22 years as I've seen you serve, lead, and minister here at the college.

I've watched as you and Mom nurtured students in our home with a mixture of sweet tea and the Bread of Life. You have loved and counseled young couples as they began planning lives together, and served as friends, prayer partners, and encouragers to countless alumni and friends of the college. I've seen you preach, pray, and proclaim the risen Christ with a passion that no amount of committee work could dampen. I've seen you celebrate with students who had achieved success and grieve with those who suffered loss. I've watched you spend hours, nights, and weekends—no exception—counseling and mentoring young leaders and pastors, all the while serving as a faithful shepherd to your own family.

And so, Dad, as your time as president draws to a close, so too does your time as a minister to the hundreds of young men and women on the campus of GBS. I couldn't be more excited to see what path God has for you next. And, because I'm fortunate enough to be your son, I'll get to be a part of it, too!

Best wishes,  
Josh

Dad,

It has been a wonderful experience being a part of the GBS community for these last 22 years. It seems like a lifetime ago that we packed up the U-Haul and headed to the big city. While the move was challenging for all of us, you never pulled back from what you knew to be God's leading.

I'm so thankful you never hesitated in passionately pursuing God's direction, because what you have been a part of at GBS is amazing. Thousands of young people's lives have been changed, millions of dollars of debt repaid, and GBS is on strong footing to continue transforming lives for the next 100 years.

You have poured your life into God's work, and that work will have a lasting impact long after you are gone.

So congratulations on the last 22 years, and thank you for being such a wonderful example of a father and follower of Christ.

I love you and am so proud of you.  
Jon

After 20 years of working with President Avery, some of the things that stand out to me about him are his love of theology, his desire to develop student leaders, his balanced approach to dealing with life issues, his ability to raise money, and his love of a beautiful campus. I am wishing you the best for the future, President Avery. Thanks for being the great leader that GBS has needed for the last couple decades.

MARK BIRD  
Director, GBS Aldersgate Distance Education Program

**President Avery has been used by God to speak prophetically into my life several different times, not only while I was a student at GBS, but also at some pivotal moments throughout my ministry. So many of us still look to him as both a mentor and a friend.**

R.G. HUTCHISON  
Missionary (GBS Class of 1998)

From "hometown" friends to "Hilltop" friends! I was privileged to be raised in the same small community as Pres. Mike—my great friend as well as part of my family! I'm so grateful that he has allowed the Lord to use him in a tremendous way, and I offer him congratulations for a job "well done"! P.S. In earlier years of our pastoral ministry together, I would remind him that the only reason he married my sister Ruth is so that he could be called "Steve Vernon's brother-in-law"! Blessings! Continue the great job you are doing!!

STEVE VERNON  
Pastor

**In 1995, Mike Avery became president at GBS. In 1995, I became a student at GBS. My first interaction with President Avery happened prior to school starting when, while giving the parents of a prospective student a tour through the men's dorm, he had to knock on my door and ask me to turn down my loud, raucous music.**

**Mike developed me intentionally as a leader while I was a student. Later, as an employee, he sought out my opinion, brought me in on significant institutional meetings allowing me to observe the behind-the-scenes negotiations necessary for advancement, and gave me a voice. However, the most important lessons were the ones observed. He dispensed with ego in leadership. The organization has always been most important. He sought to hire people more qualified than himself for his team. He wasn't threatened by their success. In fact, he has always been the greatest champion of his team members. He taught me how to lead with humility, yet also with confidence. He has been a mentor and trusted confidant. His influence will always be present in my leadership. I want to be like Mike.**

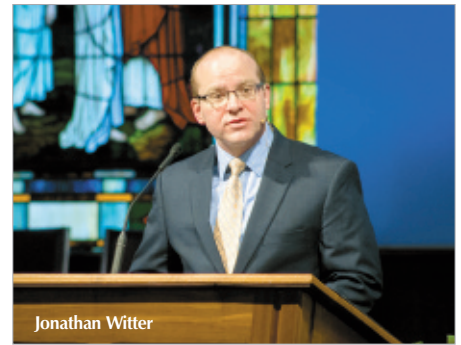
KEITH WAGGONER II  
Pastor (GBS Class of 1999)





emphasis. Rev. Marc Sankey spoke to our students asking the question, “What is your life?” His answer: Divine in its origin, Short in its duration, Frail in its nature, Final in its ending, and Eternal in its destiny.

In light of these truths, students responded to the call to present their lives as a sacrifice to be used by God. Comments from students included: “This week helped give me a new perspective on what my life is” (10th grader); “This was a great opportunity for us to experience God in a way and at a time that was specifically tailored to the ACA students” (11th grader); “I am thankful for this opportunity we had this week to draw closer to God; I feel like He spoke to me” (middle school student).



year’s Student Development Day. Drawing from his vast knowledge and personal experience, Witter presented our students with the steps, perspective, planning, and tools needed to manage personal resources in a God-honoring way. The outstanding sessions provided invaluable practical information and concluded with a student-initiated standing ovation.

#### COUNSELING CENTER EVENT

The GBS Counseling Center hosted a “Meet and Greet” event for students in The Commons on the evening of Monday, February 20th. Several members of the coun-

#### ACADEMY REVIVAL

Aldersgate Christian Academy held its annual revival services February 27–March 3. Students from grades 5-12 met together in a time set aside as a week of spiritual



#### STUDENT DEVELOPMENT DAY

Jonathan Witter, a Tier III senior executive providing financial services to major government agencies, was the guest speaker for this

## REVIVALIST FAMILY

*On these pages, we feature items about GBS alumni, significant events scheduled throughout the “Revivalist Family,” and brief news notes from across the Holiness Movement.*

#### DEATH



**Rev. Dale E. Travis, Sr.**, 75, passed away in Ocala, FL, on August 23, 2016. Dale was born in Parkersburg, WV, on May 1, 1941. He was a graduate of God’s Bible School and College (HS ’61). Pastor Dale was affiliated with The Wesleyan Church for 50 years, serving 12 churches in West Virginia, Florida, and Georgia. Most recently he pastored the Living Water Wesleyan Church in Dunnellon, FL, for 22 years. He is

survived by his beloved wife of 55 years, Anna Marie Travis; three sons, Dale Jr., Micah, and Kemuel; daughter Cynthia; brother Roy; sisters Naomi and Viola; nine grandchildren; four great-granddaughters. A memorial celebration was held at Living Water Wesleyan Church, officiated by Rev. Dale E. Travis, Jr.

#### BIRTH



To **Tim (BA ’16) and Kyla (Tichenor) (BA ’14) Lanigan**, a daughter, **Charlotte Dorothy Desiree**, born December 24, 2016, in Tuscaloosa, AL. Tim is the Associate Pastor of the Bible Methodist Church, Greensboro,



selling staff were present to get better acquainted with the campus family, and also to provide tools for students to use in order to understand more fully their identity in Christ. Refreshments were provided, including a variety of fresh coffee from the Coffee Emporium and an assortment of Mrs. Debbie Byer's famous cookies.

### SEWING WORKSHOP

Each semester, a variety of workshops are hosted by our Academic Resource Center (ARC), offering students opportunities to gain practical knowledge and skills outside the classroom. Our most recent workshop provided students with simple lessons on repairing and modifying garments. Snacks, lots of needles and thread, and patient instruction made the event both memorable and valuable.

### CHOIR TOUR

The College Choir, directed by Tim Crater and accompanied by

Martha Miller, ministered in 14 services in 7 different states including a "first service" to an enthusiastic audience of travelers and rest area workers at the Tennessee Welcome Center



en route to Alabama. Both President Avery and President-Elect Loper joined the tour as representatives.

