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Letters to the Editor

Furman University

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ON WALKING AND WRITING

I am moved to write and say how very much I enjoyed your essay on walking. It is chiseled in stone, beautifully written, as fine as anything I've read in a long time. The whole magazine is well edited. But I am particularly struck by the high quality of this piece of writing. I shall return to it, you may be sure. With my best regards,

Richard E. Brantley,
Professor Emeritus of
English, University
of Florida

KIMBERLY JACKSON '06

I was intrigued by the article about Rev. Kimberly Jackson and her work about racial understanding and equality. I grew up going to school in a segregated system in Atlanta and had only met a couple of people who were black. Like many others, I was confused by the civil rights movement because I believed their schools were as

good as mine, and I struggled with trying to understand why they were doing this. After Furman, I went to Southern Seminary in Louisville and took a job as organist in a Presbyterian church in Louisville's West End, which, in those days, was in the midst of a racial transformation. The church where I was employed had taken the bold move of hiring a black student from the Presbyterian Seminary as their associate pastor with the purpose of making the new people moving into the community feel welcome. His name was Rev. James Strickland, and I wish I knew where

Kimberly
Jackson '06



he is today. In conversations with him, often over a meal, I learned that the doctrine of Separate But Equal in schools, which most of us believed, was bunk. And I learned what it was like for blacks to travel in the South where they would often have to resort to the woods to use the bathroom and would have to find where there were black-owned restaurants that would welcome them when in a strange town. And I have to mention that Jim was taking Biblical Hebrew and Greek at the same time and making A's in both. No one at my seminary was that bold, even the best ones, which taught still another lesson about the intellectual capabilities of black people. I cherish those conversations because they so shaped my views. Later in life I would be soundly criticized for performing an interracial marriage, something I might not have done without the new understanding I gained from Jim. While many African Americans have better lives and have climbed the ladder of success, the percentage of blacks in prisons and in poverty indicates we still have a long way to go to really have the equality that everyone deserves. *Where are you Jim Strickland?* We need to sit down over a meal again and talk!

Paul Bowen '63

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

We welcome letters on any subject covered in the magazine. Letters should be limited to 150 words, refer to a subject from the most recent issue, and include the writer's name and city/state. They may be sent to magazine@furman.edu. Although we make every effort to include as many submissions as we can, letters may be edited for length or clarity. Letters that address a topic before the most recent issue of Furman will be published at the editor's discretion.