

FACULTY

Baptist Women in Ministry Honors GWU Professor Sophia Steibel

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON JULY 27, 2022



Nominated by Her Students, Steibel Receives Distinguished Mentor Award

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Dr. Sophia Steibel, Gardner-Webb University professor and the first School of Divinity faculty member to serve as the Bonnie Price Chair for Christian Formation and Leadership, has been recognized by Baptist Women in Ministry. She is the recipient of the 2022 Frankie Huff Granger Distinguished Mentor Award.

This honor is presented each year to a mentor who has supported and empowered women called to ministry to use their gifts in service of the church. Established in 2013, the award honors the legacy and ministry of Granger, who served at First Baptist Church, Berea, S.C. for over 20 years.

“Dr. Steibel has been an outstanding mentor for women (and men) during her years of service at the School of Divinity,” praised Dean and Professor of Christian Theology Robert W. Canoy. “This honor is one that she would never seek for herself, never preferring public recognition. She only wants God’s best for God’s people.”

Three of Steibel’s students, Kelly Settlemyre, Jennifer Jennings and Sarah Blosser Blackwell, nominated her for the award. “It was a life-giving surprise, especially to have been nominated by excellent former students,” Steibel affirmed. “To know that as women in the past formed me, and now I do those under my influence, illustrates how a God-given legacy passes on. I am very grateful for this honor to have come in this season of my life.”



In recommending Steibel for the award, the students noted that she was a quiet, behind-the-scenes individual who is prophetic and spiritually wise. They appreciated her deep commitment to mentor and support them as they pursued their callings.

Steibel earned her Bachelor of Arts from Gardner-Webb. She received her Master of Arts in religious education and her Ph.D. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

She joined the Gardner-Webb School of Divinity faculty in 2001. Before then, she was an associate professor of religious education at Gardner-Webb. Steibel is the former director of Campinas Baptist Theological College, Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil. Additionally, she served on the faculties of South Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary and Baptist Religious Education Institute, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is active in the life of First Baptist Church of Shelby, N.C.

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