

Blue & White



September 14, 2007

Special Inaugural Edition

“Know When to Hold’em, Know When to Fold’em”



President Weedman’s address focused on the challenge of every college dealing with change for the future while holding on to the best of the past. He affirmed that there is much of the past of Johnson that we certainly must retain. Yet, he pointed out that Johnson has had a long tradition of change as the environment occasioned such change to accomplish its historic mission.

The key to knowing “*when to hold’em, when to fold’em*,” he asserted was knowledge—both knowledge as individuals and as an institution. We must know who we are in the midst the myriad of institutional models and associations that try to pigeon-hole us into one or another slot. While we will learn from all of the competing models, we must ultimately know who we are based on our mission, our history, our resources, our opportunities.

EXCERPTS:

We like constancy at Johnson; we revere our history; you don’t have to be on our campus long to realize that.

One of my favorite colleagues of years ago, Phyllis Fontaine, Milligan College, captured this love of constancy by her motto: “Dean, get in a good rut and stay there.” Sometimes I even followed her sage advice.

We colloquially say, “*if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.*”

“The more things change, the more they stay the same.”

Our history has demonstrated constancy, and...

There is much from that history that shouldn’t change:

- the same mission of the school contextually translated
- the core values of learning in community
- an education irrespective of financial resources
- a focus on the text of the Scriptures
- a broad-based arts and sciences education, what Ashley Johnson called “*a proper English education*”

We embrace change here. We’ve **always** embraced change...

- From the distance learning “*Correspondence Bible College*” to the four-year residential “*School of the Evangelists*,”

to Johnson Bible College now with several baccalaureate programs and four graduate degrees

- From a male-only institution, to first “*allowing*” women to enroll, then to creating programs specifically targeting women
- From a mostly nationally based and homogeneous student body to an international and ethnically diverse student body

These and other changes came not because there was something wrong with the status quo, but rather because a **new environment** occasioned **new responses** to accomplish the mission.

Change is not an implicit criticism of the past or the present but rather a realization of the mission of the school in a new environment.

*Some observers might think we’ve been **slow to change** here at Johnson. Well, we have been. We’re reluctant to bend with every new wind that blows across the education landscape.*

And yet, in some areas we’ve been out in front of the pack. I noted with some amusement that on July 1, 2007, Harvard University made much of announcing their new president Professor Drew Gilpin Faust—the 28th president of the oldest college in the U.S. It took this esteemed university 371 years to appoint a woman president. **Johnson did it in its 32nd year!**

With dependability—we’ll embrace our history, our unique mission, and values.

With deliberation—we’ll change as opportunities occasion such change to accomplish that mission.

With devotion—we’ll try to do for the church in the world what Ashley Johnson did for the church in the nation.

With determination—we’ll follow the French philosopher, Jean Jaurès (1859-1914), who advised: “Take from the altars of the past the fire and not the ashes.”

“Know Thyself”: attributed to at least five Greek philosophers, including:

- (1) Socrates; also
- (2) In the temple in Delphi, Greece, according to Pausanias
- (3) And, of course, in the original “Matrix,” the oracle instructed Neo: “Know thyself”

Even though it’s not biblical, it’s good advice (it should be biblical right up there with “cleanliness is next to godliness”).

Know your self **as an individual**, that’s what the Greeks meant. But it applies equally to an institution.

One of the fundamental tasks of the president is to **articulate the mission of the school**.

That’s easy here: **“To Educate Students for Specialized Christian Ministries with Emphasis on the Preaching Ministry.”**

And yet, it is all too deceptively easy. When Ashley Johnson said that the School of the Evangelists was “Open day and night to the poor young man who desires above every other desire to preach the gospel of Christ,” that was a crystal clear mission. And our mission is clear as well.

The problem is that the academy tends to force an institution into this or that category rather than allow the mission, history, constituency, and resources define its unique ethos.

Thus, we have a panoply of models that compete for our allegiance; Ashley Johnson chose one model in 1893. By his own account he took Bethany College, founded in 1840 by Alexander Campbell, as the educational model. But Johnson focused their strong

emphasis on the Bible, arts, and sciences for the single purpose of preparing a leadership ministry for the church.



Our task, then, is not to dilute that original mission by trying to follow an externally imposed paradigm. Rather, we’ll follow our purpose as defined by our history, our constituency, and our resources. We will listen to, communicate with, engage in dialogue, learn from, and contribute to the discussion in the academy. We will humbly learn from them all, blindly imitate none.