Crater stated that "the tour was marked by a special sense of God's help and presence both in the services and on the bus, and choir members testified to spiritual renewal and God's specific guidance." During the many prayer times together, the choir and faculty prayed for specific requests—including prayer for all of the unsaved loved ones that were represented

by students on the bus. God proved Himself strong, and a list of answers to prayer and specific blessings reached sixty—which could have been surpassed had they continued counting. We thank the Lord for working through the choir's ministry and for their eagerness to give of themselves as a unified body.

### NEW EMPLOYEE MELISSA LOPER

We would like to extend a warm welcome to a new member of our staff, Melissa Loper. She will be working in Donor Records Management. Ruth Avery, who



worked in this office for eight years, is currently training Melissa. Pray for her as she carries the responsibilities of being a mother of four children, wife of the president-elect, plus all of the normal duties of life.

We are blessed to have the Loper Family as a part of our campus family. ■



AL, and Kyla is a stay-at-home mother. The Lanigans reside in Greensboro.

### SISTER SCHOOLS RECEIVE INITIAL ACCREDITATION

On February 8, members of the administration and board of **Kansas Christian College** met with the Commission on Accreditation for the Association for Biblical Higher Education for final questions. Following the meeting, the commission voted to advance KCC to initial accreditation. This comes after nearly a decade of work toward this goal headed by Vice President for Academic Affairs Dorothy Purtle. KCC, established in 1938 as Kansas City College



and Bible School by the Church of God (Holiness), has long been a fixture in Overland Park, KS.

Following KCC into that same room was a group from **Penn View Bible Institute**. As with KCC, the commission granted initial accreditation to PVBI. This culminated eight years of diligent work by President John Zechman, Academic Dean Timothy Cooley, the Steering Committee, the faculty, and others. PVBI was established in 1966 at Penns Creek, PA, by the God's Missionary Church.

GBS would like to congratulate KCC and PVBI on reaching this milestone. This initial accreditation is the reward for thousands of pages of reports and assessments written in preparation for this day. Your diligent work has come to fruition! ■





## Planning and Processes

by Ken Farmer, former Vice President for Academic Affairs

**G**BS “has developed a true culture of assessment, the breadth and buy-in for which is unusual in higher education.” This appraisal by the evaluation team from the Higher Learning Commission came as a result of spending many hours of investigation over a period of three days on our campus in 2007. The evaluators further stated that the institution “has become more sophisticated in its strategic planning processes” and commended it for significant progress in developing the units of institutional effectiveness system. “If progress continues,” the report continued, “it could well be a model for others to observe.” Amazing! How did that happen? I would argue that it began in 1995 when Michael Avery became president of GBS.

At his remarks during his installation service, President Avery presented four initiatives that he felt had to be given institutional priority. While he did not realize it at the time, he was developing a strategic plan:

**1. Address the school’s financial situation.** This meant stabilizing cash flow in order to meet payables in a timely manner, addressing payroll concerns, and reducing and eventually eliminating the debt.

**2. Restore the core.** The programs that undergird a Bible college like GBS are the Bible / Theology / Ministry training programs. Sadly, these programs at the very core of GBS’s mission were faltering, and enrollment numbers showed a sharp decline in these areas of study. President Avery knew these programs had to be strengthened and restored back to a place of importance on our campus, so their rebuilding had to become a major priority.

**3. Enhance and re-build the faculty.** This meant bringing in new faculty and aggressively pursuing continuing education for present faculty. The faculty lacked vision and passion—there was a sense of institutional weariness that had to be replaced with vision and optimism.

**4. Increase enrollment.** College enrollment, which peaked at 338 in the fall of 1983, had dropped to 167. The school could not function properly if enrollment and tuition revenues were not significantly increased.

Though this outline was never formalized as an official strategic plan, it became the guiding philosophy that marked every decision for the next five years. The fact is that good strategic planning does not happen in a vacuum. It is preceded by assessment and followed by a budgeting

strategy organized to support elements of the plan. In order for President Avery to focus on these four initiatives, he had seriously assessed the situation and was willing to direct institutional resources to address the problems.

### THE FIRST FORMAL PLAN: 2000-2005

In the spring of 1999, a group of board members, administrators, and key faculty met in Indianapolis to strategize and develop the institution’s first official strategic plan. This plan added five new objectives to the previous four:

**5. Hire a full-time student recruiter.** This enabled the preparation of an enrollment plan with specific goals for enrollment increases.

**6. Hire new faculty.** This gave leadership and strength to existing programs.

**7. Develop a master plan.** A study of existing facilities and projected needs served as a guide for campus development and growth.

**8. Launch a capital campaign.** This addressed financial and facilities issues.



**9. Explore regional accreditation.** Being accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association would create real benefits for GBS.

### STAND PLAN AND ROLLING PLAN

After 2000, there were two other strategic plans: Strategic Thought and Action for New Development





## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

(STAND) Plan in 2005; First Rolling Plan in 2008. These provided two important ingredients for institutional maturity and growth: broader input and better processes. For example, the STAND Plan was created by 30 people from a cross section of various internal constituent groups: administrators, faculty, staff, students, and board members. It was a day-long event at an off-campus site facilitated by Rebecca Kelley, a GBS trustee with wide business experience. The resulting plan was placed on the institution's website where the public could monitor progress on its various aspects.

The next iteration began in 2008 with a move from a "static" plan that would last for several years to a "dynamic" plan that would be updated on an annual basis. The first step in this planning process was to identify people who were positioned to give valuable input in specific areas. This resulted in an ad hoc Environmental Scanning Group which met for a day to discuss trends that may pose opportunities or threats to the school. This information, along with information from past plans, was distributed to the diverse group assembled to create the elements of the next plan.

### STRENGTHEN FOR GROWTH

Our 2014 plan—**Strengthen for Growth**—followed the same development format as the previous plan. It is forward-looking and focuses on continuing to strengthen our weaknesses, build on our strengths, and plan for our future. This plan places a great deal of emphasis on "serving": We want to be a better partner with the local church and para-church organizations that need our expertise. It also addresses our commitment to be an institution that is centered in and guided by Scripture, while at the same time willing to have greater institutional flexibility to meet the challenges and changes of the 21st century. It focuses on five E's: Extend our reach; Enhance our effectiveness; Ensure our longevity; Expand our capacity; Enlarge our resource base.

### CONCLUSION

The good news is that nearly all of the objectives of our strategic plans since 1995 have been met. Of course, Strengthen For Growth is current and therefore still being implemented. Some of the successes are highlighted in the accomplishments listed in other sections of this issue. (See the sections dealing with facilities, finances, etc.)

As important as these successes are, they are not as important as the fact that GBS now handles all of these processes better. Whereas, in the past, planning was something which "just happened," the related activities have now been broken apart, analyzed, and more fully developed. The result is a robust sequence of processes that regularly occur in the work at GBS: assessment, planning, and budgeting. ■

It is easier to write a page about Mike Avery than a couple of sentences—so I have chosen four words, and they need to be in caps—A GOOD, GODLY MAN!

EDSEL (E.R.) TROUTEN

Retired college professor, Church historian

**Dr. Avery and I sought after God together for a \$3,000 school bill. I will never forget how God answered prayer with an envelope a few days later containing thirty \$100 bills from a little Roman Catholic lady. Dr. Avery and I had "camp meeting" in his office, praising God for His faithfulness and reassurance that GBS is where He wanted me.**

JEFFREY A. MOORE

Pastor (GBS Class of 2000)

Thank you, Dr. Avery for your years of dedicated service to GBS. You have contributed greatly to the enduring legacy GBS is to us.

