

## Who Believes What?

The Guilfordian March 25, 1983

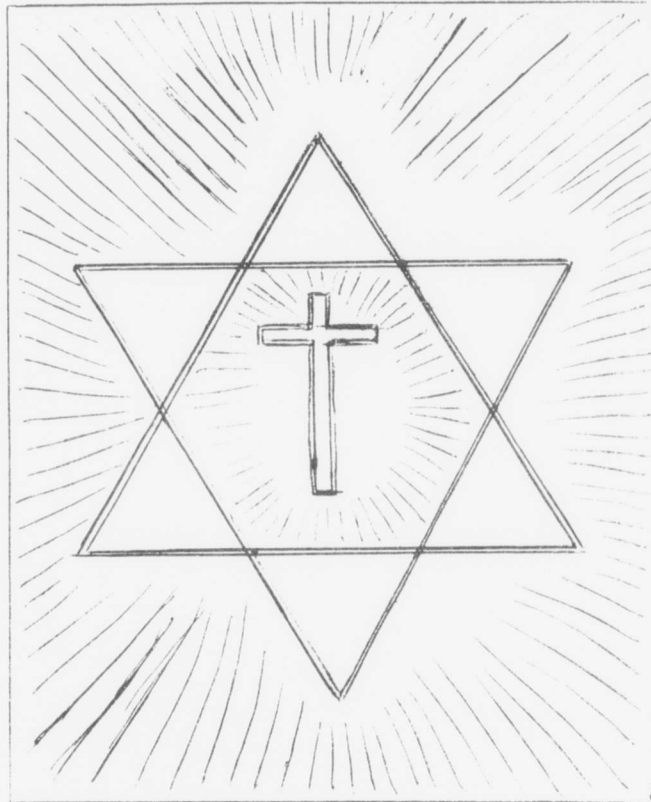
by John Cox  
Staff Writer

Do you remember filling out a little blank entitled "Religious Preference" on your application form to Guilford? Well, the Registrar's Office has tabulated the results of the Fall, 1982 semester. Here are the numbers for the 1146 main campus students.

The largest single block of students 17% or 194 students listed themselves as having "no preference." This figure includes atheists and agnostics, folks who are too apathetic to write anything down, and also people who consider themselves true ecumenicals.

Of the students professing a certain faith, over 96% claim Christianity. The largest number of these are Catholics (165, 14.4%), followed closely by Methodists (152, 13.3%) and Presbyterians (145, 12.7%). Completing the denominations with double-figure percentages are Baptists (133, 11.6%) and Episcopalians (118, 10.3%). Quakers comprise only 8.7% (100) of the main campus body of students. Among non-Christian groups Jews number far and away the most, at 3.5% (40).

That Guilford has an extremely diverse student body is evidenced by the large number of religious groups each totaling less than three percent of the student body.



These groups are: Lutheran (23 students), Unitarian (13), Moravian (10), Congregationalist (8), United Church of Christ (7), Christian Scientist (5), Greek Orthodox (5), Wesleyan (4), Church of Brethren (3), Anglican (2), Assembly of God (2), Buddhism (2), Dutch Reformed (2), Holiness (2), Mormon (2), and one believer for each of the following faiths: Bahai, Church of Covenant, Church of God, Disciples of Christ, Islam, Nazarene, Reformed, and Seventh Day Adventist.

## Easter is More Than Eggs

by Carrie Boyce  
Staff Writer

For many people, Easter means a care package from home on a trip to Myrtle Beach, but Easter isn't just a weekend. It is the final day of an important season in the Christian Church.

Before Easter is the season of Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday and lasting for forty days. It is a period of prayer, reflection and self-sacrifice. It is a personal time when people take a closer look at themselves and their faults. Many people choose to give up something they enjoy or take on an added responsibility as a way of building inner strength during Lent and the ritual cleansing prepares us for the observation of Easter.

The Christian celebration of Holy Week coincides with and actually grew out of the Jewish celebration of Passover. The feast originated when the Jews fled from Egypt and 400 years of slavery. According to tradition, God sent a final plague to curse the Egyptians and The Angel of Death swept the country killing the first born of every family. The Jews spread lambs' blood over their doors and so the Angel passed over their houses. That night the (chosen people) came together for a quick meal and then escaped into the desert. Every year from then on, the seven day feast of Passover has been

celebrated by Jewish families as a symbol by their deliverance from slavery.

In his thirty-third year, Jesus took his disciples to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast. As he rode through the gates of Jerusalem on a colt, crowds of people filled the streets to see him pass by. They spread palm branches on the ground before him and called out as he rode past. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem before Passover is translated to a celebration now in Christian churches as Palm Sunday.

Keeping with the Christian beliefs, during the following week Jesus was arrested and tried by the church elders who sent him to Pilot, the Roman governor, to be killed. Every year at Passover, Pilot pardoned a prisoner at the people's request. On Good Friday, Pilot let the people choose between Jesus and Barabbas, a murderer. They chose to free Barabbas and crucify Jesus. Three days later, what had been foretold hundreds of years before, came true when Jesus rose from the dead on Easter morning, bringing an end to the Christian Easter Season.

The Passover and Easter season is more than just a time to look back at our religious heritages. It is a time to reflect on what life has brought us and it is also a time for rebirth and new beginnings.

# Campus

Interview with Mel Kiser

## Religion Dept.

by Emily Bonk  
Staff Writer

In the concentrated effort to obtain marketable skills to cope with today's tight job situation, majors such as religion are often overlooked in favor of more pragmatic courses of study like management or accounting. However, as Melvin Keiser, a professor in the Religion Department, said, "Religion remains as important as ever, it helps people answer questions about the meaning of their lives...helps them deal with eventualities like death." Students in this concen-

tration also want to pursue questions of human origins and ends, or "want to find out where 'I' and 'We' came from."

Unlike other departments, where most majors declare their field of study freshman year and pursue a degree, the religion department draws most of its students from "undeclared" majors or those who switched from another area of study. Dr. Keiser explains this by stating that at first, they think, "it's going to be like Sunday School. But later they find out that what we teach here really deals with the complex business of living our lives." He

## Guilford's W

by Iris Velvin  
Entertainment Editor

There are about 20 Muslim students at Guilford College from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Quator, and Kuwait. Muslim students have been an important part of Interlink since its formation in August 1980. Most of the students in the program are here to learn English, and stay for one or two semesters although some remain to attend regular classes.

Muslims at Guilford face cultural and religious differences that each must resolve in their own way. It is never easy to fit into a new cultural experience, as anyone will tell you who has lived abroad. Most Muslim students are Arab, and their difficulties are often magnified by an unfortunate prejudice among some Americans against their race. However, Guilford College is a liberal, tolerant campus, and Muslim students probably face less prejudice than in other places.

As Sue Siler of Interlink pointed out, the first and most obvious difficulty is the language barrier faced by Arab-speaking students. This makes it hard for Muslims to interact with other students. Another major problem lies in relating to women. Depending on the degree of strictness in upbringing, Muslim males feel that it is wrong to look a woman in the face or talk freely to her. This causes obvious difficulties when teachers are female. Female Muslims on campus are rare, but face similar problems. They will not speak up in class if men are present, for it violates their concept of femininity. Muslim women do not drive cars, and will not live in dormitories. Since they only venture abroad in the company of a male relative who serves as a protector, the occasional female Muslim at Guilford is always accompanied by a brother or husband.

Such segregation by sex is a religious as well as a cultural difference, since Islam teaches such separation. There