

WINTER 2021

# BLESSED

TO BE A BLESSING



## STEGALLS VISIT WITH SEMINARY STUDENTS

Fall visits to the campuses of Asbury and Duke  
encourage students

## FOUNDATION HOSTS BENEFIT CONCERTS

Concerts feature renowned pianist  
Randall Atcheson

## SUPPORTING THE CALL

Rev. Brad Zimanek reminds us why bi-vocational  
pastors need our support

# Supporting the Call of the Bi-Vocational Pastor

By Brad Zimanek

The journey of bi-vocational pastors, those persons who hold both a pastoral job and a secular job, is a surreal experience. The number of requirements and demands they face boggles the mind and so often aren't recognized for the many sacrifices made.

I truly feel that these persons are disciples with a unique and very real call - as they wouldn't have any reason to endure all they do in order to be ministers if they weren't.

See, I was once a bi-vocational pastor. I spent five years as the pastor at Snowdown UMC in Montgomery, Ala., while also serving as the sports editor at *The Montgomery Advertiser* newspaper. During this time I often found myself in unique, and sometimes unusual, circumstances as I sought to be faithful in both roles.

For instance, I frequently would go into the restroom at either Bryant-Denny or Jordan-Hare Stadium at half-time during the Iron Bowl to practice delivering my sermon for the next morning. When I was finished with this unusual rehearsal, I would return to the cheers of the fans, go back to work covering the game, and arrive back home past midnight.

Juggling these two jobs, while also volunteering to feed those persons experiencing homelessness and serving in prison ministry (both great passions of mine), was obviously plenty to handle. But, when you add to that the scheduling, paying for, and completing of Course of Study classes it can sometimes feel overwhelming.

During those times when I felt overwhelmed by work, study and ministry, I was encouraged by the donors of the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation. I'm thankful for the financial support I received from the foundation and ask for your continued prayers and blessings for all local, licensed pastors. Your mission to support the education of these pastors is a gift to not only them, but to the churches they are called to serve.

I entered the full-time ministry two years ago and completed the Course of Study in June 2021. Even though I am



Gulfview UMC. Photos courtesy of Brad Zimanek

no longer a bi-vocational pastor, I feel a burden for those now walking the same path as I did.

I began my full-time pastoral appointment at Gulfview

UMC in Panama City Beach, Florida this July. As an older congregation, Gulfview suffered 10 deaths in the last year as well as the loss of other members who chose to move closer to family due to isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Yet, at Gulfview, we are blessed that our cutting-edge broadcast technology rivals that of larger churches. We've instituted a "Philippians 234" ministry - in humility looking not to our own interests but the interests of others - which

includes providing backpacks for the needs of the area's homeless population.

Christ's love has been planted here at Gulfview for the past 65 years and we're excited to see what's in store for the next 65. Your gifts supporting my education have helped to equip me to lead this amazing congregation into the future.

If you are ever on vacation nearby - and want to experience the friendliest church on the beach - please come by and join us for worship...flip flops and shorts are always welcome!



Brad and Jill Zimanek

**The Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation is a 501(C)(3) non-profit foundation, and all gifts are tax deductible. Gifts for our Seminary students should be mailed to Dr. Karl K. Stegall, Seminary Scholarship Foundation, P. O. Box 241661, Montgomery, Alabama 36124-1661.**

# Foundation Hosts Benefit Concerts featuring Randall Atcheson

*2022 dates and locations to be announced*



The Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation is sponsoring piano benefit concerts featuring Randall Atcheson. The first one took place on Sunday evening, November 14, 2021 in the sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church of Prattville, Ala. There is no charge to attend the concerts.

Randy, a native of rural Chilton County, was recognized as a child prodigy and enrolled in the music school at Samford University at the age of 12. He graduated from Chilton County High School in 1970. He later was accepted to The Juilliard School where he studied piano and made his Carnegie Hall debut in 1991. He has recorded 16 albums such as "Amazing Grace," and "Christmas by Candlelight." Randy has been a featured guest on the nationally televised Gala of Stars from Radio Music Hall, as well as a guest on "A Fox and Friends Christmas"



**Randall Atcheson**  
Photo provided

primetime TV special. His concert series has taken him to the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. He has performed on different occasions for former Presidents George Bush and Barack Obama.

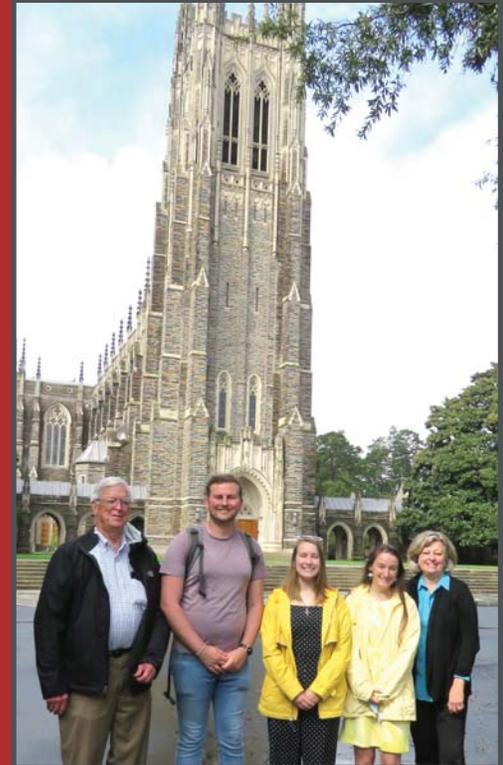
Randy has selected a variety of music that he will play for these concerts. His piano selections include "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," "Amazing Grace," "Blessed Assurance," "And Can It Be," "Revive Us Again," "I'll Fly Away," "When We All Get to Heaven," "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder," "Anything Goes," "Try to Remember," "Autumn Leaves," "Think of Me," "Music of the Night," "All I Ask of You," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," and a patriotic medley of "Anchors Away," "The Caissons Go Rolling Along," "Marine Hymn," "Air Force Hymn," and "God Bless America."

Dates and locations for the 2022 concerts hosted by the Stegall Foundation will be announced soon. "I recently heard Randy in concert at Samford University, and it was one of the most enjoyable evenings that I have experienced in a long, long time," said Karl Stegall. "I can promise you that you will return home with a warm spirit in your heart! Please join us for future concerts."

Concert photographs courtesy of Prattville FUMC.



Brenda and Karl Stegall visited this fall with students on the campuses of Asbury Theological Seminary and Duke Divinity School. During the visits they were able to spend time with the students, encourage them, and share with them your prayers and support. Thank you for your faithful support of these students, and so many others!



*Seminary students Kevin Towers, Beth Johnson, and Lucy Burch are pictured with Dr. and Mrs. Stegall during their recent visit to Duke Divinity School.*



*Left to Right: Seminary students Zach Jeffcoat, James Harvey, Paul Sigler, Esther Felt, Hunter Bethea, and Haley Bethea are pictured with Dr. and Mrs. Stegall during their recent visit to Asbury Theological Seminary.*



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## Blessed to be a Blessing

Martina McBride recorded one of my favorite songs years ago that she simply titled, "Blessed." It contains the beautiful lyrics,

"I have been blessed and I feel like I've found my way,  
I thank God for all I've been given at the end of every day.  
I have been blessed with so much more than I deserve  
To be here with the ones that love me, to love  
them so much it hurts, I have been blessed!"

As I move each year from Thanksgiving through Christmas, those words always resonate deep within my soul. However, I always have to pause and remind myself that I have been blessed by God for a Divine purpose. Hopefully, I can be a blessing to others.

One of the most inspiring things that I am discovering today is the increasing number of people who are longing for their lives to make a difference. They are desperately seeking meaning and fulfillment that the secular world does not provide. In response, they are increasingly devoting their time, talent, and yes, their financial resources to church-related causes that will make a difference.

In light of this, I would remind you that the greatest issue facing the Christian Church today is the shortage of effective pastors to fill our pulpits. For those who do answer God's call upon their lives to enter church-related vocations, they need and deserve our support.

In 1924, George Schuler and Ira Wilson, two seminary roommates in Chicago, wrote a camp meeting song that early Methodists loved to sing to remind them of their need to be a blessing to others,

"Make me a blessing, Make me a blessing, Out of my life may Jesus shine.  
Make me a blessing, O Savior I pray, Make me a blessing today!"

Brenda and I want to thank you for the great blessing you are to us and to all of our students preparing to serve our local churches. We wish for you and your loved ones a very Merry Christmas!

- Karl K. Stegall



**KARL & BRENDA STEGALL**