

FOCUS

The magazine of Union Presbyterian Seminary

Summer 2014

Ever Faithful

The Meaning of Faith


11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²Indeed, by faith ^bour ancestors received approval. ³By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible. ^c

^aOr was not made out of visible things. ^bOr greater. ^cOther ancient authorities read By faith Sarah herself, though barren, received power to conceive, even when she was too old, because she considered how faithful who had promised.



Prayer Garden Construction Underway

If you should be driving by the Richmond campus, you can't help but notice that construction has begun (above left) on the Prayer Garden in front of the Early Center on Brook Road. The sculpture, the centerpiece of the garden, will be a welcoming beacon to visitors to the seminary or to cars just passing by. Over 150 bricks have already been purchased by alums and friends of Union Presbyterian Seminary to honor or remember their loved ones or to list their own name as a proud supporter of the seminary. Orders are still being taken at www.upsem.edu/prayergarden. Each brick is \$200.

Your investment is much more than a brick with a name engraved on it. It's a piece of the future foundation of Union Presbyterian Seminary! All bricks purchased directly support the Annual Fund. 



Faith in Our Music

Many Voices, Diverse Chords, Common Hopes

September 23-25, 2014 **Richmond campus**

A three-day music conference for clergy, church members, worship committees, church musicians, and anyone interested in music in the church. Featuring **John Bell** from the Iona Community in Scotland; **Warren Cooper** who writes and performs sacred jazz music; and **Amanda Powell** whose specialty is global music. Worship services in different styles, morning and afternoon workshop opportunities on different topics, panel discussions, and much more.... We will put our many voices and diverse experiences together and express the hope that is central to our faith.



Forming Leaders. Transforming the Church.

For more information or to register, www.upsem.edu/music_conference



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MISSION AND VISION:

*Union Presbyterian Seminary equips Christian leaders for ministry in the world—
 a sacred vocation that requires deep learning, commitment to service, and an ability to read culture
 and circumstance in the light of the rich resources of scripture and theological tradition.*

*The seminary's core mission is to participate in the mission of the church by forming and equipping leaders
 for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).*

*We confess the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is God in the flesh, the Son of that One whom
 he called Father. His life, ministry, death and resurrection have transformed the world.*

As the risen and living Lord, Jesus has called us to bear witness to his transformative presence in the world.

*We serve as a theological resource for church and society. We weave together distinctive approaches
 to theological education for pastoral and educational ministries. We educate, inspire, and empower leaders
 for congregational life, theological scholarship, and bold Christian service to the world. We seek to participate faithfully
 in the Holy Spirit's transformation of the seminary, the church, and through the church, the world.*



Brian K. Blount

Dear Friends,

God has a plan. We may not all agree on what that plan is. But we all agree that God has one. And we all agree that the Bible is one of the places where that plan is lodged. The biblical narratives bear witness to God's intent in the world, particularly as that intent is made flesh in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. We Christians, therefore, place a great deal of emphasis on our ability to read and interpret the scriptures in (at least at Union Presbyterian Seminary) their original languages. The scriptures, then, are something like a strategic plan for creation, directing creation with purpose toward the goal of eschatological relationship with God that God has established for it. No wonder, then, that the stakes are so high where the reading and interpretation of scripture are concerned. We spend much time interpreting scripture and then attempting, as best we can, to be faithful to our interpretations and the mandates for living that may arise from them.

Seminaries also have plans. When we are at our best, our plan is to follow God's plan. And so, we begin with Christ. We seek to know him and follow him as he leads through the presence and work of the Spirit. And in much of our seeking we start with scripture. Guided by the Spirit, we interpret and we reflect. Humbly, carefully, though broken and shortsighted, following scripture's lead, we chart a way forward. We trust that what we miss, God catches, where we swerve, God corrects, when we fall short, God helps us rise to the occasion.

It is because of this trust that when we set strategy for the future direction of the seminary we begin not with the seminary but with Christ and the scriptures that bear witness to him. In Matthew 28:19 and Isaiah 43, we discern a lens that brings focus to God's mandate for our life and work together over the next five years. Those texts help shape our vision and bring clarity to our sense of purpose. And though we may, and often surely do, fall short of God's plan for our seminary community, just as surely as our scriptural analyses inevitably miss their interpretative marks, we persevere in our endeavor to have our strategic plan coalesce with God's plan for the kind of community we believe we can and should be.

I hope you will spend some time reading through the seminary's 2014-2019 strategic plan (available on our website, www.upsem.edu/mission). I especially hope that when you read it you will sense in it our struggle to discern God's plan for our life and work in theological education. And then I hope you will do all that you can to help us put that plan into effect.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian".

Brian K. Blount, President

o n c a m p u s

Seminary Welcomes Back Dean McBride

The Sprunt Lectures are always a time of homecoming but especially so this year with Emeritus Professor of Biblical Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation **Dean McBride** (right) as the featured lecturer. McBride spoke on “*The Name Above All Others: Denominating Divine Providence and Presence in Biblical Traditions.*” If you were unable to attend, you can still catch the lectures on Union Live at www.unionlive.org.

Director of Alumni/ae Development **Lynn McClintock** (D.Min.'87), **Heath Rada** (M.A.'70), **Peggy Rada** (M.A.'66), President **Brian Blount**, and Sharon Blount pose together during the Alumni/ae Luncheon where Rada was honored as the 2014 Distinguished Alumnus (below).



Agnes Winston Norfleet (M.Div.'86) was the Sprunt preacher (below left).



Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Old Testament Interpretation **James Mays** (below right) and Professor Emeritus of Biblical Interpretation **Sibley Towner's** appearances at

Sprunt were a most pleasant surprise for many alums, faculty, and staff.

More Sprunt photos are available for viewing on the Union Presbyterian Seminary Facebook page. [Ω](#)

Plans Underway for Travel Seminar to India

Union Presbyterian Seminary announces a travel seminar to India during January term, 2015. This will be a unique opportunity to learn about the vibrant history and culture of India, both past and present.

The 3-week trip will focus on the history of Christianity in India, issues of caste and women's rights (especially as these relate to Christianity), and Hindu-Christian relations. In addition to spending time at the United Theological College in Bangalore, the largest seminary in India, participants will travel extensively in south India visiting significant landmarks, especially

Christian churches and Hindu temples. The trip will end with a brief stay in Delhi and a trip to the Taj Mahal in north India. Lectures from prominent theologians and other scholars of religion will be part of the agenda, as well as dialogue with seminary students.