DONALD E. NICHOLS

Conference President, Midwest Pilgrim Holiness Church

Dr. Mike Avery fulfilled the revelation God gave him to excel in spirituality, academics, appearance of the campus, relationships within the city of Cincinnati, and the quality of staff and teachers at God's Bible School. He would not accept a status quo atmosphere in any area of the institution. By God's grace and wisdom, Dr. Mike Avery has been able to take the ministry of the college to a new level without losing the mission, passion, and spirituality of the school. Thank you, Dr. Avery, for your prayers, labors, and sacrifice.

WALTER HEDSTROM

President, Alabama Bible Methodist Conference

**I cannot overstate how deeply grateful I am for the years in which Dr. Avery took time to give direction and speak wisdom into my life.**

JAMIE (BISHOP) SPIVEY

Pastor's wife (GBS Class of 2001)

It has been my privilege to work closely with President Avery on an almost daily basis. His focus on and love for the school never wavered. His faith and trust in God's provisions for GBS were evident and, as a result, God provided for our "daily bread."

DAVID FREDERICK

GBS Director of Finance

We appreciate Bro. Avery's impact on God's Bible School and also his ministry in the God's Missionary churches which has instructed and inspired us to walk in the ways of holiness.

JACOB MARTIN

Conference President, God's Missionary Church





# PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

President Avery has left a legacy at GBS that will benefit students for years to come by directing and encouraging the regional accreditation process at the institution. I have been impressed by his efforts to learn students' names and get acquainted with them personally. I have appreciated his leadership skills in encouraging department heads to lead their individual departments.

ALLAN BROWN  
Chair, GBS Division of Ministerial Education

**I have always been impressed by Dr. Avery's commitment to know the students and speak into their lives. I have benefited greatly from his care for the "next generation." Many know him as a gifted speaker; I know him—as many students also do—as a gifted listener. I am a pastor today because he never took his eyes off the local church, and I left GBS believing in the primacy of local church ministry in the kingdom of God.**

DAVID FRY  
Pastor (GBS Class of 2002)

The Penn View Bible Institute administration, faculty, and staff extend our sincere appreciation to Michael Avery for the commitment and dedication he exemplified in leading God's Bible School for the past twenty-two years. God's Bible School will always bear the mark of Bro. Avery. We wish him God's best in his transition to new endeavors. I consider him to be a "real friend."

JOHN ZECHMAN  
President, Penn View Bible Institute

**There are not words to acknowledge the unknown sacrifices made to lead GBS with vision, excellence, and integrity as you have, nor to express my gratitude for your personal influence on my life. Thank you, President Avery.**

MANDY (MIMIER) BUCKLAND  
Counselor (GBS Class of 2003)

Words that describe Mike Avery: Creative, visionary, compassionate, capable.

DAN GLICK  
Program Coordinator, GBS Missions

**Brother Avery: A visionary leader—a great speaker—a man of God! Thanks for following Christ!**

SCOTT A. CLEMENS  
School Headmaster (GBS Class of 2004)

President Avery is a man of integrity who has encouraged me to go deep in my walk with the Lord. Thanks for the office chats and book recommendations!

DAVID HARTKOPF  
Director, GBS Symphonic Wind and String Ensemble



## Finances

by David Frederick, Director of Finance

In 1995, days into his new presidency, Michael Avery made two key hires for the financial department of GBS: David Frederick and Monte Stetler. The challenges were daunting for this new finance team as we faced over 2 million dollars of debt, a depleted pension fund, 13 weeks of back salary, and no cash on hand.

The President laid out the priorities for recovery: never miss a payroll, get payables current, stabilize cash flow, and reduce the debt. We pursued each area with intensity. Before the end of the first year, the pension fund was replenished, the entire back payroll repaid, and payables were being handled.

In 2001, Harold Fourman followed Monte Stetler as Director of Finance and was instrumental in setting up many of the practices and systems which stabilized the institution's finances. He stayed in this position until 2012, when, after training me as his replacement, he assumed the position of part-time internal auditor.

A vigorous budget process involving department heads was developed, leading to budgets that were carefully planned and followed. As early as 2000, the team began to build cash flow reserves to help smooth out day-to-day operations. These reserves are now averaging approximately \$600,000 yearly.

In 2002, the school's first capital campaign—Faith in the Future—began. In the first of its three phases, the school's entire debt was eliminated and payables came under control. In fact, for many years now, the payables age sheet has had nothing due more than 21 days. Presently we have no debt—long or short term.







Dave Frederick and Harold Fourman

## Snapshot of \$uccess

	1995	2017
Debt	\$2,400,000.00	0
Accounts Payable	> 70 days	< 21 days
Cash Flow Reserves	0	\$600,000.00
Endowed Scholarships	0	\$2,300,000.00

Payroll is stable with mid-year bonuses and an annual experience pay increase for all full-time employees.

In 2005, GBS secured membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). This agency is dedicated to helping Christian ministries earn the public's trust through adherence to standards of responsible stewardship: board governance, financial transparency, integrity in fundraising, and proper use of charity resources.

For the past 10 years, permanently restricted scholarship funds have been a focus. Starting with nothing, the fund value is presently \$2,300,000. Two of the larger scholarships are invested in real estate with a monthly income return of \$4,000.

With all of these things happening, campus expansion and renovations have continued at a strong pace (see pp.22-24). With the help of loyal friends, GBS has invested approximately \$10,000,000 in campus expansion and improvements over the last 22 years. ■



## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

In the last 22 years, God has wonderfully used Dr. Michael Avery. God brought him to the Hilltop "for such a time as this." His leadership and administration skills, his love for young people, and his ability to communicate publicly in the pulpit, as well as personally, one-on-one, has brought GBS to a higher level!

JOHN PEABODY

Conference President, Pilgrim Holiness Church of New York

**Congratulations on 22 years of God-honoring ministry at GBS! You have had a profound influence on our next generation of leaders. There's no question you have helped shape me into the pastor/leader I am today. Thanks for patiently answering my questions with forthrightness and wisdom, and most of all thank you for your prayers and support over the years. May God richly bless you and Ruth!**

JONATHON PHILLIPS

Pastor (GBS Class of 2005)

President Mike Avery was God's man for GBS. Over the 10 years that I served on the board, I saw his excellent leadership, his above-reproach character and holy living, his commitment to prayer and fasting, and a weeping heart for students. Eternity will reveal that Dr. Mike Avery impacted thousands of lives around the world, and I will be forever indebted to him.

MARK A. SMITH

President, Ohio Christian University  
Former Member, GBS Board of Trustees

**President Avery's leadership at GBS has expanded God's kingdom and has demonstrated to my generation that great leadership can be more than theory.**

MATTHEW HALLAM

Educational Administrator (GBS Class of 2006)

Heartland Regional Conference of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches gives our deepest regards to Dr. Michael Avery. It has been a distinct honor to serve alongside such a distinguished and dignified leader. His influence on the churches as chairman of the connection has been extremely valuable.

His leadership and influence have had a positive impact on the community of churches with which we labor, and especially the conference in which we serve. His ministry among us has challenged us to lives of authentic faith and a deeper understanding of Christlikeness. His life has encouraged and stimulated a deeper sense of individual integrity and intentional holiness.

Michael and Ruth Avery are examples of Christian faith and rich Godliness. Their leadership and lives leave a deep and lasting impression on everyone they meet.