*Not only must we **know ourselves**, our ultimate goal, individually and institutionally, is to be known by God.*

It is not enough to acquire the right knowledge and the right skills. Unless our character is formed and known by God himself, we will have failed.

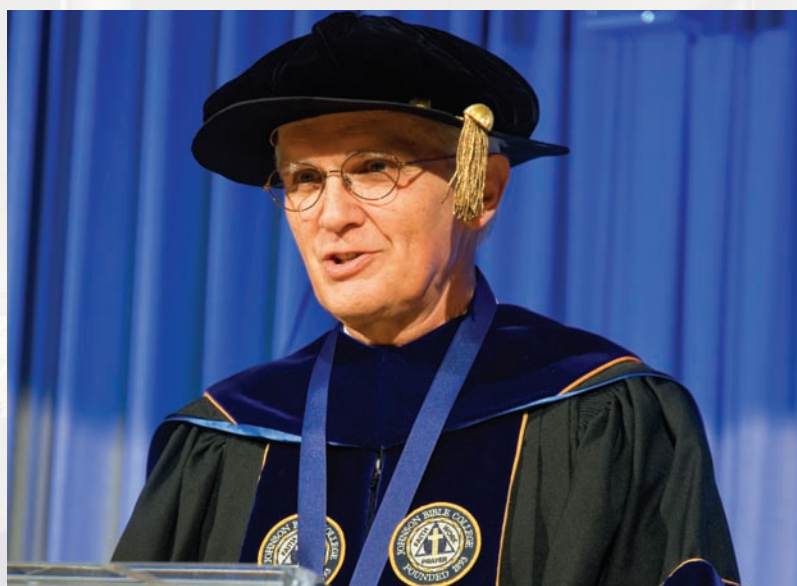
I end with the beginning:

Members of the Board of Trustees, President Eubanks, honored delegates and guests, members of the families of the Browns, the Bells, and the Eubanks, faculty, staff, students, alumni, friends and family, to the many members of

*committees and staff who worked tirelessly for this day, to the program participants: thank you all so much for your participation in this new chapter of our history here at Johnson. May God give us all the wisdom to **know: know when to change** and when to **“get in a good rut and stay there”:** to know **“when to hold’em and know when to fold’em”.***

For more inauguration coverage including video & audio recordings, photo galleries, a full manuscript of Dr Weedman’s inaugural address, and more visit our website: www.jbc.edu/inauguration

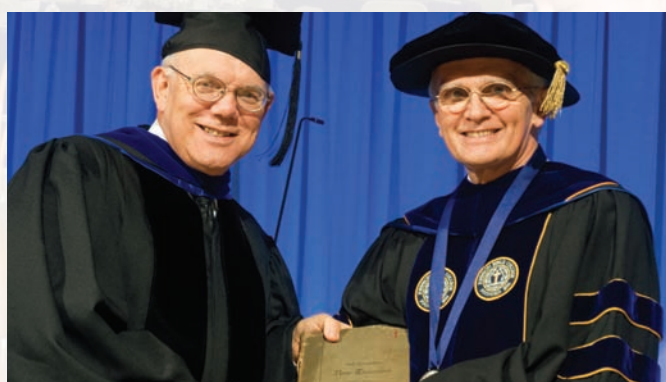
Our Celebration



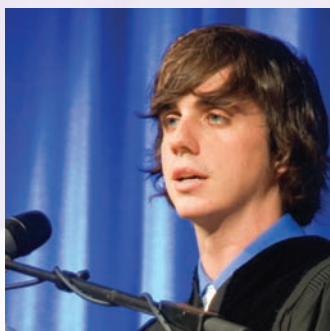
This gallery contains images representative of the festivities surrounding the Inauguration of Gary E. Weedman as the sixth president of Johnson Bible College. Frequent, heartfelt applause thanked Robert Chambers, Jill Lagerberg, Jerome Princeton, Michael Taylor, Donald Trentham, Brent Weaver, and Jenna Weaver for their outstanding performances at the pre-inauguration concert.

JBC trustees, spouses, and special guests joined the faculty and staff for dinner under “the big tent” set in front of the Philips-Welshimer Building. Student volunteers served 232 guests.