Sam Adams, associate professor of Old Testament, and Christine Luckritz-Marquis, assistant professor of church history, will be the travel seminar leaders. Alumni/ae and friends of the seminary are welcome to participate. If interested, please contact Sam Adams at sadams@upsem.edu for more information. Ω



Richard Boyce

A New Beginning

Richard Boyce assumes the mantle of dean of the Charlotte campus July 1 upon Tom Currie's retirement

Anyone who's been in the church knows that transitions can be challenging times: the transition from Palm to Passion on the Sunday before Easter; the transition between an outgoing class and the incoming class of officers on a church session; the transition between founding pastor and new pastor in the life of a new church development. Transitions can be hard, and exciting.

We find ourselves in the midst of a dynamic season here in Charlotte.

We're engaging the new strategic plan approved by our board of trustees which will carry us from one stage of the seminary's journey to the next. Concurrently, our founding dean, Tom Currie, is retiring. We celebrate all Tom has done for Union Presbyterian Seminary, and we bear witness to his leadership, while still preparing for the beginning of a new administration on the Charlotte campus. This is going to be hard, and exciting.

Let me, as incoming dean, share just a few sources of my own excitement (and ask that you say a prayer of encouragement for me regarding my worries!).

Number one, we build now on a strong and vital foundation as we continue this new approach to theological education (part-time, non-residential) in our new building

on our new campus at Sharon Presbyterian Church. We have much for which to be grateful.

Number two, we see signs of new things beginning, even before we get to the new emphases of our strategic plan—our certification by the United Methodist Church; the addition of a Saturday afternoon lay, Latino education program; increased interaction between the campuses in hybrid classes, travel seminars, and the Communities of Learning program. We have a lot of good things that are already up and running.

Number three, we see things bubbling up in the strategic plan, with its greater emphasis on the integration of our study in the seminary with our lives out in the world (ecumenically, evangelistically, through public witness and service), that we already are practicing together here and in Richmond. Yes, we have much to be excited about.

It's true. Transitions can be hard, *and* exciting. Come and get excited along with us! Ω

—RICHARD BOYCE

Goodbye to Sir, With Love

Retiring in June, Thomas Currie, dean of the Charlotte campus, leaves an indelible mark upon the seminary.

In the movie *To Sir, with Love*, teacher Mark Thackeray takes on the challenge of corralling and educating the misfits and lost ones of East End London. Fraught with challenges on all sides, he never gives up on the young men and women in his charge. He recognizes their potential; he gives them skills to survive and thrive, believes in them, and has hope for the future generation as they go out into the world. Union Presbyterian Seminary's Charlotte campus is distant in time and circumstance from the North Quay School portrayed in this film, and yet in our teacher and first dean, Thomas Currie, we find similar qualities of vision, wisdom, pastoral care and an undivided investment in the lives and futures of our students.

Over ten years ago, Tom discerned a call to lead a new venture for those seeking theological training who were the “misfits” of the seminary world, so to speak—the older student, the second, third, even fourth-career student, the ones who needed to work during the week, the ones who weren't sure why they were there. Tom met with each and every one, offering guidance and support as they discerned their own call to ministry and took those first few tentative steps.

Bringing years of experience as a parish minister, Tom's obvious love for Christ and the Church laid the foundation upon which our program and our community were built. Anyone who has taken classes with Tom, worked with him on staff, or just participated on a committee with him can attest to his humility—a genuine trait lacking any guile. For Tom, it seems, being the dean has always been as much an opportunity to learn from our students as to teach them. Deep and sincere discussions and relationships bloomed in the rich soil he tended. An open door to his office was always ready to receive a perplexed or troubled student, a colleague, or visitor with the same gracious hospitality.

We could list Tom's many achievements as dean—the successful journey through the accreditation process, the continued growth and diversity of the student body, the move from leasing space on the Queens campus to turning over the first shovel of dirt on the site of what is now our own campus. . . on and on we could go, but Tom's career as dean leaves behind even greater legacies than these.

Go into any given Presbyterian church in and around Charlotte (and those of several other denomina-



tions, for that matter) and someone there will tell you that Tom has impacted their life in ministry in some way: graduates, who are now Christian educators or pastors, colleagues in ministry who respect and seek out Tom's counsel; laypersons who have come to hear him preach or teach at their churches and are touched by his faith and illumined by his proclamation. Each has a story to tell about Tom's influence on the faith community—stories that portray a true servant minister who has some Good News he wants to share. In the process we, too, are enriched and renewed in our own calls to serve Christ.

Tom retires in June 2014. Although we are happy to wish him well and are willing to send him back out into the world for others to benefit from his good company and ministry, we will miss him and always be grateful for all that he has done during his tenure as dean of the Charlotte campus. Just like those students in the film, we do not really know how to adequately thank him, so we, too, will simply say: Goodbye to Sir, with love. Ω

—NADINE ELLSWORTH-MORAN (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'11)
Pastor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC,
and on staff in the Advancement Office of UPSem

Congregational Leadership Awards Announced

Since 1991, 105 churches in 28 states and the District of Columbia have received Union Presbyterian Seminary Congregational Leadership Awards. Each congregation is awarded \$1,000 for its work in innovative ministry.

The 2014 Congregational Leadership Award recipients are:

University Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, TX, received the Al Dimmock Award for its excellence and congregational involvement in the empowerment of older adults.

First Presbyterian Church of Lafayette, LA, received the Elinor Curry Award for its ministry of outreach and social concern. The ministry addresses the call of the church to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God,” and in so doing changes the congregation.

Beacon New Church Development of Philadelphia, PA, received the James Goodpasture Award for excellence in ministry to persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

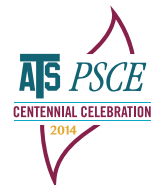
New Hope Presbyterian Church of Orange, CA, is one of two churches selected for the Katherine Hawes Award for its effective youth ministry that engages youth in all areas of the church’s mission, extending beyond the church into the community and the world.

Northern Lakes Community Church of Northern Lakes, MI, is the second of two churches selected for the Katherine Hawes Award for its effective youth ministry that engages youth in all areas of the church’s mission, extending beyond the church into the community and the world.

St. Luke’s Presbyterian Church of Titusville, FL, is the recipient of this year’s Louise McComb Award for excellence in Christian education for older adults.

Prospect Presbyterian Church of Maplewood, NJ, is the recipient of this year’s W.T. “Tolly” Thompson Award for creatively meeting a vital Christian education need in the church community. Ω

Celebrating 100 Years *of Excellence in Christian Education*



Big plans are afoot to celebrate the Centennial of the General Assembly’s Training School (ATS) for Lay Workers and the Presbyterian School of Christian Education (PSCE). On **November 2-5, 2014**, there will be workshops, class reunions, square dancing, story telling, and a historical tour.