G. CLAIR SAMS

President, Heartland Bible Methodist Conference





## Campus Facilities

by Richard Miles, Campus Administrator

One of the more obvious accomplishments of President Avery is the improvement to the campus properties. He indeed has an “eye” for excellence and a belief that, because we are stewards of God’s property, that property should reflect order and excellence. Because he put that belief into practice, the list of accomplishments is too long to include in this article. However, we will include an abbreviated list and highlight a few of them below.

### CHAPEL RENOVATION

After the financial situation was somewhat stabilized, President Avery began to prioritize campus needs. The chapel was in a state of disrepair—chairs were broken, wood veneer missing, and seats not raising prop-

erly. The old maple hardwood floor was warped and worn out. The walls were painted a drab green. It was rather embarrassing. So, in 1997, President Avery launched the project to renovate what was renamed the “Adcock Memorial Chapel.” The project cost about \$267,000 and included an entire new lighting system, new public address system, all new wiring, new ceiling, new floor, seats, and carpet. The old altars were retained but refinished. The platform area was reconfigured. The final touch was the installation of air conditioning for the chapel proper.

### BUILDING RENOVATIONS

Various renovation projects upgraded campus facilities and made spaces more attractive and usable. The office areas of the president and vice presidents on the second floor of the Administration Building were reconfigured and renovated. The first floor was given similar treatment and the main parlor was renovated and named for Oswald Chambers who taught in that very room. The third floor on the east side was reconfigured to provide a classroom and office space



Students at the Centenary Walk and Monument, 2013



for the Aldersgate Distance Education Program, Graduate Program, ministerial faculty, and the Revivalist Press. The third floor on the west side provided space for the Information Technology Department.

The first floor of the Women’s Residence Hall was renovated to provide guest rooms—several with private baths. The floor immediately below that was completely restructured to accommodate the high school,



which consolidated with the elementary grades to form Aldersgate Christian Academy.

## FRIENDSHIP FOUNTAIN

Many alumni fondly remember the “fish pond” as a favorite student spot at the center of campus. After its removal in the early 1990s, it was just an empty grassy area, unprotected from the sun as the large maple trees that had been there were also removed. Two small wrought iron benches did not make it an



inviting place. So, in 1997, memorial bricks were sold to support the project, and enough money was raised to install a tunnel for necessary power and water lines, and to build a new fountain with a memorial brick walkway leading up to it. Landscaping and benches were the finishing touches to this beautiful and charming campus icon.

## STUDENT COMMONS

Other ideas were implemented to make the campus more “friendly” for students. A newly created seating area by the Snack Bar in the Student Center provided another pleasant place to gather. But an even greater impact was made with the con-



## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

President Michael Avery has been a remarkable leader. To maneuver successfully the maze of challenges and potential pitfalls of a presidency for 22 years is a rare accomplishment for any leader, but especially for a college president. Few leaders have the resilience and commitment to endure the journey. I make these claims from two perspectives—as a former president who is familiar with the load a president carries and who understands the myriad of conflicting expectations from a passionate and widely diverse constituency; and as a proud GBS graduate from high school in 1969 and from college in 1973.

President Avery's accomplishments go much further than mere endurance. Two things stand out among his many achievements. First, Michael Avery has modeled inclusiveness while maintaining an unwavering allegiance to conservative principles. No one should ever doubt his uncompromising stand among conservative Wesleyan Arminian holiness colleges. Yet, he has welcomed graduates from around the world with diverse interpretations of that ideal into the family who proudly claim GBS as their alma mater. Second, to achieve recognition for excellence from our nation's highest accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission, is a profound and significant legacy. The greater academy of higher learning no longer doubts what we alumni have always known—GBS provides one of the most outstanding educations anywhere while remaining true to her beliefs and convictions.

HENRY SMITH  
Chancellor, Indiana Wesleyan University

**Many qualities come to mind, but I appreciated how Pres. Avery always seemed to be in tune with the student body. Especially through his chapel messages, he seemed to have a special way of knowing what we needed to hear.**

**KIMBERLY (EASLEY) BLAKE**  
Teacher (GBS Class of 2007)

The story of Michael Avery's life, from his humble beginnings in the piney woods and fields of Alabama until this plateau of accomplishment, has been one of grace and inspiration. For forty-plus years I have watched God use my dear friend and colleague in ministry with awe and appreciation! Heaven holds the records! Earth bears the fruits of a life well spent!

JOHN PARKER  
Conference Vice President, Alabama Bible Methodist Connection

**President Avery has been and continues to be one of my heroes and role models. As a former international student of GBS, I have witnessed and personally experienced his selfless and unwavering love for students of different cultures and nationalities. President Avery always exemplified Christlikeness.**

**CARLSON BENJAMIN**  
Teacher (GBS Class of 2008)



struction of The Commons in the area formerly housing the GBS bookstore. This happened in 2011, and students were involved in determining layout and design of the area. Included were several booths and other comfortable seating options, several computer stations, snack bar, and an outdoor patio. The Commons contains the student mailboxes and has become the students' favorite hangout.

## PATTERSON FACILITIES BUILDING

As part of the Faith in the Future capital campaign, stage two called for a new building to house the entire facilities department: reception area, offices, work areas, and indoor parking for the school bus. The maintenance and grounds workers had been housed in many areas over the years. However, this building consolidated all of the related operations scattered across campus into one location.

## ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Even as President Avery nears the conclusion of his effective presidency, he continues to think of the future of his alma mater. He developed a plan to build a beautiful Ministry Arts Building to provide practice rooms for music students, an orchestra room, and a choir room that includes a 150-seat lecture/performance hall. This will also house classrooms and perhaps an additional student commons and college computer lab.

The list of the accomplishments included here does not tell the complete story. Suffice it to say that President Avery has taken great care of the GBS campus and has improved it in ways that situate it for success in the future! 📌

- An **elevator** and a new **heating system** were installed in the Revivalist Memorial Building / Women's Residence Hall.
- The **J. Wesley Adcock Memorial Chapel** was renovated, including the installation of a new sound system, lighting, seating, air-conditioning, and, recently, equipment to live-stream the services.
- The **Women's Residence Hall** was renovated.
- The **Friendship Fountain** was installed in the center of main campus.
- Dedicated areas to serve academic divisions were created, including the **H.E. Schmul Ministerial and Research Center** that houses a library and the Schmul Chapel; the **William D. Gale Study Center for World Missions** with library and new office for the Intercultural Studies and World Missions Division.
- A **media center** was created with office space for the media specialist and green room for video production.
- **New signage** was installed at the campus entrances and directional signs were added to assist visitors.

