

# CONNEXION

A NEWSLETTER OF THE YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE

## Students Complete Mission Trip in the Bahamas

Seven Young Harris College students, faculty and staff members spent an “alternative spring break” mission trip in the Bahamas, March 5-12, volunteering with Bahamas Methodist Habitat (BMH), a building ministry that repairs old houses and builds new homes for local residents on the islands.

The YHC mission team traveled to Governor’s Harbour, Eleuthera, where they joined nearly 60 volunteers from other Methodist-affiliated colleges, universities and community organizations.

“It was wonderful to witness the closeness of the community and the humbleness of the people in the Bahamas,” said sophomore Marissa Thomas of Brunswick. “They were so grateful to have our help, and they constantly reminded us of that through their words and actions.”

The group helped restore the community’s health clinic to working order by hanging cement wallboard, pouring concrete pillars for a roof and digging out a bank for drainage.

“When we were not working, we found ourselves playing with the ever-present children who popped over from the primary school



Marissa Thomas (left) and YHC Admissions Counselor Kari Webb, '07, bond with children from the primary school next door.

Michelle Brun, Kennesaw, Marissa Thomas, Brunswick, Admissions Counselor Kari Webb, Campus Minister and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Rev. Dr. Tim Moore, Danielle Ashby, Cartersville, Tim Linley, Cartersville, and Admissions Specialist Kelli Fell stand on the Glass Window Bridge on Eleuthera, which is often referred to as “the narrowest place on earth” and separates the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.

next door,” Campus Minister and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Rev. Dr. Tim Moore said. “Each afternoon, the team enjoyed the tropical elements of the island—pink sand beaches, abundant conch shells, seafloors littered with sand dollars, variously colored starfish, coral to be snorkeled over, curly tailed lizards and expansive stretches of sand.”

The volunteers attended an Ash Wednesday ecumenical worship service organized by the local community.

“The service proved more than a valued cultural experience; it was truly a holy moment that summarized our week,” Dr. Moore said. “The team stretched their expectations of themselves, their abilities, their understandings and their faith.”

YHC Admissions Counselor Kari Webb, '07, and Admissions Specialist Kelli Fell pour concrete.



“Connexion” is a traditionally Methodist word and important Christian practice. Connexion speaks both to how we organize ourselves and the penetrating significance of our shared life, witness and work.



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## Message FROM THE CAMPUS MINISTER



What a great year! Religious Life at Young Harris College for the 2010-11 academic year was full of new and diverse opportunities for worship,

fellowship, service and faith. In particular, the student leadership team moved into action, leading our students and challenging them with rich programming and faithful service. Our theme for the year was "Don't Forget (ALL) Your Change," a subtle reminder that a life of faith is not about partial investment of self but a whole-life commitment. And our students committed. On average, nearly 300 students share in a Religious Life activity each week. With another academic year behind us and the next almost upon us, I am as excited as ever for what God has in store for us, our faith and this community of people called Young Harris College.

Rev. Dr. Tim Moore  
Campus Minister and Assistant Professor  
of Religious Studies

## YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE Students Form Gospel Choir



The student-led gospel choir was formed by sophomore music major Cedric Epps of Talbotton (left).

"I joined the gospel choir to praise God like I was used to doing at home," added recent graduate Jalessa Morris, '11, of Canton. "When I joined, I felt like I had a piece of home with me when we sang together. Generation X is more than just a singing group—it will forever be my family!"

Generation X, a student-led gospel choir formed by sophomore music major Cedric Epps of Talbotton, offers an exciting new dimension to the religious opportunities for Young Harris College students.

"The group was formed because I wanted to express a different type of worship that is comfortable to my background," Epps said. "This group's only goal is to please God in our own way. Every song we sing is customized and tailored to fit our style of worship."



## YHC HOSTS Summer Ministries Jobs Fair

In February, representatives from ministries across the Southeast gathered in Grace Rollins Dining Hall at Young Harris College for the first-ever YHC Summer Ministries Jobs Fair. Co-sponsored by the Office of Religious Life and the Academic Advising Center, the fair helped pair students with ministries looking for summer staff.