Student volunteers also served the Inaugural day luncheon for visiting delegates, dignitaries, spouses, honorary alumni, and other special guests. For an expanded gallery visit our website: www.jbc.edu/inauguration.



JBC trustees initiated a tradition by ceremoniously presenting a copy of the Self-interpreting New Testament edited by founding president Ashley S. Johnson and by presenting a silver medallion to President Gary E. Weedman. Greetings were spoken by numerous guests. For a complete listing of platform participants visit our website: www.jbc.edu/inauguration



Our First Lady

Those who know Janis Weedman well believe that she is uniquely qualified for her new role as Johnson Bible College's first lady. She has a long history with JBC. Her family moved to the campus in 1960 when her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Morgan, became staff members. She is an alumna of the College and she has served on the faculty. She worked in the office when Dr. R. M. Bell was President and also helped Mrs. Bell in the White House on special occasions. When she and Gary were married in the Old Chapel in 1963, Mrs. Bell hosted their reception at the White House.

But it is not just her history with the College that has helped equip Janis for this role. She has shown herself to be extremely adaptable to new situations and challenges. She has excelled in teaching on a variety of campuses, devoting untold hours to her job. Her most recent teaching experience was in an inner city school in Indianapolis where she worked with disadvantaged young people. Recognizing that most received little encouragement in other areas of their lives, Janis went to great lengths to do special things for them and to challenge them to achieve all they could.

Janis is a gracious hostess with an innate ability to make people feel welcome in her home. People sense that she is genuinely interested in them and in what is going on in their lives. She is a loyal friend, willing to add things to her own schedule in order to help her friends. Even in the midst of demanding jobs, Janis has found time to entertain. Business colleagues, family, and friends have looked forward to the dinners and open houses hosted by the Weedmans.

Something else that will serve Janis well is the fact that she is extremely hard working (a trait inherited from her parents). She has always given many more hours than required to any job entrusted to her. And when problems or difficulties have arisen, her philosophy has been just to "deal with it" in the best way she can and go on.

The love that Janis has for her family is very evident.

She, along with her sisters, spent many hours caring for their parents in the last years of their lives. She has a close relationship with her three sisters and their families. She has been a wonderful mother to Mark, Matthew, Micah and Joshua, and is proud of the men they have become. She is a devoted grandmother to her six granddaughters (and is enjoying buying the little girls' clothes that she had to bypass with her four boys). Perhaps one of the greatest compliments to her relationship with her family came recently when one of her daughters-in-law said that they were anticipating the arrival of "Nana, who makes all things right just by her presence."

Janis has long loved and will continue to love Johnson Bible College. She appreciates its rich history and heritage. She will continue the tradition of being a first lady who loves the Lord and who uses her unique talents and abilities to honor Him and to love and serve the JBC family.



Our First Family

Gary and Janis Weedman's immediate family consists of four adult sons, three daughters-in-law, and six granddaughters. Their oldest son Mark, his wife Michelle, and three daughters, Annalise (5), Eleanor (3), and Adelaide (3 months) live in Rochester, Minnesota, where Mark teaches theology at Crossroads College and Michelle teaches religion courses at Lourdes High School. Their second son Matthew lives in Los Angeles with his wife Rachel Morgan. Matthew is an actor and teacher who just completed a graduate degree. Rachel teaches literature, composition, and creative writing at a private Catholic high school while continuing to publish poetry. Micah, the third son, and his wife JoEllen currently live in Kankakee, Illinois, where JoEllen is an assistant professor of journalism at Olivet Nazarene University. Micah has just assumed a new position as director of outreach in the Office of University Ministries at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee; after a semester of commuting, JoEllen, Emmaline (4), and twins Audrey and Clara (16 months) will move to Nashville in December. The Weedman's youngest son, Joshua, is an attorney specializing in corporate and consumer litigation with White and Case LLP in New York City. He is currently doing an externship for a non-profit company, representing battered and abused women and children in various low-income areas of the city. He resides in the Gramercy Park area of New York City.