- The **Standley Administration Building** was completely renovated and named.
- Many **new offices** were established in the Standley Administration Building, including those for the Revivalist Press, Advancement, Graduate Program, and Aldersgate Distance Education Program.
- The Standley Administration Building parlor was renovated to create the **Oswald Chambers Room**.
- The lower two levels of the Revivalist Memorial Building were renovated to house the **Aldersgate Christian Academy** (grades K through 12).
- **Twenty-one new properties** were purchased, and green space and additional parking areas were added.
- Two apartment buildings were purchased to house employees and married students: the **Tiffany House**, with seven efficiency apartments, and the **Allan Clarence Strong Residence Hall**, newly renovated with eleven one-bedroom apartments.
- More than **30 campus houses and apartments** were remodeled.
- The **dining facilities** and **main foyer entrance** of the Miller-Deets Student Center were renovated.
- The **snack bar** area in the Miller-Deets Student Center was renovated and **The Commons** and **Resource Room** were created in the Standley Administration Building.
- The **Martin Dining Room** was added in the Miller-Deets Student Center to provide private dining facilities for special occasions.
- The old **motor coach** was replaced with a newer model.
- A new **heating system** was installed for the entire campus.
- The **Centenary Walk and Monument** was placed on the main campus.
- The **old dining hall** (maintenance building) was razed.
- The **Patterson Facilities Building** was built to house the maintenance department and to provide a garage for the bus and mechanic facilities.
- **Internet service** was established for the entire campus.
- Classrooms were modernized with computer/projection systems to create **electronic classrooms**.
- The **Men's Residence Hall** was expanded to include half of the old high school floor. The other half was remodeled into offices and classrooms for the Division of Education and Professional Studies.
- The **Professional Counseling Center** was established with a new counseling office in the Knapp Memorial Building. A new entrance was added to the building to allow for more direct and private access to the counseling center and to provide street-level handicap access to the lower classroom level.
- An area of the library was renovated to house the **Academic Resource Center** (ARC) which provides additional support for student learning outcomes.
- The exterior of the **R.E. McNeill Music Hall** was restored to its original grandeur by replacing the porch and windows. The heating equipment was replaced and central air conditioning was added.





# Board of Trustees: Structure and Function

by Robert E. England, Jr., Chairman of the Board

**M**any of the accomplishments that President Avery has achieved during his tenure are highly visible and bring value to God's Bible School in obvious ways. However, there have been a number of improvements in areas that are not as apparent to the casual observer. Although there has been no fanfare regarding many of these significant accomplishments, the benefits are immeasurable and continue to impact the governance of this wonderful institution.

## COMMITTEES

One of the key aspects of the improved board function is directly related to the committees of the board. For many years, the board committees existed in name only and served no meaningful purpose to the ongoing work of the board. Over the past 17 years, there has been a targeted emphasis on empowering the committees to function at maximal capacity, which in turn allows the board to utilize its time expeditiously in making high-level, policy-driven decisions. The research component, as well as exploring viable options and building contingency plans, happens in the initial phase at the committee level. This permits the full board to review the recommendations from the committee and make well-informed decisions in an efficient manner.

## POLICIES

Preparing and maintaining a board Policies and Procedures Manual has been an intentional undertaking during the Avery administration. There is a focus on keeping the manual up to date and making sure that the policies that have been adopted are being followed. The Policies and Procedures Manual has become the board "playbook" as new information is processed and direction is given.

## RETREATS

Board retreats have become a biennial event for the GBS board over the past 11 years. The retreat offers a more relaxed environment to spend additional time getting to know the board members on a personal level, and it allows for extended time for board development or brainstorming sessions. Enjoying dinner with the faculty and staff has been a wonderful time of fellowship and connection as well.

The Board of Trustees of God's Bible School and College clearly recognizes the professionalism and wisdom that President Avery has brought to our institution, and we are indebted to him for his influence and assistance in becoming a much stronger and engaged governing body. ■



Board of Trustees, May 2012





## Academics

by Aaron Profitt, Vice President for Academic Affairs

**P**ossibly the best word to describe academics during President Avery's tenure is "development." Academic quality is multifaceted, cannot be created instantly, and must be continually maintained. For these reasons, academic progress becomes more visible in retrospect.

### DEVELOPING PEOPLE

In a Bible college, people matter significantly, including those in academics. Quality comes not only from the textbooks, course names, or even requirements, but also from the people creating these things. Crucially, academic personnel must blend spiritual depth and quality with academic excellence—the developed mind and the burning heart.

President Avery has been served by five academic deans. Dr. Robert England oversaw academic affairs until 1997, followed by Tom Ellis and Dr. Fred Wingham. In 1999, President Avery asked Dr. Ken Farmer to return to his alma mater as dean, especially to lead efforts to achieve regional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). He served as Vice President for Academic Affairs until 2013, a tenure that included achievement of HLC accreditation as well as reaffirmation of accreditation by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). Dr. Farmer also trained and mentored me, the current Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Throughout his tenure, President Avery emphasized faculty development. Key hires included Dr. Allan Brown to lead the Ministerial Education Division and Dr. Dan Glick to lead the Intercultural Studies and World Missions Division; both divisions saw significant growth during these years. More recently, President Avery and Dr. Farmer recruited a new generation of faculty and academic staff: Joshua Avery, Cheryl Comparativo, David Hartkopf, Stephanie Hoffpauir, Chris Lambeth, Dr. Jana Pop, Dr. Nicolae Pop, Jessica Smith, and Stephen Smith. Each of these staff are also alumni who graduated during President Avery's tenure, providing a glimpse of the results God has given!

A similar pattern has marked Aldersgate Christian Academy. In these 22 years, alumni Paul Clemens, David Crosley, and Bill Marshall have served as principal. The K-8 and high school departments merged into a single school located on the lower two floors of the Revivalist Memorial Building. As in the college, a number of alumni from President Avery's years now serve as

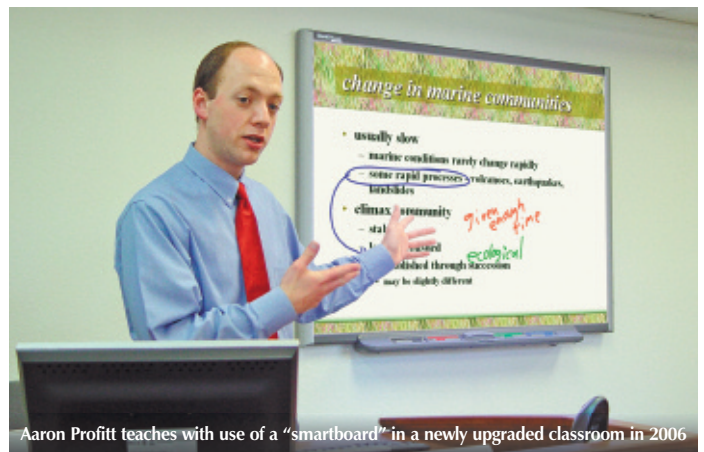
teachers and staff members in the academy, including the three previously mentioned principals and principal-designate, Tim Makcen.

### DEVELOPING QUALITY

GBS has been accredited by the ABHE since the 1980s, an affiliation that continues. Our accredited status with them has been reaffirmed three times under President Avery: in 1997, 2007, and 2017. Under President Avery's leadership, GBS has been deeply committed to growth in quality throughout the institution. One outcome of this work is our increased engagement with ABHE: currently three GBS personnel regularly serve on ABHE teams to evaluate other Bible colleges, an unprecedented level of involvement.



Pres. Avery and Ken Farmer receive letter from HLC announcing regional accreditation



Aaron Profitt teaches with use of a "smartboard" in a newly upgraded classroom in 2006





## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

An emphasis on quality also led GBS to pursue regional accreditation by HLC. Considered the “gold standard” in the U.S., regional accreditation emphasizes quality throughout the institution, including in its structures, systems, and processes, as well as in its curriculum, faculty, student services, etc. The entire institution experienced quality improvements from this process. Among those other areas, HLC engagement required explicit mission commitment by staff and faculty, so that the GBS mission statement became not simply words on paper, but a lived-out priority in employees’ work, leading accreditation teams to praise the thorough mission alignment that marks the institution.

After achieving regional accreditation, GBS joined the Greater Cincinnati Consortium of Colleges and Universities (GCCCCU). This membership provides additional professional development opportunities for staff and faculty, as well as excellent options for GBS students to take a wide range of classes at other GCCCCU institutions without paying additional tuition.