More than 50 students stopped by to speak with ministry representatives, marking the event's benefit to both the College's students and the ministries in attendance.

"We enjoyed visiting the Young Harris College campus and the opportunity to meet several really great students. Lake Junaluska Assembly (LJA) would definitely be interested in coming back!" said LJA Director of Human Resources Karen Kirby.

## MEET THE 2011-2012 INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

### Amanda Noonan

"Throughout my time at Young Harris College, God has taught me that being a follower of Christ is not about serving ourselves, but rather about serving God—feeding his sheep and giving all of the glory to Him. This year, our theme for Religious Life is "One." The hope in my heart is that this will be more than a theme for an academic year, but also a theme for our lives. I pray that God will use this theme to reinforce the truth that we are one body serving one God. I pray that we will put this truth into action and spur each other on towards the heart of our precious Lord. This year, may God do abundantly more than we could ever imagine."



AMANDA NOONAN, SENIOR ENGLISH MAJOR, SMYRNA

# YHC STUDENTS ENJOY Special Spiritual Commencement Festivities

## Vespers Hike and Service

One of the key moments during the commencement weekend is the trek to the top of Brasstown Bald where graduates, their families and college faculty and staff gather for the annual Vespers Service. Students are encouraged to participate in the seven-mile hike to Bald Mountain prior to the service.

After walking through four ecosystems, crossing impromptu streams, hiking over rocks and logs and ascending more than 2,000 feet, the hike participants joined others from campus to share in a meal and worship.

Despite the unseasonably cold weather, the congregation sang hymns warmly and read scripture against the backdrop



Left: Graduates and their families gather for the annual Vespers Service.

of a spectacular sunset over the “Enchanted Valley.”

Campus Minister and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Tim Moore delivered an inspiring message regarding the journey to the “promised land”—graduation—that students have made at YHC.



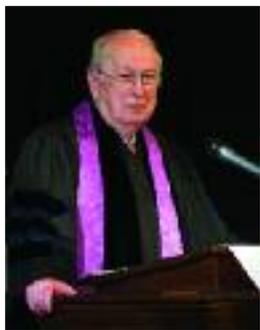
Below: YHC faculty, staff and students make the annual trek to the top of Brasstown Bald.

## Baccalaureate Service

Forty baccalaureate-degree candidates, along with family, friends and members of the YHC community, gathered in Susan B. Harris Chapel on the eve of the 2011 commencement ceremony to share in worship during the College’s first-ever Baccalaureate Service.

Thought to have begun at Oxford University in England in 1432 when students graduating with their bachelor’s degrees were asked to give speeches in Latin, a baccalaureate service is a moment of worship typically associated with commencement.

“With YHC graduating its



Fred Craddock addresses graduates.

first class of bachelor’s-degree candidates in nearly 100 years, the College’s introduction of this baccalaureate service tradition proved a suitable addition to our College community—a community

emphasizing our commitment to the vital union of knowledge and faith,” Campus Minister and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Rev. Dr. Tim Moore said.

Dr. Fred B. Craddock, Bandy Distinguished Professor of Preaching and New Testament, Emeritus, at

Emory University’s Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, addressed the students during the ceremony, and a special senior class prayer was offered by



Above: Graduates Brittany McKinnon, of Murphy, N.C., and Kortney Shelley, of Smyrna, offer a senior class prayer.

graduates Brittany McKinnon of Murphy, N.C., and Kortney Shelley of Smyrna.

Each graduate chose a special mentor to share in worship during the service and present the candidate with a purple stole they would wear with their cap and gown the next day. As part of another new tradition at the College, the chapel bell was rung for each senior to signify their transition from students to alumni.

A Bible was presented to each senior as a reminder of Young Harris College’s spiritual heritage and the importance of spiritual growth and faith while in college and throughout life. Printed with organic ink on recycled paper, the Bibles spoke to the particular environmental sensibilities of the graduating class.