A special banquet is planned for November 4. Please join us for a time of remembering and celebrating!

Check out the Centennial website at www.atspscecentennial.org! Join Facebook (search for ATS PSCE Centennial Celebration) to see fun photos, historic documents, and updates on the celebration!



For more information, please call 804-278-4245. To register, please go to: www.regonline.com/ATS-PSCECentennial

Forming Leaders. Transforming the Church.

FACULTY NOTES

Carson Brisson, associate dean for academic programs, director of graduate studies, and associate professor of biblical studies, presented on stewardship and ecology at Williamsburg Presbyterian Church in their “Winter Lecture Series” in February 2014. He preached at Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church in Mt. Pleasant, SC, and presented a lecture on preparing for Lent in March.

Katie Geneva Cannon, Annie Scales Rogers Professor of Christian Ethics, was the State of Black Religion Lecturer on “The Evidence of Absence/The Absence of Evidence” at the 44th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Student of Black Religion in Detroit, MI, in April 2014. She was a panelist for the premier of the documentary film, *Journey to Liberation: The Legacy of Womanist Theology and Ethics at Union Theological Seminary*, a social and spiritual look at female theologians and ethicists of African descent, at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, NY; served as the 2014 Judith Plaskow Lecturer, “Zora Neale Hurston: Telling a Truth that Alters the World,” at Manhattan College, Riverdale, NY; and was a webinar presenter on “The Homiletical Theology of Dr. Isaac R. Clark” for the Homiletical Theology Project’s Colloquium Series at Boston University in April. Cannon was a lecturer on “The Social Justice Ethics of

Zora Neale Hurston: Courage, Commitment and Creativity,” and workshop leader on “Holy Homiletics: Legitimate Encounters with the Living God” for The Styberg Preaching Institute at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL, April 30-May 2. She preached at Church of the Covenant in Cleveland, OH, and lecture at the Cleveland Ecumenical Institute for Religious Studies, “Through Fire and Brimstone: Black Women’s Literature as Embodied Mediated Wisdom,” in June.

John Carroll, Harriet Robertson Fitts Memorial Professor of New Testament, began service as co-editor of *Interpretation* magazine, with Associate Professor of Old Testament **Sam Adams**, in January 2014. He led an adult forum on canon formation and extracanonical early Christian writings at St. Paul’s Ivy Episcopal Church, Charlottesville, VA, in January and February. Carroll taught a three-week adult education class, “New Testament Survey,” at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Richmond, VA, and presented a paper on “The Gospel of Luke: A Contemporary Cartography” at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Theologians in Princeton, NJ. Carroll was the keynote speaker for the Union Presbyterian Seminary United Methodist alumni/ae lunch in Hampton, VA in June 2014, speaking on “The Holy Spirit in the New Testament: Resource for Faith and Ministry Today.”

Susan Fox (M.Div.’89; D.Min. ’95), director of supervised ministry and vocational planning and professor of supervised ministry, published an article in the April 2014 edition of *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry* titled “Digital Natives—Ministry Immigrants.” She preached at the UU Community Church in Glen Allen, VA, in April 2014. She had the privilege of officiating at the wedding of **Michael Hughes’** son, Michael, Jr., in April 2014.

Paul Galbreath, professor of worship and preaching, presented his paper “Meals, Values and the Earth” for the Ecology and Worship Seminar at the North American Academy of Liturgy in Orlando, FL, in January. He was a guest speaker on Sacramental Renewal (via Fuzebox) at Presbyterian College in Montreal, Canada, and was a participant in the Consultation on Common Texts in New York City.

Stan Hargraves, registrar, and adjunct assistant professor of evangelism, taught a contemporary Sunday school class at Trinity United Methodist Church, Richmond, VA, and attended a SACRAO (Southern Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) meeting in Raleigh, NC, in February. In March, he attended the Extension Ministers Annual Gathering with Bishop Cho of the Virginia United Methodist Conference.



Carson Brisson



Katie Geneva Cannon



John Carroll



Susan Fox



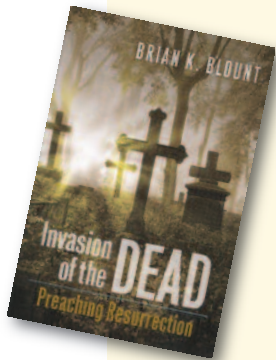
Paul Galbreath



Stan Hargraves

Ken McFayden (D.Min.’86), dean of the Leadership Institute and professor of ministry and leadership development, preached at Howard Memorial Presbyterian Church, Tarboro, NC; First Presbyterian Church, Dunn, NC; and Second Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, VA. He was the Keynote Speaker on “A Vision for Transformational Leadership: How Must We Change Our Lenses?” and “Educating Transformational Leaders: What Are We

Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection



Westminster John Knox Press celebrates the latest publication by President **Brian K. Blount** based on his 2011 Yale Beecher Lectures. In *Invasion of the Dead: Preaching Resurrection*, Blount helps preachers effectively proclaim resurrection in a world consumed by death. He offers an alternative apocalyptic vision for our time, one that starts with a clear vision of life that obliterates death and reveals life's essence.

“Brian Blount has written a life-giving, faith-building work that will revitalize not only preachers, but any thoughtful Christian willing to wrestle with how the cross has been misinterpreted and employed for abusive ends,” said Thomas H. Troeger, Lantz Professor of Christian Communication at Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music. Ω



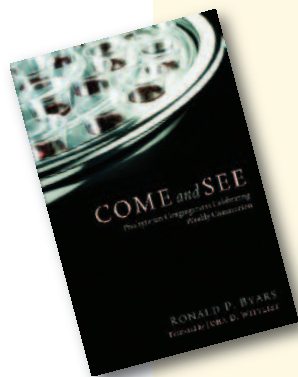
Brian K. Blount

Willing to Change?” with Presbyterians Organized in Nurture and Teaching (POINT) at the 2014 Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators (APCE) Conference in San Jose, CA. McFayden also spoke at the Congregational Ministries Publishing/Presbyterian Publishing Corporation Publishers’ breakfast at the

APCE Conference. He led a seminar on “Congregational Leadership” for the Korean Lay Leadership Seminar at Union Presbyterian Seminary and served at the “Interim Ministry Training Event” at Union Presbyterian Seminary with a focus on leadership with a new curricular design and as a teaching team member. McFayden was a

leader at the 2013 Western Area Staff Conference for PCUSA Mid-Council Staff at Mercy Center in Burlingame, CA, served at the Trent Symposium for Newly Ordained Ministers at Second Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, VA, and assisted with Strategic Planning Processes at Second Presbyterian Church,

Richmond, VA; Amherst (VA) Presbyterian Church; First Presbyterian Church, Dunn, NC; and St. John’s Episcopal Church, Richmond, VA. He published a book review in *Interpretation* on “Christianity After Religion: The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening” by Diana Butler Bass. McFayden participated in the NEXT Church Conference in Minneapolis and in meetings of Theological Schools Receiving Grants from the Lilly Endowment to Address Economic Challenges Facing Future Ministers in Pittsburgh, PA.



