

Truett Seminary celebrates 30 years, looks to future

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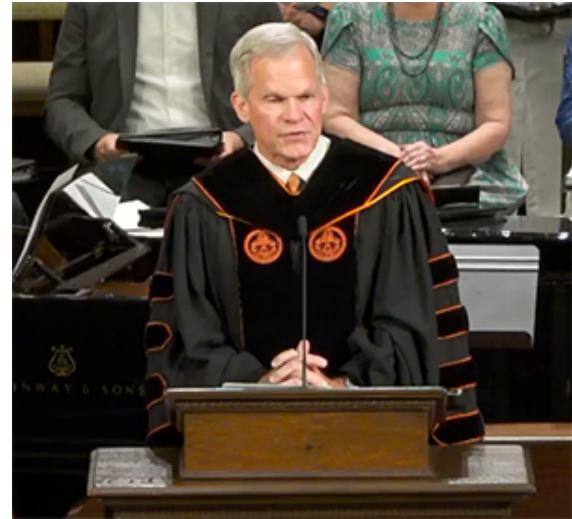
WACO—Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary returned to its birthplace at First Baptist Church in Waco for an Aug. 27 convocation marking 30 years of spiritual formation and preparing students for ministry.

"In 1994, in this very room, a handful of Truett Seminary administrators, faculty and staff, along with 51 students and a goodly number of stalwart supporters, began the story of which we are now a part, started the stream in which we now stand, sang the song we now sing," Dean Todd Still said.

Truett Seminary classes met in the facility of First Baptist Church in Waco until 2002, when the seminary moved to its Baugh Reynolds Campus on the grounds of Baylor University.

Seminary 'still on mission'

Brad Creed, the seminary's second dean, reflected on the days preceding the seminary's birth.



Brad Creed, second dean of Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary and president of Campbell University, spoke at Truett's 30th anniversary convocation in Waco.

"I was there when Truett Seminary was a concept, a hope and a dream," said Creed, now president of Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C.

"I was there when it was two people, a legal pad and a pencil for sketching out those hopes and dreams. And look at you now, making those compelling ideas incarnate on a continuing basis."

The seminary launched during a "time of denominational turmoil and unrest" in Baptist life, he acknowledged. While some other institutions created at that time did not survive, Truett Seminary persevered.

"Truett Seminary is visible. It is virile. It is viable. It is vibrant and still on mission to 'equip God-called people for gospel ministry in and alongside Christ's church by the power of the Holy Spirit,'" he said.

Creed offered thanks for the vision of the late former Baylor President

Herbert Reynolds and former provost Donald Schmeltekopf and for the support of founding dean—and later university president—Robert Sloan, early faculty and donors who made Truett Seminary possible.

Pro Ecclesia, Pro Texana, Pro Mundo

Since its founding, Truett Seminary has exemplified Baylor University's [recently expanded motto](#), *Pro Ecclesia, Pro Texana, Pro Mundo*—"for the church, for Texas, for the world," Baylor President Linda Livingstone said.



Baylor University President Linda Livingstone underscored Truett Seminary's contributions to the church, to Texas and to the world.

She particularly noted the partnerships Truett Seminary and Baylor University have with the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the [Baptist World Alliance](#).

"Truett celebrates the diversity of the BGCT while also contributing to that diversity," Livingstone said. "This includes racial diversity, with students from all backgrounds and walks of life, and it includes gender diversity."

“Truett plays an important role in fully affirming women in their call to ministry. And in this increasingly polarized theological landscape, Truett’s affirmation of women in ministry is more important than ever.”

After looking at Truett’s past and present, Still raised the question, “Where do we go from here?”

Truett Seminary will continue to embrace its identity as “an orthodox, evangelical multidenominational school in the historic Baptist tradition embedded in a Christian R1 university,” he said.



Dean Todd Still emphasized Truett Seminary’s goal of providing “quality theological education that is accessible, affordable and achievable.”

The seminary will seek to train “thoughtful, faithful Christian ministers for a 21st century church and world” by providing “quality theological education that is accessible, affordable and achievable,” he added.

“More than lofty—much less, empty—rhetoric, these are erstwhile

commitments that ground us and guide us day in and day out, week in and week out, year in and year out. ... We are all in—committed to being both humble and hungry, gritty and graceful, resolutely refusing to rest on our self-fashioned laurels,” Still said.

At a luncheon following the convocation, Truett Seminary announced church historian Alan Lefever as the inaugural Russell H. Dilday Endowed Visiting Professor in Baptist Life and Leadership.

Lefever, director of the Texas Baptist Historical Collection, has taught as an adjunct at Truett Seminary for 25 years. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve at a seminary that “takes academics seriously,” while also creating a “culture of fellowship” and a “community of joy.”