

People

News in the [May 3, 2005](#) issue

Duke University has named Anglican priest-theologian **Samuel Wells** of England the new dean of Duke Chapel, effective in August. Wells, 39, a specialist in theological ethics who described his outlook as “generous orthodoxy,” has been serving as priest-in-charge of a parish in an underprivileged area of Cambridge, England. Most chapel deans at Duke have been Methodist ministers, as was **William H. Willimon**, who was elected a United Methodist bishop last year. However, services at Duke Chapel are ecumenical in nature, noted a Duke news release. Wells’s wife, priest and theologian **Jo Bailey Wells**, will become the school’s director of Anglican studies.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has appointed **Emir Caner**, a convert to Christianity from Islam who has written controversially about his former religion, as dean of the College at Southwestern, the new undergraduate school at the Southern Baptist seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Caner, 34, will leave his post as associate dean of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, for his new position. In February, Caner’s brother Ergun, also a convert, was named dean of Jerry Falwell’s Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary. The brothers coauthored a controversial 2002 book, *Unveiling Islam: An Insider’s Look at Muslim Life and Beliefs*. Jerry Vines, a Southern Baptist minister from Jacksonville, Florida, said he was referring to that book when he once called the prophet Muhammad a “demon-possessed pedophile” in a sermon to Southern Baptists that deeply offended Muslim groups.

After a couple of bouts with pneumonia, **Jerry Falwell** was released a second time from the hospital in Lynchburg, Virginia, on April 6. His second stay, during which he was briefly listed in critical condition, lasted more than a week as he recovered from respiratory arrest. Conservative evangelist Falwell, 71, the chancellor of Liberty University in Lynchburg and pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church, also spent 13 days in the hospital with pneumonia in late February and early March.

An Episcopal bishop has released a music CD featuring rock and blues standards like “Mustang Sally” and “Suzie Q.” Bishop **John Chane** of Washington, D.C., recorded

“The Chane Gang: A Bishop, His Band and the Blues,” reuniting a band Chane started playing with in high school. Funds raised by sales will send Episcopal youth to the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve this summer. Directed by Alaska bishop Mark McDonald, the youth will work among member of the 7,000-member Gwich’in tribe who live on the reserve, most of whom are Episcopalian.

In a service combining Episcopal and Navajo traditions, **Steven Tsosie Plummer**, the first elected Episcopal bishop of Navajoland, was laid to rest in a family burial plot in Bluff, Utah, on April 6. Plummer, 60, died four days earlier after a lengthy battle with cancer. A congregation of about 300, including ten bishops, took part in the service, according to the Episcopal News Service. Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, one of several homilists, said he appreciated the Navajo bishop’s “gentle wisdom” and the “way in which he could see the humor in situations when other people were terribly serious.”