Come and See

Why has there been such an increase in the number of Presbyterian congregations celebrating the Lord’s Supper every week? *Come and See: Presbyterian Congregations Celebrating Weekly Communion* by UPSEM Professor Emeritus of Preaching and Worship **Ronald P. Byars** explores the possible causes. They include generational change, ecumenical convergence, revisiting Reformed roots, heightened interest in spirituality, new perspectives offered by ritual studies, and the post-modern opening to a deeper appreciation of Scripture.



Ronald P. Byars

Worship that is a balance of Word and Sacrament is incarnationally serious, recognizing that human persons are embodied beings who bring to worship all of our senses—not only the ability to process words.

Presbyterian congregations celebrating weekly Communion are discovering ways of being and thinking missionally as they link their experiences of being nourished at the Holy Table to the needs of people who are physically as well as spiritually hungry. *Come and See* describes a number of congregations who have made the transition to weekly Communion and tells how they did it, working within Presbyterian polity and local cultures. Some are traditional, established congregations, while others are new church developments. They may be found in the north and south, east and west, across the broad Presbyterian theological and demographic spectrum. Ω

Joshua Ralston, instructor of theology, presented the 2014 Dawe Lecture, “Incarnation and Idolatry: The Question of Jesus in Christian-Muslim Dialogue,” at Union Presbyterian Seminary in February 2014. He presented a paper on “Salvation, Law and Mercy in John Calvin and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali” at Wake Forest Divinity School’s Conference on Theology and Religious Diversity in March 2014.

Ralston was a guest preacher at First Presbyterian Church in Lexington, VA, First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich, CT, and Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA. He led a six-week Lenten Bible study on the Reformed Confessions at Grace Covenant. Ralston represented the seminary at the inauguration of Mark Labberton as President of Fuller Theological Seminary. Ralston, along with **Sam Adams**, associate professor of Old Testament, and **Frances Taylor Gench**, Herbert Worth and Annie H. Jackson Professor of Biblical Interpretation, led the Middle East Travel Seminar in Spring 2014.

Karen-Marie Yust, professor of Christian education, was promoted to full professor by vote of the board of trustees in January 2014. She was the keynote speaker at the “Equipping the Saints” event of the Coastal Carolina Presbytery, Wallace, NC, in February and spoke on “We Are the Church Together: Families and Congregations as Intergenerational Christian Communities.” She presented on “Digital Culture and Spirituality” at the United Church of Christ Potomac Association Ministerium meeting in March. Yust published “Digital Power: Exploring

the Effects of Social Media on Children’s Spirituality” in the *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality*.

Beverly Zink-Sawyer, Samuel W. Newell, Jr. Professor of Preaching and Worship, preached for the Union Presbyterian Seminary Wednesday community chapel service in February. She did an adult education series (March-April) entitled, “The Pulpit Leads the World: American Preaching through Four Centuries of Change” for First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, VA. Ω



Ken McFayden



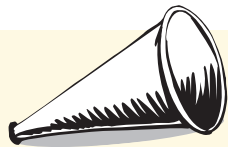
Joshua Ralston



Karen-Marie Yust



Beverly Zink-Sawyer



Student Shout-Outs

Congratulations to **Frank Spencer** (M.Div.’14) who has been elected by the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as its new president and chief executive officer, pending approval from the 2014 General Assembly. Spencer, currently president of Habitat for Humanity in Charlotte, NC, has extensive experience in real estate investment and development with for-profit and non-profit organizations. He is a ruling elder at Selwyn Avenue Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, chairman of the board of directors for the Montreat Conference Center, and a member of the NEXT Church national strategy team.



Frank Spencer

Catherine Lovejoy (M.A.’14) was awarded the Patrick H. and Mary P. Carmichael Fellowship, an award given to a student completing the M.A.C.E. degree at Union Presbyterian Seminary who manifests superior academic achievement and possesses outstanding qualities of leadership. **Miriam Foltz** (M.Div.’14) was awarded the Martha O. and Fred R. Stair Fellowship, an award established in 1981 by anonymous gifts to honor Martha O. and Fred R. Stair, fourth President of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. The fellowship is awarded to a graduate elected by the faculty on the basis of promise in pastoral ministry. **TJ Remaley** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.’14) was awarded the Thomas Cary Johnson Fellowship, established by Mr. and Mrs. John H. Reed of Richmond, VA, in 1926 as an expression of their affection for Dr. Thomas Cary Johnson, professor of systematic theology at the seminary and first supply pastor at Ginter Park Presbyterian Church. It is given to a person who has demonstrated outstanding academic ability and who is known for “excellence of Christian character.” **Anna George Traynham** (M.Div.’14) was awarded the Sallie Shepherd Perkins Fellowship, an award given to a student who has demonstrated superior academic achievement and who possesses outstanding qualities of Christian commitment. The award will enable Traynham to pursue further graduate study to enhance her ministry.

De’Anna Daniels (M.Div.’13; Th.M.’14) published an article in *Urban Faith*, an e-newsletter dedicated to open conversations on faith, news, and culture from an urban, African American, multi-ethnic perspective. Her article, “Can the Church Get ‘Turnt’ Up? On the Hymns and Hip Hop Conference,” is available at <http://www.urbanfaith.com/2014/04/can-the-church-get-turnt-up-on-the-hymns-hip-hop-conference.html/> Ω



Planner in Chief

Union Presbyterian President Brian Blount is committed to connecting the resources of the seminary with the needs of the church

By Eva Stimson

In a small diner tucked away on a side street in Richmond, VA, Brian Blount, president of Union Presbyterian Seminary, pours syrup on a formidable stack of pancakes that he claims are the best in the city. Then his pancakes get cold as he shifts his attention to a more urgent priority: talking about the future of the seminary.

Blount has shepherded UPSem through one five-year strategic plan and is poised for the launch of a new strategic plan in July. Not only is he excited about the vision expressed in these plans, he says he actually gets energized by the planning process.