More recently, GBS launched two graduate programs, MAs in Biblical Studies and in Ministry, that bring together faculty from several holiness Bible colleges. Under the leadership of Dr. Philip Brown (another Avery hire), these degrees constitute the first accredited graduate program within the IHC constituency.

Additionally, President Avery initiated efforts to achieve programmatic accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which is the next step toward enabling our education graduates to obtain state licensure. CAEP work is led by Lyle Witt, assisted by Dr. Jana Pop and Dr. Marcia Davis, all three of whom joined or rejoined the faculty in the last 20 years. Currently, GBS has completed CAEP’s Phase I, with Phase II work ongoing.

Academic quality has been emphasized in the academy as well. In President Avery’s first year, the academy achieved model status from Accelerated Christian Education (ACE). Later, under Principal Marshall, the K-8 grades transitioned to conventional curriculum. Throughout these years, students have competed with excellence in Christian school competitions, with many top awards, especially in music areas.

### DEVELOPING CULTURE

As President Avery assembled a strong team of academic personnel and oversaw development in academic quality and mission alignment, GBS’s academic culture grew as well. One project associated with HLC accreditation provides the best illustration of this: the Educated Christian Statement. This provides GBS’s vision of what an “educated Christian” looks like—and also describes the ideal GBS graduate.

Developed by college faculty, the Educated Christian Statement proclaims that “an educated Christian is a faithful servant whose knowledge, values and skills

It has been a real privilege working with Dr. Avery these past seven years. He has always been gracious in sharing his and his staff’s expertise with Kansas Christian College as we have followed GBS down the road of accreditation and Title IV compliance. I wish him well in whatever path that God chooses for him.

DELBERT L. SCOTT  
President, Kansas Christian College

**President Avery made a way for international students like myself to be encouraged to dream big, find God’s will, and go out into the world to inspire others to dream. Thank you, President Avery.**

ALFONSO CHEN  
Teacher (GBS Class of 2009)

For many years, Mike Avery has been a personal friend to me, as well as a source of practical wisdom. Our on-the-way conversations have been life and ministry shaping. Congratulations, President Avery, on a race well run at GBS. I look forward to seeing what God has in store for you next!

TIM KEEP  
Director, Bible Methodist Missions

It has been a delight to serve as a faculty member under President Avery. His passion for holiness of heart and life have marked my life. His personal commitment to integrity and growth in grace have provided me models I will never forget.

A. PHILIP BROWN II  
Director, GBS Graduate Program

**I know of few people who demonstrate such excellent skills in leadership and preaching as President Avery, but who also live out these skills with authenticity and humility. It has been a privilege to be at the receiving end of his ministry.**

JORDAN LITCHFIELD  
Pastor (GBS Class of 2010)

I am honored to consider Dr. Avery a friend. Wesley Biblical Seminary’s admiration led us to confer an honorary doctorate upon him. Dr. Avery never fails to extend to me a warm welcome to GBS. Congratulations upon your retirement. May your next phase of life and ministry be fruitful for the Kingdom.

JOHN NIEHOFF  
President, Wesley Biblical Seminary

You have embodied the best exemplars of presidents—high integrity, strategic; in for the greater good of the college and its mission; authentic and student-focused.

JANA POP  
Chair, GBS Music Division





# PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

There are few positions that can have a greater impact on the Christian community than that of the Bible college presidency. This place of sacred service makes one directly responsible for preserving the heritage of our institutions and preparing the hearts of individuals for kingdom activity. Dr. Michael Avery has served in this capacity with unique distinction. His leadership and legacy will long be remembered and continues to impact the Conservative Holiness Movement and beyond.

C. ADAM BUCKLER  
President, Union Bible College and Academy

I have grown up admiring the *preacher* Michael Avery and, over the past 17 years, I have had the incredible opportunity of working alongside the *administrator* Michael Avery. I have watched him through extremely blessed moments, and I've witnessed more than a few tears through some very difficult experiences. Through it all, my thinking has been challenged, my passion for God has been fueled, and my desire to be an authentic Christian has grown. Eternal gratitude is due to my *friend* Michael Avery.

ROBBIE ENGLAND  
Chair, GBS Board of Trustees

**The impact President Avery's mentorship had on my life continues to form who I am today. I cannot think of another person I would respect more highly or aspire to become more like!**

EZRA BYER  
Pastor/Church Planter (GBS Class of 2011)

My personal congratulations to Mike Avery as he completes his 22-year tenure as GBS president. His keen vision for the school helped keep us focused on achievable goals for the future. I trust his continuing ministry will be spiritually fruitful.

LEONARD SANKEY  
Former Chair, Current Member, GBS Board of Trustees

**President Avery is someone who not only inspires you to be better by observing his example, but who also encourages you by believing in what you are capable of achieving. His humility, leadership, and discernment are blessings rare to find and characteristics we should all emulate!**

CHARITY FRAZIER  
Counselor (GBS Class of 2012)

It's been my privilege to work with (and for) President Mike Avery over the past 15 years. Not only has he been a great leader, but he has also been a good friend. I wish you the best, Mike. You will be missed.

MARCIA DAVIS  
Program Coordinator, GBS Teacher Education

center in loving God, loving others, and loving learning." While the statement continues by describing each of these areas more specifically, this basic summary—loving God, others, and learning—encapsulates the academic culture developed under President Avery's leadership. At GBS, all three are integral, and all are matters of the academic culture, rather than academics being narrowly focused on learning alone.

## CONCLUSION

The people, quality improvement, and culture that have marked academics under President Avery manifest themselves in excellence. Shared commitment shows itself in a campus culture of discipleship, where faculty engage with students in classes, at lunch, in offices, and in their homes—and where these conversations are not exclusively academic, but broaden to encompass students' whole lives. That is how "educated Christians" develop, through the intentional and concerted efforts of godly, gifted people in a community of spiritual depth, academic quality, and detailed carefulness. May God long continue this legacy in GBS's future! ■

- A **computer lab** was created in the Flexon Library in 1997, later supplemented by a computer lab in the academy in 2001. More recently, a **Learning Commons** was added to the Flexon Library.
- The **H.E. Schmul Ministerial and Research Center** was dedicated in 2000 and houses H.E. Schmul's personal library and memorabilia, as well as J. Wesley Adcock's sermons and papers.
- The **William D. Gale Study Center for World Missions** was dedicated in 2001 and houses a missiology library and a missions classroom.
- Residence halls were wired for **Internet access** in 2002. Over time, Internet services have expanded, including WiFi coverage for much of campus.
- An **Electronic Classroom Project**, begun in 2004, has led to the inclusion of computer display systems and other technologies in nearly all college classrooms.
- The **Aldersgate Community** began in 2001 to provide higher education to people already active in ministry. It later became the **Aldersgate Distance Education Program (ADEP)**. Current ADEP Director Dr. Mark Bird was another early faculty hire under President Avery.
- In 2002, *The Journey* and *I Believe* were published. Written by GBS faculty and staff, these books were produced to provide doctrinal and discipleship resources to individuals, churches, and schools.
- **Aldersgate Forum** began in 2004. The Forum continues to meet annually, bringing together scholars, clergy, and laity in sessions intended to provide relevant Biblical and theological information to enable growth in ministry effectiveness.





## Student Life

by Richard Miles, Vice President for Student Affairs

**O**ur Mission Statement commits GBS to prepare faithful servants to proclaim Jesus Christ. Because we are sin-damaged people, proclaiming Jesus Christ effectively requires that we experience a transformation of redemption.

