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Office of University Communications

January 24, 2014

Jonathan Martin to Share the Message on Jan. 28 & 30

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – Acts of faith, service and leadership are always on display at Gardner-Webb University and especially seen during Celebration Week, where the University community unites to worship and glorify the Lord. Hosted by Gardner-Webb's Campus Ministries, the theme for this year's student-led event is "What are We Celebrating?" It will include contributions from Jonathan Martin, a Gardner-Webb alum and lead pastor at Renovatus Church in Charlotte, N.C. The event will be held on campus Jan. 28-30.

Celebration Week consists of five services in three days, including morning services Tuesday and Thursday at 9:25 a.m. in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center, where Martin will speak.

"Jonathan Martin is a graduate of Gardner-Webb University, so he knows the GWU experience," said Dr. Tracy Jessup, vice president for Christian Life and Service and senior minister to the University. "He has spoken at Gardner-Webb previously and students have responded well to his personality. Jonathan met his wife here and was actively involved in student ministries as well as theatre department performances. It is a pleasure to welcome him back to his alma mater."

Student-led services, which include student testimonies, scripture reading, music, and prayer, will take place in Stewart Hall each evening at 8 p.m. Speakers will examine different aspects of who God is and what he has done to give us strength as Christians. Students Zach Smith and James Mauney will preach Tuesday and Wednesday night, respectively, and three students will give their testimonies on Thursday night. Celebration Week concludes after the service on Thursday night with the sharing of communion.

Neal Payne, associate minister for student ministries, hopes that Celebration Week will help encourage the unity of spirit on campus. "I want it to be impressed on students that this is real. That God is real and what Jesus did is real. That the faith they see in these other students is not fake or misguided, but that there is the real supernatural presence of Christ in this place. I want them to know they can stop running away from God, and run to Him and live for him on this campus," said Payne.

All Celebration Week services are free and open to the public. More information is available by calling 704-406-4277.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University offers a comprehensive academic experience that introduces students to the diverse world of ideas and to the people who think them, preparing them not only for professional success but for lives marked by empathy, compassion and a commitment to service on the broadest scale.