"I think everything we do has an element of planning, so we're not just going from day to day," he says. He recalls many hours spent on planning sermons in his earlier life as a pastor. Now, as a

seminary president, he says, *"I get excited to look ahead and connect resources with needs."*

Blount sees strategic planning as a process that involves people as much as numbers. It involves looking at how to pull together all the various groups involved with the seminary: board members, faculty, staff, students, alumni/ae, donors, supporting congregations, and friends—from the neighborhood to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and beyond.

These relationships are top of mind for Blount on this March morning. After pancakes and a few hours back on campus, he will climb into his Savile Gray Volvo and head to North Carolina for a meeting of the Montreat Conference Center board of directors. The seminary and the conference center have a long history of collaboration. Pete



PHOTOS BY DUANE BERGER

Peery, president of Montreat and a Union alum, encouraged Blount to serve on the board.

En route to Montreat, Blount will visit First Presbyterian Church in Rocky Mount, where another Union alum, Peter Bynum,* is pastor. Following a dinner with the congregation he has visited several times, Blount will talk about his vision for UPSem. He says five of his past seven weekends have included visits to churches.

"That's the way I get the face of the seminary in congregations," he explains. "I spend a huge amount of time with congregations."

Extending the Reach of the Seminary

Support from congregations is crucial—for the seminary's financial viability, of course, but also for developing its vision. Both the 2009–2014 strategic plan and the new strategic plan, Blount says, focus on *"preparing students to meet the needs of the church."*

Thus, understanding the ever-changing needs of congregations is key to extending the seminary's reach beyond the Richmond and Charlotte campuses. For example, Blount sees the Leadership Institute, a key component of the new strategic plan, functioning as *"a living laboratory"*

where seminary graduates can put their classroom learnings into practice while they are serving congregations.

"The number-one mission for me is setting a vision and finding the resources to accomplish it. The strategic plan is all about vision."

"The strategic plan has helped us refine our thinking on leadership," Blount says. "We've tried to figure out how we can make the Leadership Institute more responsive to the wider church."

The Institute's continuing education curriculum will emphasize things students may not have had time to focus on while earning their degrees—for example, budget development, conflict management, strategic planning, evangelism and church revitalization, and refinement of preaching skills.

* Peter Bynum will begin serving as pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Concord, NC, on August 1.

"In seminary, you're doing homiletics and Bible exegesis, but in a vacuum," Blount explains. Developing these skills becomes much more practical once graduates become pastors and begin writing and preaching weekly sermons. The Leadership Institute enables students to continue their relationship with the seminary following graduation.

The seminary is also extending its reach through the hybrid model of teaching, another component of the new strategic plan that Blount finds particularly exciting. Like the Extended Campus Program (ECP), the hybrid model combines both online and on-campus learning. It has the potential to be a valuable resource for laypersons interested in auditing seminary courses.

Expanding the hybrid model will benefit both church and seminary, Blount believes. *"It helps the church, because people become more knowledgeable about the Bible and theology."* And as laypersons explore the seminary's course offerings and spend time on campus, he adds, *"they become more invested in what the seminary is doing."*

The hybrid model reflects UPSem's growing emphasis on employing the latest technology in teaching and learning. *"Ninety percent of churches I visit use technology in some way,"* Blount says. And students who become accustomed to technology in the classroom are more comfortable using it later in their teaching and preaching.

A Strengthened Curriculum

Looking back on the previous strategic plan, Blount says, *"We were able to accomplish almost every major goal."* Asked which accomplishment makes him proudest, he points to a major revision of the seminary's curriculum. *"We wanted to focus on degree programs that were directly related to ministry and church leadership,"* he explains. *"We need leaders who can address the areas the church is struggling with."*

The M.Div. and M.A.C.E. core curriculum prepares students for three key roles: practicing theologian, congregational leader, and community witness. A *"church in the world"* component

Strategic Plan Highlights

- Engage new or revitalize current degree programs so as to achieve a mission and leadership focus on God's transformational work in the church and world.
 - Invigorate the M.Div. program through the new curriculum that began in 2013-14 academic year
 - Enhance long-standing commitment to Christian Education
 - Reaffirm call to theological scholarship as a means of promoting the gospel through an educated ministry
 - Engage a Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree
 - Consider the viability of a Doctor of Ministry degree
 - Research the Doctor of Philosophy Degree program
- Strengthen and broaden the work of the Leadership Institute
- Institutional Efficiency
- Institutional Investments
 - Invest in the long range liveability for students on the Richmond campus by renovating Richmond Hall to include apartment style dormitory spaces, dining facilities, and Global Ministry Endeavors
 - Invest in long range development of the Westwood Tract to include replacing Advance & Rice apartments with updated student family housing

The full 2014-2019 Strategic Plan is on our website at www.upsem.edu/mission

equips students with skills for interfaith engagement, evangelism and church revitalization, and community engagement. Every student is required to complete at least one course or supervised ministry project in each of these areas.

The new strategic plan builds on these efforts, particularly in regard to strengthening Union's Christian education program, Blount says. The seminary is now in the "silent phase" of a capital campaign that will raise funds for two endowed chairs in Christian education, among other things. Campaign funds also will enable the creation of a new Global Mission Center for Christian Education, where missionaries and scholars will equip educators from developing countries, giving Union's students from the United States the opportunity to experience firsthand the vitality of the global church.

The new strategic plan also commits to strengthening the Th.M. program and creating a new Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.) degree. It calls for reviewing the seminary's Ph.D. program and studying the viability of a D.Min. program. Should Union add a D.Min. program, Blount would like to see it focus on "promoting entrepreneurial leadership." He believes this would help meet a growing need for pioneer leaders of outside-the-box ministries, such as those promoted by the PC(USA)'s initiative to create 1,001 New Worshiping Communities.

Vision and Resources

An accomplished New Testament scholar, Blount has found time to teach only two courses so far in his seven years at UPSem. But he is committed to his duties as seminary president. "The number-one mission for me is setting a vision and finding the resources to accomplish it," he says.

"The strategic plan is all about vision."

"I spend a huge amount of time raising resources," he adds. "I see that as one of the most important parts of my job right now. That's what both energizes me and keeps me up at night."

Besides endorsing the launch of a capital campaign to cultivate new resources, the previous strategic plan initiated efforts to "right-size" the number of students, faculty, staff, and programs in order to decrease the draw on endowment funds. "The endowment helps fund a lot of our programs, but if we have more people and programming than the endowment can fund, we put stress on the endowment," Blount explains.

"Raising tuition is counterproductive," he adds. "We want to assist students financially so they don't graduate with a lot of debt."

