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Liberty University

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Liberty University's seminary reinstates old name

December 19, 2007 | Mitzi Bible

Liberty Theological Seminary is now Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary.

The name change was announced by Dr. Ergun Caner, president of the seminary, during the Seminary Christmas Banquet on Dec. 14.

The word Baptist was taken out when Caner became president in 2004. In his banquet address, Caner told faculty that the earlier change “served notice to the larger Christian community that we were willing to do anything for the sake of the mission. ... Changing the name was just one small component in our overall strategy. It obviously worked. We have had three straight years of growth and have doubled our residential enrollment to over 400 in the seminary.”

But now, he said, it is time “to build bridges to a lost world without burning the bridges of our doctrinal heritage. We are putting Baptist back in our name, and taking back a term that has been misused.

“It just made sense,” he said, “following the vision of our founder and the new chancellor, to proudly state that we are Baptist with a capital ‘B’.”

The name was approved by Chancellor Jerry Falwell Jr. last week.

The seminary was founded in 1973 as an outgrowth of Liberty University. Now, close to 4,000 students from all 50 states and other countries are enrolled in both the residential and distance learning programs. The seminary is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools.