

New Texas-based seminary names first four faculty; Corley to lead_111003

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DALLAS—Four faculty members have resigned from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to become the inaugural faculty of the B.H. Carroll Theological Institute.

However, founders insist the new seminary has not been formed in reaction to changing leadership at Southwestern and will not seek to draw students away from Southwestern or other traditional seminaries.

[Read reactions to establishment of the seminary below.](#)

Bruce Corley, former dean of theology at Southwestern and former faculty member at Baylor University's Truett Seminary, has resigned as a New Testament professor at Southwestern and will become president of the Carroll Institute, announced Russell Dilday, former Southwestern president

and an organizer of the new enterprise.


Inaugural faculty of the Carroll Institute are Bruce Corley, Stan Moore, Budd Smith and Jim Spivey.

Corley will be joined by Jim Spivey, Budd Smith and Stan Moore.

Spivey, who has taught church history 16 years at Southwestern, will teach historical theology at the Carroll Institute. At Southwestern, he also has been administrative dean for the seminary's Houston campus.

Smith, who has taught Christian education at Southwestern for 24 years, will teach in that same field in his new assignment. At Southwestern, he also has directed the Oxford Studies Program.

Moore, a former missionary to Brazil, has taught church music at Southwestern for 16 years. He currently is acting dean of the School of Church Music there.

Dilday and Scotty Gray, a retired administrator at Southwestern,

announced the first faculty appointments at a news conference Nov. 4 at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas.

Park Cities will become the first of what organizers hope will become 100 teaching churches—the backbone of the Carroll Institute's concept. Numerous other churches have expressed interest in the concept, but no other agreements have been finalized, Dilday said.

However, churches currently served by the 1,400 doctor of philosophy graduates of Southwestern Seminary are “the kind of churches we're targeting,” he added.

Neither Dilday nor Gray will draw compensation from the seminary, although Dilday has been given the honorary title of chancellor. Gray has served as director of the seminary during its initial development.

Jim Denison, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church, explained the concept of a teaching church tied to seminary studies will provide a more practical education than an institutional seminary.

“This is a new way of doing theological education that at the same time returns us to our roots,” Denison said. He and the other organizers cited the original vision of B.H. Carroll, who as pastor of First Baptist Church in Waco founded the precursor to Southwestern Seminary as a department of Baylor University. Carroll became the founding president of Southwestern when it separated from Baylor and moved to Fort Worth in the early 20th century.

This happened in the context of educating ministerial students within the local church, Denison said. “We are returning to his vision and advancing his vision.”

Ironically, when Baylor University formed Truett Seminary in 1991, it was hailed as a fulfillment of Carroll's vision of placing a seminary within a

university. More recently, Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson in his inaugural address pledged to tie Southwestern to the founding vision of Carroll.

Although Carroll's name and vision have been tapped in various ways, this is the first time an institution has been named for him.

The Carroll Institute is needed, organizers said, because of its different approach to theological education and because existing seminaries are not producing enough trained ministers to meet demands.

“In the past 20 years, the number of Southern Baptist churches has grown by 17 percent, but the number of ministers has grown only 10 percent,” explained a document distributed to reporters. “The number of SBC seminary graduates per church has declined 30 percent. The number of SBC seminary graduates per member of SBC churches has declined 45 percent.”

Although the institute will have a small headquarters somewhere in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, its primary work will be done through affiliated teaching churches. Ideally, organizers said, students will be engaged in ministry roles with those and other churches concurrent with their studies.

“Carroll Institute will not aim at recruiting students who desire to attend one of the residential seminaries already in existence,” according to information given to reporters. “It will recruit students who desire to continue ministering in their own local congregations while pursuing theological education at a teaching church very near their home base.”

Instruction will be delivered in four ways, the organizers said:

- ❑ Traditional classroom settings with face-to-face interaction between teachers and students.

✖ Live electronic instruction via the Internet, akin to distance-learning concepts in use in many universities.

✖ Online classes.

✖ Electronic correspondence studies.

Classes will begin in fall 2004, and tuition will cost \$100 per credit hour. The rate will be the same for both Southern Baptist and non-Southern Baptist students.

The business plan calls for reaching 500 to 1,000 students enrolled in the Metroplex alone, with 200 to 300 at each additional teaching church site.

The institute will develop both a physical library and a virtual library, Dilday and Gray said. Students also will access other existing libraries in or near where they live.

The institute's primary collection received an initial boost from Eddie Belle Newport, widow of John Newport, longtime academic vice president at Southwestern. The 4,892-volume Newport library will be housed at the institute's headquarters.

In addition, the Carroll Institute library will include 500 volumes donated by Lois Hendricks, widow of William Hendricks, longtime theology professor at Southwestern Seminary, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Texas Christian University's Brite Divinity School.

Six other retired faculty members are “in the process of making their libraries available to us,” reported Carl Wrotenbery, retired director of libraries at Southwestern.

Full implementation of the Carroll Institute's business plan, including endowments, will require \$35 million to \$50 million, Gray said. The initial

cost is estimated at \$8 million to \$10 million.

Required funding for the first year will be about \$400,000, Dilday said. To date, about half that amount has been raised, he added, including one large gift and a number of smaller and mid-sized gifts.

The Carroll Institute plans to remain an autonomous Baptist institution that will “seek to build collaborative and collegial relationships with all Southern Baptists, with the Southern Baptist denomination as a whole, with state conventions and with local churches,” the press statement said.

Dilday and Denison insisted the Carroll Institute will not serve only moderate Baptist churches disaffected by the rightward shift in the SBC.

“We do not see this as a moderate seminary,” Denison said, adding that the institute will not become “politically identified.”

Information given to reporters said the “sole authority for faith, practice and teaching” in the institute will be “Jesus Christ, whose will is revealed in the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The confessional position of Carroll Institute is the consensus of opinion concerning those articles of the Christian faith and practice that have been most surely held and expressed in historic Baptist principles and practices.”

Articles of incorporation filed with the Texas Secretary of State May 1 list three men as directors of the corporation: Gray, Herbert Howard and William Latham, all of Fort Worth.

A strategic plan document lists 16 people as members of the strategic planning group that has birthed the Carroll Institute. In addition to Dilday, Denison, Gray, Howard and Latham, they are Tom Chism, Tom Coston, Robert Feather, Tom Hill, Cheri Jordan, Hilda Moffett, Joan Trew, Fran Wilson, Michael Wright, Wrotenbery and Jerry Yowell.

The institute also announced a website-www.bhcti.org.

A formal launch of the institution, along with announcements about a headquarters location and more teaching churches, will occur in January, Dilday said.

Reactions mixed to Carroll Institute launch

✖ Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Seminary: “People are, of course, free to employ whatever name they wish. Whether this is done with integrity depends upon whether the principles of the one whose name is thereby invoked are honored and espoused. While one may question the justice of using the name of the founder of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in a competing effort against that seminary, the real test will be whether they have honored Carroll's name or just used it.”

✖ Paul Powell, dean of Truett Seminary at Baylor University: “The need for theological education is vast and this is a bold experiment. These are my friends and I wish them God's favor.”

✖ Charles Wade, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas: “I welcome this new paradigm of seminary education represented by the B.H. Carroll Institute in our ongoing effort to train effective Christian leaders, biblically sound pastors, passionate gospel preachers, evangelists, missionaries and ministers who value our Baptist heritage. The leadership announced are men who have contributed greatly to Texas Baptist life. We look forward to working with them and commend them to our churches.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.