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Gardner-Webb University Hosts Charlotte Mason Education Conference

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Office of University Communications

June 11, 2011

Mason's Philosophy Devoted to Teaching the Whole Person

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – From June 8 to June 11, the Gardner-Webb University School of Education will host the Charlotte Mason Education Conference, titled “A Charlotte Mason Education—A True Alternative.” The sessions will illuminate Mason’s educational philosophy, and provide strategies for implementing Mason’s methods to meet the challenges of today’s public, private, and homeschool classrooms.

The conference will feature several keynote presentations and a variety of breakout immersion groups led by a host of Mason experts, including scholars in education, school administrators, and experienced teachers from every level and arena. With titles like “The Two Towers – Paradigms at War in Middle Earth,” “Nature Study in the Charlotte Mason Digital Collection,” “Wonder and Admiration...Living Science,” and “Inspiring Heroism and Claiming Magnanimity: What Charlotte Mason Said about Citizenship,” the sessions promise to be as creative as Mason’s methods themselves. The focused breakout groups will also enable attendees to share ideas and methods with colleagues facing similar opportunities and challenges.

Charlotte Mason (1842-1923) was a British educator who believed that all children, regardless of age or social class, should receive a broad and stimulating education. Abandoning the mentality that education is merely an exchange of facts, Mason sought to develop the whole person by creating a positive atmosphere, teaching discipline and good habits, and communicating what she called “living thought” rather than dead facts. Thus, the educators’ own values and habits, and the way ideas are communicated, are as crucial as the ideas themselves.

Mason’s emphasis on the atmosphere of education and her call for parental involvement have made her methods popular with many homeschool teachers. But her methods are by no means exclusive to homeschooling, as teachers in all arenas have found Mason to be a suitable alternative to dominate models of education.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University was founded in 1905 and is home to over 4,300 students from 37 states and 21 foreign countries. Gardner-Webb seeks a higher ground in higher education – one that embraces faith and intellectual freedom, balances conviction with compassion, and inspires in students a love of learning, service, and leadership.