

A Celebration of the Life of

David Clyde Jones

July 26, 1937 – March 4, 2017

Biography

(as published by Covenant Seminary)

Covenant Theological Seminary said goodbye to a dear friend and beloved teacher as Dr. David Clyde Jones, professor emeritus of systematic theology and ethics, went to be with the Lord on Sunday, March 5, 2017. He was 79 years old. He passed away in St. Louis, Missouri, after a battle with recurring cancer. The entire Seminary community grieves with Dr. Jones's family at the loss of this faithful servant of God, yet we rejoice as well that he is now face to face with the Savior he loved so much.

Dr. Jones was a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary and a former student of the renowned scholar and theologian John Murray, whose classic work *Principles of Conduct* left an indelible mark on him. He began teaching at Covenant Seminary in 1967. During his forty years at the institution, he not only taught systematic theology and ethics to generations of students, but also served as academic vice president from 1977 to 1988. He wrote the widely-praised textbook *Biblical Christian Ethics* (Baker, 1994), which has been translated into Spanish and Korean. During his tenure, he helped lead the Seminary into full accreditation regionally with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) and nationally with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), and was instrumental in bringing Prof. Jerram Barrs, his former student and good friend, to Covenant to teach (and later establish the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute) in 1989. Dr. Jones was also known for his great love of music, especially for playing the tuba and bluegrass guitar, and would occasionally recruit student musicians to join him as part of a brass quintet during campus chapel services and school picnics.

Prior to his time at Covenant, Dr. Jones served for two years as pastor of a mission church on Grand Cayman Island in the West Indies (following future Covenant Seminary colleague Dr. David Calhoun, who also had pastored the church). He came to St. Louis in 1966 to pursue a doctorate at Concordia Theological Seminary, completing it in 1970. In 1967, he was asked to fill in as a part-time instructor and assistant librarian at Covenant after Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr., one of the Seminary's founding professors, suffered a stroke. That led to Jones becoming a full-time assistant professor in 1968 and later a full professor. He taught at Covenant until his retirement in 2007, when he was granted the title professor emeritus.

In addition to his work at Covenant, Dr. Jones also served as moderator of the General Synod for the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES) in 1978, before that denomination's joining and receiving with the PCA, and was a further blessing to the church at large through his wide-ranging preaching ministry and presbytery involvement. Even in retirement, he

(continued on the back page)

Thursday, March 9, 2017
2:00 p.m.

Prelude Margaret Jones

Call to Worship • 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Hymn • *Jesus Lives, and So Shall I* #706

Scripture Reading • Psalm 90

Hymn • *O Father, You Are Sovereign* #75

Scripture Reading • Psalm 139:1-16

Hymn • *Father, I Know That All My Life* #559

Scripture Reading • Psalm 84:1-4, 10-12

Homily Professor Jerram Barrs

Special Music • *Precious Lord* Suzanne Bates

Homily Rev. Ryan Laughlin

Special Music • *Just a Closer Walk* arr. D. Jones

Hymn • *For All the Saints* #358

Benediction Dr. Will Barker

Postlude

Organist/Pianist – Jonathan McGuire
Brass Ensemble

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continued to write, teach, and preach. His many research interests included the history of the French Huguenots and, most recently, an investigation into the influence of spirituals on early gospel and jazz music.

Dr. Jones was widely recognized among the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) as an expert in ethical matters. He served on or chaired several denominational committees that prepared official position papers on such thorny topics as divorce and remarriage, abortion, women in the church, end-of-life issues, and nuclear weapons, and constantly received phone calls asking for his advice on various ethical dilemmas. Jones once stated that, “From time to time I tell my students that what keeps me going in ethics is the opportunity to quiet frightened consciences by providing a more adequate biblical perspective on various issues.”

Prof. Jerram Barrs, professor of Christian studies and contemporary culture, said of his long-time friend and colleague, “David taught the first class I had as a student at Covenant in 1968. His humility, modesty, and meekness, his graciousness and kindness drew me to him immediately. I still remember everything he taught, even his exam questions. He was a wonderful teacher and a great friend. For years, I’ve told people that David Jones is my hero and that I want to be like him when I grow up. He is the reason I came to teach at Covenant.”

Dr. Jay Sklar, professor of Old Testament and newly appointed Vice President of Academics, noted, “For a period of a year or more, David gave me a ride home from work once a week. During those rides, I experienced firsthand David’s wisdom and grace. When I heard that he had passed away at 8:00, I immediately thought, ‘And at 8:01, he heard the Lord say, “Well done, good and faithful servant!’”

Dr. Mark Dalbey, president of Covenant Seminary, commented, “Dr. Jones was a wonderful example to generations of students of a grace-filled pastor-scholar whose love for the Lord and principled approach to life and faith showed through in all that he did. We will miss his gentle nature and his great wisdom, but we rejoice that so many of us—and the church—are better for having known him.”

Dr. Jones is survived by his wife of 54 years, Sue Ellen Bilderback Jones; two sons, Mark (and his wife, Moyra) and Keith (and his wife, Rebekah); and his beloved grandchildren Cameron, Margaret, Davie, Isaac, Rowan, and Ailee.

Memorial gifts may be made to:
Covenant Theological Seminary
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