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Executive Director of Baptist Joint Committee to Visit Gardner-Webb University

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Office of University Communications

September 25, 2012

BJC's Brent Walker to speak on "The Use and Abuse of Religion in Politics"

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – A leading Baptist voice for national religious freedom will speak at Gardner-Webb on Oct. 14 at 6:30 p.m. about the relevance of religion in political life especially in light of the upcoming election. The event, which will be held in the new Tucker Center, is free and open to the public.

Brent Walker is the executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty (BJC) in Washington, D.C. A graduate of the University of Florida, and Stetson University College of Law, located in Tampa Bay, Fla., Walker is a member of the Supreme Court Bar and an ordained minister.

The BJC is an organization that fights to uphold the historic Baptist principle of religious freedom believing religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government. Protecting the liberty of the First Amendment is one of the organization's specific interests.

Walker will discuss the dangers in a too explicit association of religion with partisan politics. Dr. Lisa Allen is assistant professor of Christian ethics at Gardner-Webb and serves as the director of the Center for Christian Ethics and Leadership. She arranged for Walker to speak at Gardner-Webb University because she believes his Walker's presentation involves topics of interest to the Gardner-Webb University community, particularly in light of the upcoming presidential election.

"Unfortunately, as citizens in a highly marketed and fast-paced environment, we often choose a political party because of its slogans, reputation or social pressure rather than considering the guiding values of our lives," Allen said. "Through this event, attendees will have an opportunity to think about how religion and politics mix together in everyday life and especially what that mix creates in an election year."

The Center for Christian Ethics and Leadership promotes a commitment to service and leadership, across the disciplines and in the surrounding professional community, by awakening and fueling a sense of social responsibility through Christian ethical reflection.