YHC President Cathy Cox (right) presents Misty Barber of Nashville, Ga., with her graduation stole.



Left: Kyle Hatley, of Kennesaw, receives a special Bible that was presented to each senior as a reminder of YHC’s spiritual heritage.



View videos of the Vespers Hike and Service and Baccalaureate Service.  
[youtube.com/youngharriscollege](http://youtube.com/youngharriscollege)

# Alumni Musing

Campus Minister and Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Rev. Dr. Tim Moore and a group of YHC alumni recently discussed the depth and breadth of the impact religious life at Young Harris College has on students. "I began to reflect on the significance that faith experience has for individual students, yet I considered the additional vocational and multigenerational importance religious life holds from many who have walked our halls and sat in our chapel over the years—a transformational, persistent hold that shapes lives for decades and in many places," Dr. Moore said. "Naturally, my thoughts turned to the Haygoods."



Rev. David Haygood, '60, and son, Rev. Thad Haygood, '92,

*"At the age of 15, I answered God's call to Christian ministry at Dooly Campground near Vienna, Ga. My immediate goal was to finish high school and choose where I would continue my education. I chose Young Harris for several reasons—my summer youth director, Jimmy Kenny, was a student there, I had three good friends who were headed that way, I loved the mountains and the total cost was less than other schools I was considering. At YHC, I was mentored by Dr. Charles Clegg, Dr. John Minter and Mr. William Fox. Other faculty members were also supportive and caring. The whole atmosphere of the campus nurtured God's call on my life and helped me to keep my focus on Him. Those two years convinced me that I was on the right path. After more than 50 years, I am still convinced I made the right choice to attend YHC."*

REV. DAVID HAYGOOD, '60, RETIRED PASTOR,  
SOUTH GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

*beginning of a call from God into full-time ministry. My greatest inspiration and guidance came from my parents, Rev. David and Harriette Haygood. They were always so encouraging and supportive, and they allowed me to find my own way. My campus minister Rev. Fred Whitley, '68, was also very influential in my life and helped guide me in the direction that would eventually end in my acceptance of God's call. I will be forever grateful for the family atmosphere of YHC that nurtured me and started me on a solid path. Christ's presence is palpable in those beautiful mountains of North Georgia, and I loved my time in their shadows."*

REV. THAD HAYGOOD, '92, SENIOR PASTOR,  
DUBLIN FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH,  
DUBLIN, GA.

## YHC AND SHARP MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

### Introduce Shared Worship Service



YHC students, faculty and staff gather with members of the Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church congregation.

In an old classroom decorated with couches, a papasan chair and donated lamps, Young Harris College and Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church in Young Harris began a shared worship service on Sunday evenings called the 7:17.

"7:17 is worship without expectations," explained Lauren Neal, director of Christian education at Sharp Memorial UMC. Intended to serve both the College community and the broader Young Harris community, the 7:17 service occurs each week during the

academic year in the Charles R. Clegg Fine Arts Building on the YHC campus.

Centered on conversation and coffee, the service's informal nature creates an intimate atmosphere in which the congregation is as likely to ask questions as listen to that week's speaker.

YHC Instructor of Religion Adam Neal and Sharp Memorial UMC Director of Christian Education Lauren Neal lead praise and worship.



## YHC STUDENTS COMPLETE Spring 2011 Internships

Whether to explore calls to ministry or simply put faith into practice in a new way, YHC students regularly complete internships both at churches in the community. Three students recently served as interns at churches surrounding the YHC campus, gaining valuable experience by leading small groups, planning worship services and working at retreats.



**Caleb Paul, '11**  
A.S., Education  
Watkinsville  
Youth Intern, McConnell Memorial Baptist Church, Hiwassee



**Brittany McKinnon, '11**  
B.S., Business and Public Policy  
Murphy, N.C.  
Youth Intern, Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, Young Harris



**Daniel Sowell**  
Freshman Religious Studies Major  
Atlanta  
General Ministry Intern, Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, Young Harris

### STAY CONNECTED

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