When it comes to dealing with the pressures of his job, Blount practices what he preaches. "What we tell students is, 'You need a good spiritual life.'" So when the stress mounts, he says, "Conversations with God sustain me. There are different kinds of prayers on different days."

He leans on the "unconditional love" of his wife, children, and parents, and the backing of a "really nurturing" board of trustees. "They care about me as a person as much as they care about accomplishing the mission of the school," he says. He also appreciates his friends on the faculty. "They don't mind telling me the truth, but they do it in a gracious and collegial manner."

What motivates him to get up each morning and go to office or drive to yet another fundraising event? It's the students, Blount says.

"I draw strength from their hope for what the seminary can do for them. It makes me want to work harder to live into their expectations." Ω



Robert E. (Bob) Dunham, pastor of University Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill, NC, is a former member of the Union Presbyterian Seminary Board of Trustees and former chair of the planning committee that worked on the seminary's new strategic plan. He shares his thoughts about the process and people involved in developing the plan and how the plan will help shape the seminary's future.

Setting a Direction for the Next Five Years

By Eva Stimson

Why is the new strategic plan important for the future of Union Presbyterian Seminary?

For some boards, the task of strategic planning rates somewhere between ho and hum on the Richter scale. Some groups develop strategic plans and then put them away on a shelf. But Union Seminary's board was well aware of the way the previous plan guided our steps during the last five years and knows that this plan will help us navigate the next five years. In fact, under President Blount's leadership, the seminary achieved a significant percentage of the previous plan's goals.

I trust this new plan will be no different. It casts a direction for the seminary that seeks to respond faithfully to changing landscapes in church and culture with all the resources available.

Describe the process for developing the strategic plan.

We began our work more than a year ago, meeting several times at First Presbyterian Church in Raleigh, NC, and concluding our work in February of this year on the Richmond campus. In between our meetings there were numerous e-mail exchanges and conversations, as well as extended dialogues with key seminary constituencies.

The Strategic Planning Committee was comprised of faculty, student, administration, and trustee representatives. They did much of the preliminary study for the plan, poring over studies and material that addressed key issues in theological education and the church. They engaged in substantive conversation about the state of the seminary and of

other theological schools. They identified some central initiatives for the plan and shaped the first drafts, but the final product (our fifth draft) represents significant input from the seminary faculty, as well as reflections from alumni/ae, students, and members of the Board of Trustees.

How did you gather input from various constituents in developing the plan?

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee took the plan into their constituencies for conversation and feedback. We received a number of comments and suggestions, particularly from the seminary faculty, and we sought as much as possible to incorporate that input into later drafts of the plan. As subsequent drafts were written, they were shared with the seminary community. During the winter meeting of the Board of Trustees earlier this year, committee members met with board members, faculty, and students to discuss key features of the proposed plan and to seek further comment. Even the final draft underwent editorial tweaking in response to faculty and board comments.

What excites you about the new strategic plan?

I am heartened by the way this plan takes stock of the hard realities facing theological schools in our time, yet seeks to build on Union's strengths and assets and an abiding faith in God's grace and guidance to move the seminary forward.

This plan, for example, has a sculpted realism as it looks at trends in the pastoral and teaching vocations, but also a declared intention to re-form the way we prepare leaders and scholars for the church. Building on the faculty's splendid work in revising the core degree curriculum, this plan seeks to envision next steps. Acknowledging the high costs associated with maintaining a Ph.D. program, yet still committed to the seminary's

"I believe the plan proposes a course that will help the seminary equip church leaders to thrive in the midst of challenging times."

role in preparing scholars for the church, this plan envisions a strengthened Th.M. program that will enrich church and academy alike.

To what major challenges in today's church does the strategic plan respond?

As the plan notes, we live in a time when many mainline churches are losing members and encountering the doubts of a secularizing culture. But the plan also notes that many congregations have a clear vision, dedicated leadership, and committed membership, giving evidence of growth, strength, and attractiveness. Those observations suggest the continuing need for the most ably equipped clergy, Christian educators and scholars for the church. I believe the plan proposes a course that will help the seminary equip church leaders to thrive in the midst of challenging times.

To what major challenges facing UPSem does the plan respond?

The plan proposes some much-needed renovations and capital improvements to enhance the seminary's competitive place with peer institutions. It also proposes investments to strengthen and expand the applicant pool for all programs to ensure the continued recruitment of high-caliber students.

Such proposals are matched by a commitment to institutional efficiency and prudence in order to enhance revenues and reduce excessive draw on the endowment. Ω

Trying Something Different

By Eva Stimson



PHOTO BY DUANE BERGER

Karen-Marie Yust is tall enough to pluck children's books from shelves near the ceiling of her crowded office on Union Presbyterian Seminary's Richmond campus. Yet the UPSem professor of Christian education sits on the floor with three-to-seven-year-olds every Sunday morning.

Some weeks only a couple of children show up for the Sunday school class Yust teaches. The church she attends in Richmond, like many main-line congregations, is struggling to adapt to a world in which competing priorities often keep parents and children away from church pews and classrooms.

"The church has changed. The world has changed. The Sunday-morning Sunday school model isn't working in most places."

"And yet," Yust insists, "the church can't survive if it doesn't educate people in faith and practice."

Yust and Union Presbyterian's other Christian education professors understand how difficult it is for today's congregations to maintain a robust educational ministry. This fuels their commitment to transform traditional ways of thinking about Christian education. Yust believes UPSem is uniquely positioned to prepare church leaders who will pioneer more effective ways of nurturing their members in Christian discipleship.

"UPSem offers not only a long and deeply rooted legacy of commitment to Christian education but also the energy to envision diverse ways that people will teach and learn the faith in the 21st century," she says. "We look to the latest research in sociology, psychology, educational theory, spirituality, media studies, and any other field that might help us educate educators."

An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of

Christ), Yust has focused much of her own research on the faith formation of children—hence the shelf of children’s books in her office. Every summer she attends the International Conference on Children’s Spirituality, a gathering that keeps her in touch with the most current resources from across the globe. She has taught elective courses on child and adolescent spirituality and on faith and film. Inspired by her young-adult children, she spent a recent sabbatical exploring digital culture and spirituality and will teach a course on the topic next year.

“It’s hard for the church to be compelling in competition with the internet and entertainment media,” Yust says. But she believes online games and other media can be friends, not enemies, of spiritual formation if church leaders are willing to try new approaches.

