

Baylor provost to Furman; Garland named interim provost

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GREENVILLE, S.C. (ABP)—[Baylor University](#) administrator and accounting professor Elizabeth Davis has been named president of [Furman University](#), an independent private school in Greenville, S.C., that broke ties with the South Carolina Baptist Convention in 1992.



Elizabeth Davis, 51, will become 12th president of the school founded by Baptists in 1826 and the first woman to hold the post. She currently serves as executive vice president and provost at Baylor in Waco.

A member of [Calvary Baptist Church in Waco](#), Davis has been a member of the Baylor faculty since 1992. She was named vice provost for financial and academic administration in 2004. She became interim provost in 2008 when Baylor fired President John Lilley after two years on the job. Current President Ken Starr elevated her to the permanent position after he took office in 2010.

Furman trustees announced Davis' hiring Feb. 6. She takes office July 1.

The 2,662-student school is named after Richard Furman, first president of the first national Baptist denomination in America, called the Triennial

Convention, and one of the nation's most important Baptist leaders before the Civil War.

In 1990, Furman trustees voted to amend the university's charter and give the board sole power to elect trustees, after the South Carolina Baptist Convention's historic practice of selecting trustees grew politicized in an era of Southern Baptist life today commonly called the "conservative resurgence."

The university's motto remains *Christo et Doctrinae* (For Christ and Learning). Today Furman describes itself as "a learning community where faith is cherished but not coerced," which "makes its own spiritual commitments explicit through faculty, staff and administrators who provide models of faith, academic excellence, maturity and wisdom."

Davis' husband, Charles, also teaches at Baylor. They have two children, Chad and Claire.



David Garland At its February meeting, the Baylor board of regents expressed appreciation for Davis' faithful service and academic leadership across 22 years at Baylor. As Davis begins her transition this spring, President Ken Starr notified the board he has appointed David Garland as interim provost. Garland is the Charles J. and Eleanor McLerran Delancey Chair of the Dean of Baylor's George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

A member of the Truett faculty since 1997, Garland was appointed Truett's

associate dean for academic affairs in 2001 and has led the seminary as dean since 2007. During Garland's tenure as dean, Truett Seminary increased enrollment and expanded its faculty. He also served Baylor as interim president from August 2008 until May 2010.

"Dean Garland is esteemed as both a distinguished scholar and an exceptional administrator, who embodies what it means to be a servant leader," Starr said. "He was lauded by all members of the Baylor family for his steadfast leadership of the university as interim president, and he again has expressed his willingness to serve our beloved Baylor.

"Dr. Garland's appointment as interim provost will allow the university to continue to move forward in the implementation of Pro Futuris, our new vision, while we begin planning for a national search to fill the position of the university's chief academic officer."

—*With additional reporting from Baylor University.*