

# Hemphill rejoins seminary to lead center bearing his name

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FORT WORTH (BP)—Kenneth S. Hemphill, seventh president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been appointed distinguished fellow of the Hemphill Center for Church Revitalization and senior professor of church revitalization in the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions.



(Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Photo)

“Dr. Hemphill has few peers in the Southern Baptist Convention in the areas of church revitalization and growth,” President Adam W. Greenway said. “I am delighted that he has agreed to give leadership to the vital work of the center that bears his name and will also bring his lifetime of experience and knowledge to our Fish School classrooms. This is a great day for Southwestern Seminary.”

Hemphill said he is “humbled and honored” by the invitation to serve again at the seminary that he led as president from 1994 to 2003.

“The Lord has used my varied life experiences to prepare me for this

unique opportunity,” he said. “My passion for the local church was birthed in me by my pastor/father. The privilege of serving my Southern Baptist family in numerous capacities has provided a wealth of information that I long to share with the next generation.”

Established in 2019, the Hemphill Center provides academic programs, resources, training and equipping events, consulting services, and ministry opportunities to help meet the needs of pastors, church leaders and the local church.

Additionally, the center works in partnership with the national fellowship of state revitalization leaders and the church replanting team of the North American Mission Board.

During its October 2021 meeting, the seminary’s board of trustees named the center in honor of Hemphill.

In addition to his role with the center, Hemphill also will teach in the Fish School, and he will help the seminary raise funds to endow the work of the center.

In addition to his service at Southwestern, Hemphill was the national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention’s Empowering Kingdom Growth emphasis from 2003 to 2011. He also served as the founding director of the Center for Church Planting and Revitalization at North Greenville University in Tigerville, S.C.

Hemphill was pastor of First Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va., from 1981 to 1992. He led the Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth, a joint venture of the SBC Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board, from 1992 to 1994.

Originally from Morganton, N.C., Hemphill earned a bachelor’s degree from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., in 1970. He earned

Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Philosophy in New Testament from Cambridge University.