“We need to rethink how we educate Christians,” she says. *“We’re still caught up in this notion that people are going to come to us. We need to get outside the walls of the church and be in conversation with people where they are during the week.”*

In a video on the UPSem website, Yust offers these suggestions: *“Go have a study group on the sidelines of sports practices where soccer moms are hanging out and waiting for their kids. We need to be in coffee shops, to be talking with young people online. We need to be engaging people in the kind of spiritual practices that they currently find more meaningful than the church in order to help them see how having a religious community is part of their spiritual formation and really can make a difference in their lives.”*

For Yust, Christian education is all about spiritual formation and transformation. *“It’s not simply conveying information about the faith, but inviting people into reflection on their faith and practice,”* she says. However, some information is essential. *“To do good reflection you need information about church history, Bible, and theology. You also*

need to be growing in self-awareness, so you realize how your understanding and experience shape what you think and do.”

In her Christian Life course, Yust introduces students to variations on the classical Christian disciplines: study, prayer, contemplation, service, and worship. Helping people explore these practices is important, she believes, because God uses these disciplines to transform our lives. The students in her class try out practices such as *lectio divina* and centering prayer and keep journals about their experiences.

The object is to make such practices accessible to the high-schoolers and soccer moms in today’s congregations. *“Most people can’t go away for a month on retreat,”* Yust says, *“but they can take five minutes at lunch to ask, ‘How have I been walking with God today and how will I walk with God this afternoon?’”*

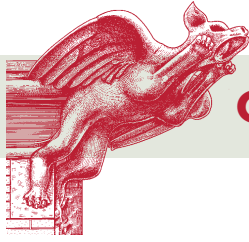
Yust would like to see all UPSem students—whether they are preparing to be educators or pastors—leave seminary equipped to oversee the spiritual formation of congregations. The number of congregations that can afford full-time, theologically trained Christian educators is shrinking. This means pastors must be up to the task. *“We need to better train pastors in the practice of teaching, so they can embrace the teaching elder role.”*

The most important tool for effective teaching is adaptability, she says. *“People need to be trained to think on their feet. We don’t teach students that there’s a single right lesson plan. They learn to create what is best for their particular context.”*

Yust also tells her students that five years from now they may have to try something different. Ω

On March 19, 2015, Dr. Yust will be inaugurated into the Josiah P. and Anne Wilson Rowe Chair of Christian Education.

The



GARGOYLE speaks

“Different Deeps”



E. Carson Brisson

The heart of the storm, cold rain, had passed. But, the shadow of its power, a confident, onshore wind escorted by the gray light of an occluded sun, had not. Upon nearing shore, the unbroken breeze churned the breakers beneath it into a swash of frothing confusion that had milled up and deposited on the face of the beach countless loaves of disordered, trembling spume. Now and then a strong gust would rise up and rush away, audibly asserting itself on the way to somewhere more important.

Taking it all in, I wanted to flee through the dunes back to our rental lodgings and disappear into a good book. Taking the same all in, the preschooler standing at my side announced, “The water is sad today; we cannot go into it.” Then he added, with no delay and with no disappointment, “Let’s dig.”

With that, he plopped down, not a far drop for him, and plunged the blade of his bright orange shovel—the toy tool and its matching orange pail both gifts of his mother’s storm-proof love—into the ancient, waiting sand.

After a few moments, and deciding not to flee, I sat down beside him; I began to dig, slowly, with one hand, half my heart, and a weather eye on our surroundings. A lone gull appeared downwind, dipping and rising in her flight. A tiny, speckled shorebird, its long beak piercing the sand in furiously rapid strokes, typed its way along the ragged verge of the beach’s high-tide crest. Not far offshore, looking neither to the right nor to the left, a squadron of Brown Pelicans glided swiftly by no more than a blink off the surface of the surging swells, their practiced aeronautical wisdom enabling them the collective discernment to find and follow some invisible, narrow channel of safe passage unfolding just above the unstable depths. I marveled, yet I wondered how long any ensemble could fly given no margin for error.

I am not sure why, but as the pelicans faded from sight a question occurred to me. “Why are we digging?” I asked. “For fun,” the youngster responded, without looking up from his efforts and with no hesitation. “And for the crabs,” he added. “They live in the sand.”

Fair enough, I thought, but the half of my heart still uncommitted to the project and as yet uncommitted to its reasons decided to push the point just a bit: “And when we find the crabs, what will we do?”

The preschooler again did not break from his happy task. “We put them in this,” he replied, tapping his orange pail with the palm of his non-digging hand. “And then they talk to each other. And then we count them until they are the number ten. And when they are the number ten, we take them out. And then they crawl away. It is fun.”

Better informed, I resumed digging. I soon noticed a shell that, if gripped in the right fashion, would make a nifty trowel of sorts. I took the shell and held it up. I admired it. I admired myself for finding it. I turned it over in one hand and then over in the other. “Look,” I announced. “I have found a shell that is quite good for digging.” “So dig,” the child responded.

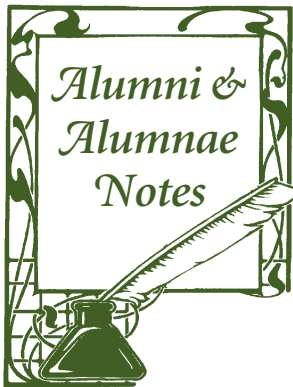
I dug. It became fun. I began to look forward to finding my first crab. I employed my shell. It worked well. I dug and dug, and then dug some more. However, I found no crabs, not one.

After I noticed by my count about the sixth or seventh living thing, all crabs or not I was not qualified to say, go into the pail as a result of the child’s industry and successful pursuit of fun, I asked, somewhat chagrined by my lack of measurable outcomes, what seemed to me to be a reasonable question. “Just how deep do we have to dig to find the crabs?”

The preschooler, for the first time since he had initiated his digging program, paused from it. He put his orange toy down. He looked at his digging hand, then into the pail, then at me. “We can’t know that,” he said, with an air of concern in his voice as if he must not leave me in the dark on such an important matter. “We can’t know that. It’s because they live at different deeps. They live at different deeps.” Then he began to sing, softly, rocking from side to side. “So, we dig and dig. That’s how we come to the deeps where they live. You can’t stop digging, or you won’t.”

With that, the child returned to his joyful labors. It was then that I looked up, from his song, and saw every creature that had ever lived, great and small, from every tribe and every tongue and every domain, rising out of the remnants of the recent tempest. And I saw also the sea itself becoming a glad river, at different deeps, clear as crystal. Ω

E. Carson Brisson is associate professor of biblical languages and associate dean for academic programs.



1950s

Richard Morgan (M.Div.'53; Th.M.'56; Ph.D.'66) was honored with the 2013 Legacy Achievement Award from the Presbyterian Older Adult Ministry Network during its annual conference in Atlanta, GA.

