



Get to Know

John Ellington: Interim Chaplain

My story begins a long time ago in south Georgia where I was born and grew up in a nominally Christian home. I came to a personal faith in Christ toward the end of high school and was active in Intervarsity Christian Fellowship in college at Emory University. I attended the Intervarsity missions conference in Urbana, Illinois in 1957 where I felt called to missionary service in another country. I later met my wife who had also been called to Africa and had been corresponding with the same mission board. So we asked them to put our dossiers together and off we went to Congo after a year of French study in Belgium in 1965. We served in various places in Africa until our retirement in December 2003.

Since we lived in Montreat, as soon as I retired from mission service, I was asked to teach a cross-cultural ministry course at Montreat College. A year later, I was asked to serve for a year as Interim Chair of the Bible and Religion Department. After that, I taught various courses in that department. For three years I taught French before moving back to teaching Bible courses. When Chaplain Woodworth left the Chaplain's position vacant, Dr. Struble called me in during the summer to ask that I become Interim Chaplain until a permanent replacement could be found. After prayer and consultation with my wife, I agreed to take the position.

Although I had been connected with the college for several years, I have learned a lot since taking this job. I have been a bit surprised at the number of meetings I have to attend. And for the most part I have enjoyed the counseling that I have done. But most of all I enjoy just hanging out with students – in the cafeteria, at sports events and just seeing them as I walk through the campus.

My primary goal is to be available to students. I want everyone to know that they can come and talk with me at any time about any subject. I also hope to continue the traditions of Montreat College insofar as chapel is concerned. I do not expect to have the opportunity to preach in chapel very often, because the schedule was mostly set before I was named to the job. But I do hope that students will find the chapel services worshipful and meaningful.

I don't have any special plans or dramatic changes in mind for the new school year. I just want to fulfill my duties to the best of my ability and help our students be drawn closer to Christ so that they will serve Him by serving others.

I am looking forward to paving the way for a new, permanent chaplain. And I also look forward to being a friend of as many students as possible. If there is anything that I can do to make the college experience more meaningful and helpful, that is what I want most.