

For Immediate Release

May 9, 2011

### **Board of Trustees Recommends FWBBC Name Change**

NASHVILLE, TN—During its May 4-5 meeting preceding commencement exercises, the Free Will Baptist Bible College Board of Trustees voted 8-1 to recommend that the college change its name to *Welch College*, according to Chairman Terry Pierce. The name change proposal will be presented to delegates for discussion at the 2011 national convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, and will be voted on during the 2012 national convention in Memphis.

The vote to recommend a name change came one year after the Board authorized college officials to conduct a study to determine the feasibility of such a move. This spring FWBBC surveyed nearly 10,000 constituents about the proposed change, and results indicate that alumni, donors, and other denominational stakeholders strongly support the idea. Meanwhile, college administrators continue to speak with pastors, churches, and focus groups about issues driving the name change—recruitment, graduate access to restricted-access countries, alumni concerns, campus relocation, donor support, and more.

In related action, the Board voted to initiate discussions with prospective buyers to sell individual campus buildings that do not directly impact student life and studies. All funds from the sale(s) will go toward relocation efforts and will be applied to debt reduction on the Gallatin property purchased in 2008 where the college plans to build on a 66-acre tract in nearby Sumner County. Funds from the sale(s) will significantly lower the loan's principal and interest payments. A portion of the savings will be board-directed toward a limited amount of capital repairs on the West End campus.

The Board also voted to honor Dr. Milton B. Fields, FWBBC's vice president for institutional planning, who retires this summer after 17 years of professional leadership at the college. Dr. Fields was presented with a plaque during commencement activities citing his role as an innovative and visionary

educator. He filled a number of critical positions during his FWBBC career, including chairman of the Teacher Education Department (1994-1999), academic dean (1998-2006), and vice president for institutional planning (2006-2011). He will continue to serve the college in an advisory capacity and as a field representative. A retirement dinner is planned in his honor on campus May 26.

President Pinson said, "We had a great Board meeting, and I thank God for those nine good men who gave so generously of their time and insight to provide direction and oversight of Free Will Baptist Bible College. They grappled with the harsh reality of the worst American economy since the Great Depression. They set the course for FWBBC to compete in the educational market for more Free Will Baptist students. They pray for the college. They love the faculty, staff, and students. It's an honor to work alongside them."