Education and service to God through education have been the distinguishing characteristics of the Weedman family. All four sons grew up with their private lives intertwined with their parents' involvement in Christian colleges and public schools and have, therefore, spent most of their adult lives in educational pursuits. Likewise, all three daughters-in-law share the desire to serve God in an educational setting. Mark grew up in Lincoln, Illinois, and then graduated from Milligan College and Emmanuel School of Religion; he holds a Ph.D. in Historical Theology from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Michelle, originally from Randleman, North Carolina, is a graduate of Elon College, Elon, North Carolina; she obtained a M.A. in Theology from Marquette University and is currently a Ph.D. student in Theology at Marquette. Matthew grew up in Lincoln, Illinois, and Johnson City, Tennessee; he graduated from East Tennessee State University and in June received a M.F.A. in Acting from University of California Los Angeles. Rachel, a native of Kingsport, Tennessee, graduated from the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga Honors Program and earned a M.F.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Iowa. Micah grew up in Johnson City where he graduated from Milligan College and also earned a M.Div. degree from Emmanuel School of Religion. JoEllen is from Spiceland, Indiana; she graduated from Milligan College and then received a M.S. in Journalism from the University of Illinois-Urbana. Joshua grew up in Johnson City and graduated from Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina, and the University of Michigan Law School. The whole family shares a love of travel, and all of the sons and daughters-in-law took advantage of study-abroad programs while in college. Family gatherings, although limited to two times a year, consist of intense theological/life discussions, friendly competitive activities, and a genuine joy in being together. Although separated geographically, everyone stays connected through e-mails, blogspots, fantasy football leagues, occasional publication of a family newsletter and frequent cell phone calls.

Our Sixth President

There is more to Gary Weedman than just an appreciation for bow ties and a dissertation on Alexander the Great. Making that discovery can be delightful. Born in Evansville, Indiana, Gary spent the early years of his life in Fairfield, Illinois. He is a fifth generation Christian from the Campbell stream and fifth generation Christian from the Stone stream by his maternal grandfather and grandmother respectively. By birthright and by choice he is committed to the principles of the Restoration Movement.

Gary has been husband to Janis (formerly Janis Morgan) for forty-three years, father to Mark, Matthew, Micah, and Joshua, father-in-law to Michelle, Rachel, and Jo Ellen, and "Bepaw" to six beautiful granddaughters.

He distinguished himself as a life-long student, scholar, administrator, professor, preacher, author, and missionary. Gary's thirst for learning is evidenced in graduating from Johnson Bible College in three years, earning his A.B. degree in 1964, his M.A. degree from Western Illinois University in 1967, and his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1971. He also studied at Lincoln Christian Seminary and the University of Tennessee. Today he reads an average of forty major works each year; recent favorites are **Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph** by Ben Witherington, III. and **The New Testament and the People of God** by N. T. Wright. For leisure reading he enjoys Ellis Peters' mysteries.

Gary is the founding campus minister of the Indiana University Campus Christian Ministry. Prior to that he served as minister to the Maple Grove Christian Church in Bloomington, Indiana, and minister to the Burnside Christian Church in Burnside, Illinois. He also served as associate professor of Greek and homiletics at Johnson

Bible College; assistant dean of interdisciplinary studies at Lincoln Christian College; academic dean at Lincoln Christian College, vice-president for academic affairs and dean at Milligan College, provost at Palm Beach Atlantic University, and executive vice president with TCM International Institute. He has traveled in Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Japan, serving as guest lecturer in seminaries and colleges in Romania, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Japan, Uzbekistan, and Great Britain. In the 1980's, he was put in jail in Hungary while traveling for TCM.

Gary loves the trumpet and dusted it off to play a duet at Seminar Day (he turned down a music scholarship to a state university to attend Johnson Bible College). Gary is an avid fly fisherman. His favorite defense, "if it was easy it would be called fly catching, not fishing." He loves to scuba dive and has done so with sharks. Recently, he was seen on a giant slip 'n slide on his stomach racing students down the hill behind our president's home.

Now we are blessed to have this well-educated, well-read, well-traveled and well-respected man bring his wisdom, gifts, interests, skills, experience, and education to Johnson Bible College as our sixth president.



Join the Weedmans on a 14-day tour of Ireland—Scotland for friends of the College from June 16-29, 2008. For itinerary, prices, and other information contact wreid@jbc.edu or call 865-251-2225.

Photography by Andy Benedict and Nathan Holt. Cover by Andy Benedict.

THE BLUE AND WHITE is published four times each year to promote the work of Johnson Bible College. It is sent free to alumni and friends of the College. Website: www.jbc.edu; e-mail: jbc@jbc.edu

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