### MERCY DOCTRINE

God's mercy and grace propelled His glorious venture to redeem sinful people. Because President Avery understands the necessity and power of redemption, he and the Student Affairs Department moved toward the "Mercy Doctrine" and "Redemptive Approach" to dealing with students. Decisions regarding students shifted toward discipline for the purpose of correction (redemption) rather than for punishment. This discipline values the power of mercy and grace to facilitate change.

### IMPORTANT HIRES

In 1997 President Avery hired me as Vice President for Student Affairs, and I hired Sonja Vernon as Dean of Women in 2000. These two hires brought long-term stability to the Student Affairs Department that continued the redemptive approach to student development. This practice is now a campus-wide approach through academics, work-study, and all of the campus departments.

### PROFESSIONAL COUNSELING CENTER

A commitment to produce healthy disciples was the impetus for founding the on-campus Professional Counseling Center in March of 2009. Counselors supplied by the local Counseling Alliance operated by Dr. Tim Barber and Rebecca Miller staff the center. Our center provides counseling at no charge, or at a minimal charge, in order to provide access to professional counseling for all students. The Counseling Center is one layer of a broadly developed "safety net" for students. Faculty and staff in departments across campus work together to identify students struggling spiritually, academically, psychologically, socially, financially, etc. Once identified, the plan activates to help the student become a strong and faithful disciple.

### STUDENT GOVERNMENT

One of President Avery's highest goals is to produce leaders. Because of that, student involvement and training in the operation of the college has grown consistently. Dr. Avery saw this need early in his tenure. Under his leadership, the Student Government began

operating in November of 1995. Since then, students regularly participate in focus groups, town hall meetings, college committees, and the accreditation process.

### AND MORE

Training, mentoring, and relationship-building between students, faculty, and staff members continue to grow. Employees welcome students into their homes for D-Groups (Discipleship Groups, formerly Covenant Groups). One of the primary reasons President Avery renovated the Snack Bar and built The Commons was to encourage relationship development among students with their peers and with employees. The two greatest commandments (Matthew 22:25-40) teach us to love



President Avery and his D-Group in 2014

God and to love our neighbor. Because of the belief that relationships matter most, there has been a strong emphasis on relationship-building throughout President Avery's 22 years.

Other projects driven by Dr. Avery's commitment to students include the Academic Resource Center (ARC), H.E. Schmul Ministerial and Research Center, William D. Gale Study Center for World Missions, campus-wide Internet service, and the development of the GBS website.

Looking back at his tenure reveals the value President Avery has placed on serving GBS students, and the students appreciate it. In fact, inventories show a high level of overall satisfaction students have had with the GBS experience (7.00 on an 8-point scale).

Thanks, President Avery for making GBS a great place for students! ■





1.

*Down Memory Lane*



2.



3.



4.



5.

(1) On January 21, 1996, Murl and Dorothy Patterson cut the ribbon for the new Revivalist Memorial Building elevator which they had funded. (2) Harold Schmul speaks at the dedication of the Ministerial and Research Center named in his honor, September 6, 1996. (3) The auditorium is completely renovated in 1998 and renamed the J. Wesley Adcock Memorial Chapel in a dedication service (4) on October 10. (5) Pres. Avery and Board Chair Leonard Sankey welcome guests at the Centenary Walk and Monument during the Grand Centenary Celebration, September 27-30, 2000. (6) The William D. Gale Study Center for World Missions was dedicated November 1, 2001.



6.





# PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

President Avery has not just required excellence from others; he has led by example. He has exhibited servant leadership, and, again, led in this area by example. No job or task was beneath him. He has often been found with a shovel, chain saw, or bobcat in all kinds of weather conditions. President Avery has been concerned for the spiritual health of campus. Many have benefited from a renewed emphasis on historical Methodism and a personal, day-by-day, walking-in-the-spirit relationship with Jesus.

CHRIS LAMBETH  
GBS Registrar

**Spiritually, President Avery shepherded the GBS campus family with the heart of a pastor—he spoke with directness to even the most difficult situations, but he did so from a heart of love and concern with both a firmness and a sensitivity which always spurred spiritual growth rather than stunted it.**

**Academically, President Avery guided the GBS campus family into a new century of higher education—he navigated changing technologies and cultures while remaining committed to scriptural holiness.**

**Personally, though my one-on-one interactions with President Avery were limited, from a distance he spoke into my life at a time when I desperately needed a spiritual father and leader, and he shaped my thinking and charted my trajectory in ways he'll never know.**

**When the names of Knapp, Cowman, Chambers, and Standley are uttered in recounting GBS's rich history, include also "Avery," as the importance of this era's positive changes and continued biblical fidelity are monumental, and their impact will be enduring.**

PETER HIGHLEY  
Graduate Student (GBS Class of 2013)

President Avery and I knew one another before either of us came to GBS. I remember his earnest search for God's will when he was asked to become president. He wisely did not jump at it and say, "Yes, I am the man for the job!" He was humbled and wanted to know what God said about it. God led him to the presidency, and 22 years later the reasons "why" are clear. God's journey for Mike Avery and GBS has been a good one, and I am glad I was blessed to be a part of the trip.

RICHARD MILES  
GBS Campus Administrator and Vice President for Student Affairs

I have been honored to serve at GBS under President Avery's leadership. My life and the lives of my children have been blessed by his generosity. My spiritual walk with the Lord has been nurtured, challenged, and enriched by his deep pulpit ministry.

TIM CRATER  
Director, GBS College Choir



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# THOUGHTS

for the quiet hour

by Sonja Vernon

## SPEAKING TRUTH IN OUR HEARTS

*"O Lord, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart." —Psalm 15:1-2 NASB*

Back in the days when I was new at GBS, President Avery would sometimes do Sunday rounds with me. I remember being a little terrified as we walked through the dorm, making sure students had left for church and discussing the way I was handling rule enforcement. I had a lot to learn, and those walk-throughs were not devoid of some mess-ups on my part and admonitions on his. But the thing that stands out most to me is that after our nuts-and-bolts discussions, we would inevitably talk about what God had been teaching us lately. In one of those conversations, he mentioned that he had been meditating on Psalm 15, and particularly on what it meant to speak truth in our hearts. We talked of how easy it is to tell ourselves what we want to hear, lulling ourselves into a false sense of security by convincing ourselves of our own goodness—when in reality the truth may be far different. He shared passionately with me about how God had been speaking to him and how committed he was to complete honesty in his own heart. That encounter challenged me, and Psalm 15 has since become one of my favorite passages. Almost every time I talk to President Avery, we eventually get around to what we're learning and how we're growing in Christ. I am so grateful to have worked for a man of this caliber for the last 17 years, a man who has led by example. He has my enduring gratitude and respect! ■

Sonja Vernon is Dean of Women at God's Bible School and College.





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11.



12.

(7) A new bus is dedicated on September 17, 2003. (8) The Patterson Facilities Building is dedicated on October 13, 2007. (9) The Council of Christian Communion of Greater Cincinnati honors Pres. Avery with the "Faith in Action" award on April 28, 2009. (10) Pres. Avery helps the maintenance crew set in place a new air conditioning unit on the top of the Student Center in the summer of 2013. (11) Dr. Phil Brown and Academic Dean Aaron Proffitt pose with Pres. Avery after receiving a letter from the accrediting association informing GBS that the new graduate program received final approval on February 16, 2016. (12) Every year since 2011, GBS has been named one of Cincinnati's "Top Work Places" by the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, an honor based on employee surveys of 130 area companies.





# PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership

When we moved to GBS in 2004, I was coming to work with some of my heroes—including President Avery. In the years since, his chapel sermons, summer prayer-time devotional thoughts, personal counsel, and organizational leadership have shaped my thinking, challenged me to deeper spiritual growth, sharpened my commitment to excellence—even influenced my priorities as a husband and father. God has used President Avery in far-reaching ways in my life!

AARON PROFITT  
GBS Vice President for Academic Affairs

**I must admit that when I first came to GBS I was actually quite intimidated by President Avery. By the time I graduated, I no longer found him so intimidating, for by then I had seen him grieve with the student body when one of our classmates passed away, pray with students seeking around the altar, and relax in his home while sharing with us words of wisdom and humorous life stories.**

REBEKAH HIGHLEN  
Teacher (GBS Class of 2014)

God bountifully blessed Dr. Michael Avery during his years of service as President of God's Bible School and College. God also fruitfully furthered the service of his daughters-in-law and his sons in their respective ministries at the college. May God be with him in his departure from the presidency, and uncommonly use all of the years of his further life and labors.

WINGROVE TAYLOR  
GBS Trustee Emeritus

**I deeply appreciated President Avery's connectedness with the student body, as a whole and as individual people. We were not a number, or even just a name; we were people that he cared deeply about. Whether in chapel messages or in conversation, his words of encouragement or caution were always exactly what was needed.**

JEFFREY ALBERTSON  
Graduate Student (GBS Class of 2015)

For 29 years, it has been my deep honor to serve my alma mater in Public Relations. Mike Avery gave me a place on his team when he came 22 years ago, and with it, the opportunity to experience firsthand a leader marked by vision, passion, and discipline. He has been a powerfully formative influence on my life and leadership. As his days of outstanding service here at GBS transition into a new life chapter, my prayer is for God's rich blessings on him and Ruth!

DON DAVISON  
Director, GBS Public Relations



**commissioning**weekend

MAY 19-21

commencement  
Saturday, May 20, 10:00 a.m.

reflections on 22 years  
Sunday, May 21, 10:30 a.m.  
Outgoing President Michael Avery

installation  
Sunday, May 21, 3:30 p.m.  
Incoming President Rodney Loper

*Aldersgate* FORUM

October 24-26, 2017

*"Gender Identity and Gay Marriage:  
Speaking the Truth in Love"*

Higher Ground Conference & Retreat Center, West Harrison, IN  
Early Registration Fee: \$150 • [www.gbs.edu/forum-signup](http://www.gbs.edu/forum-signup)



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## Michael R. Avery

SCHOLARSHIP FOR LEADERS

The Alumni Executive Council is extremely pleased with the progress of this exciting project. Would you prayerfully consider joining those who have already contributed to the Michael R. Avery Scholarship For Leaders in honor of President Avery and his outstanding legacy?

**N. Keith Waggoner**  
Alumni Council President

### LEVELS OF PARTNERSHIP

Student	\$20 and above
Friend	\$100 and above
Partner	\$500 and above
Legacy	\$1,000 and above
Leadership	\$5,000 and above

### MEMBER BENEFITS

- Name placement on scholarship plaque
- Recognition on scholarship website
- Recognition on honor roll of President's Circle donors in God's Revivalist



To donate, visit  
[GBS.EDU/AVERYSCHOLARSHIP](http://GBS.EDU/AVERYSCHOLARSHIP)  
For more information,  
contact Maria Stetler at 513-721-7944

## PRES. MICHAEL AVERY

22 Years of Outstanding Leadership



What makes a great leader? Among many other qualities, President Michael Avery has embodied these values: an ongoing quest for personal and professional excellence; a readiness to make the right decision, even when it is difficult; and a mindset more interested in promoting the institution than himself. Thank you for so many years of faithful service, President Avery!

LYLE A. WITT  
Chair, GBS Division of Education and Professional Studies

**If I had to pick one thing that I appreciate most about President Avery, it would be his "open door" for students and how personable he is. On more than one occasion, I found myself sitting in his office seeking advice on different things, and he always so graciously took the time and spoke wisdom into my life. That has made a big impact on me.**

**JULIE GOING**  
Teacher (GBS Class of 2016)

Mike Avery is a rare, creative leader who preserves the history within the innovation and keeps a welcoming spirit. I appreciate his sensitive spirit to the Lord and his ability to speak courageously to the Church. I always emerge from a conversation with Mike sensing the presence of God with joy. I could write a lot more, as Mike is one of my heroes!!

JO ANNE LYON  
Ambassador and General Superintendent Emerita,  
The Wesleyan Church

As a member of the Board of Trustees, it has been a great privilege for me to work with President Avery. His leadership and commitment to excellence have been foundational in the outstanding success of GBS over the past two decades. He has undoubtedly been God's man for this era.

N. KEITH WAGGONER I  
President, GBS National Alumni Association  
Member, GBS Board of Trustees

**Two things that I have greatly appreciated about President Avery during my time at GBS are both his commitment to excellence and his genuine concern for people's well-being at every level. He is a wonderful example of a Christian leader, and I am deeply grateful for the influence that he has had on my life.**

**MARICKA HERRER**  
Admin. Assistant, GBS Graduate Program (GBS Class of 2017)

Bro. Avery has been more than a boss to me, he has been a real friend—listening when I needed to talk and giving me great advice. At times he has listened to and taken advice from me, also. That is why I consider him a great leader.

FLOYD HYATT  
Director, GBS Access and Safety





## AN INCREASING RESPECT

by *President-Elect Rodney Loper*

I well remember that warm November day. I had just arrived home from work when the telephone rang. My mother answered it.

My life was in a turmoil at that time. I was floundering about, trying to find God's plan for my life. I knew that I was called to preach and that a call to preach was a call to prepare. I had made plans to attend another Bible college, but situations in my life seemed to be blocking me from walking through that door.

It was now over half-way through what should have been the first semester of my freshman year, and I was still on the sidelines. My frustrations were mounting as I wondered if God even knew where I was and what I needed.

After a brief conversation with the caller, my mother whispered, "Rodney, it's President Avery from GBS. He would like to talk to you." I raced into my parents' room and picked up the phone. He was calling to see how things were going in my life. He'd heard that I had a call to preach and asked me about my plans to attend college. I told him about my frustrations, and he invited me to campus "just to check things out."

When I made a campus visit a week later, I knew that GBS was the place for me. President Avery personally gave me a tour, and by the end of the morning I was in the registrar's office enrolling for classes the following semester. It was as if God said, "This is the place; now is the time."

That was the beginning of my relationship with President Avery. Later, when I was a graduating senior, he put his arm around my shoulders and gave me advice that steered me from one possible pastoral choice to another. It was sound advice that precipitated a successful, six-year pastorate. Over the course of time, President Avery became more than just a mentor—he became a colleague in ministry as he held many revivals for the churches that I pastored.

For many months now, I have worked closely with President Avery. I have seen him as he makes decisions; I have watched him working behind the scenes. Simply put, I see the "unpolished" President Avery. However, my admiration and respect for him has only increased! In a world of leaders sullied by moral and ethical scandals, President Avery remains untarnished, and—more than that—*respected!*

From that first phone call, to a close working relationship—Michael Avery has stood ready and available at every turn. Thank-you, President Avery, for the leadership, wisdom, and mentorship that you have given to my life and ministry! ■





**APRIL 21, 2017**

Register online at  
**[WWW.GBS.EDU/VIPDAY](http://WWW.GBS.EDU/VIPDAY)**

Register by April 7<sup>th</sup>  
for a **free T-Shirt.**