1960s

Richard Ray (B.D.'61) has been named interim president of King University in Bristol, TN.

1970s

Edward Moore (M.Div.'71; D.Min.'75) presented "Attempting Poetry and Prose" at The Reuben Brown House Literary Series on March 2, 2014 in Whiteville, NC.

Art Ross (M.Div.'72; D.Min.'81) served as bridge interim January 14 through April 30 at First Presbyterian Church in Goldsboro, NC.

Chris Carlisle (D.Min.'74) is president and chairman of the board of Manna Publications, which provides free easy to read Bible commentaries and coloring books in many languages.

Pete Peery (D.Min.'74) has completed 40 years of service as an ordained

Gordon F. Garlington, Jr. (B.D.'39) turned 99 years old this year. Immediately following his graduation in 1939, he served a national mission charge near Charleston, WV, and went on to serve as a Navy chaplain in the South Pacific during World War II. When he returned following the war, he earned a Th.M. from Princeton and served pastorates in North Carolina, Georgia, New Mexico, and Texas, until his retirement in Oklahoma. In 2008, he moved to West Hills, CA, where he lives in an assisted living facility. His late wife, Doris, attended ATS, and his son, **Gordon Garlington, III** (M.Div.'72; D.Min.'76), is also an alum.

minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A). He has announced his plans to retire as president of the Montreat Conference Center.

1980s

Joanne Hull (M.A.'82; M.Div.'83) is the associate pastor for Congregational Care and Deacons at First Presbyterian Church in Spartanburg, SC.

Roy Martin (D.Min.'83) is the new transitional presbyter at Shenandoah Presbytery.



Marian Notestein (ATS'39) who is 98 years old, attended a reception in support of the first Annual Pastoral Development Seminar at First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota, FL, where President Brian Blount had the pleasure of meeting her.

Congratulations to **Debbie Hough** (M.A.'79), who was named the 2014 Educator of the Year by the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators.

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Union Presbyterian Seminary
3401 Brook Road
Richmond, VA 23227

Or e-mail:
Alumnae Development Director Lynn McClintock
lmcclintock@upsem.edu

Phone: 804-278-4382

Check out our new online alumnae directory! Go to www.upsem.edu/alumni_ae/ and scroll down to the "Alumnae Online Directory." Add your profile today!

This issue of Focus includes information received through April 15, 2014.



The Trailblazers Award Ceremony and Banquet sponsored by the UPSEM Black Alumni/ae Association was held in February on the UPSEM Charlotte campus. Honored for their outstanding achievement in ministry and education (front row, left to right) are **Professor Sam Roberts**, **Brenda Foster** (M.A.C.E.'06), **Veronica Cannon** (M.Div.'06), **Ophelia Garmon-Brown** (M.Div.'08), and **Professor Katie Geneva Cannon**. Also pictured (back row, left to right) are **Jason Callahan** (M.Div.'11), **President Brian Blount**, **Hoffman Brown** (D.Min.'81), **Helen Bessent Byrd** (M.Div.'07), **Dean of the Charlotte Campus Tom Currie**, and **Director of Alumni/ae Development Lynn McClintock** (D.Min.'87).

Donald McLean (M.Div.'84; M.A.C.E.'09) has assumed full-time pastoral duties at Tappahannock Presbyterian Church in Tappahannock, VA.

Mark Davis (D.Min.'86) is the new pastor at St. Mark Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach, CA.

Leslee Kirkconnell (M.A.'87) is the new Christian educator at Davidson College Presbyterian Church in Davidson, NC.

Kevin Channell (M.Div.'89) is the new pastor of the South Plains Presbyterian Church in Keswick, VA.



Renee Griffin (M.A.'92) was honored by Wentz Memorial Congregational United Church of Christ in Winston-Salem, NC, for her tenth anniversary as pastor.

Heather Ferguson (M.A.'95) is the new director of Christian education at

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Durham, NC.

Melinda Merkley King (M.Div.'95) was installed as associate pastor for community and discipleship at Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church in Cary, NC.

Stephen Lindsley (M.A.'95) is the new pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC.

Brian Stewart (M.Div.'95) was elected as moderator of the East Central Presbytery

of the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO). He continues as associate pastor for evangelism and mission at First Presbyterian Church in Greenville, SC.

Russell Dalton (Ed.D.'98) is professor of religious education at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX. Dalton's latest article, "Meek and Mild: American Children's Bibles' Stories of Jesus as a Boy," appeared in the January-February 2014 issue of the journal *Religious Education*.

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to be a catalyst for the transformation of the church
and through the church...the world.



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Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty

(Ph.D.'02) gave the Thomas W. Currie Lecture at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary on "Grace-filled Economy" and the George and Jean Edwards Lecture at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary on "The Problem of Wealth."

Bill Habicht (M.Div./M.S.W.'04) has been named the inaugural recipient of the Jay Herber Young Community Leader Award in Davis, CA.

Veronica Cannon (M.Div.'06) is the interim pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Lincolnton, NC. Veronica was honored with the Genesis Award during the Union Presbyterian Seminary Black Alumni/ae

Association's 2014 Trailblazers Banquet and Awards Ceremony on February 21 in Charlotte, NC.

Brenda Foster (M.A.C.E.'06) was honored with the Genesis Award during the Union Presbyterian Seminary Black Alumni/ae Association's 2014 Trailblazers Banquet and Awards Ceremony on February 21 in Charlotte, NC.

Ophelia Garmon-Brown (M.S.'08) was honored with the Trailblazer Award during the Union Presbyterian Seminary Black Alumni/ae Association's 2014 Trailblazers Banquet and Awards Ceremony on February 21 in Charlotte, NC.

Jerry M. Grimes, II (Th.M.'08) and Tracy Demetrica Moore were married on August 10, 2013

at First African Baptist Church in Goldsboro, NC.



Noell Rathbun-Cook (M.Div.'10) and **Jessica Rathbun-Cook** (M.Div.'12) celebrated the birth of their son, Elliot Gray Rathbun-Cook, on November 22, 2013.

Newton Cowan (M.Div.'12) was ordained and installed to the position of associate pastor at Jamestown Presbyterian Church in Jamestown, NC.

Claire George Drumheller (M.Div.'12) was ordained to the ministry of teaching elder at Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Simpsonville, SC.

Rachel Mastin (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'12) is the Christian formation and mission coordinator at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA.

GINNA Bairby (M.Div.'13) was ordained as a teaching elder by the Presbytery of the James on March 20, 2014 at First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA.

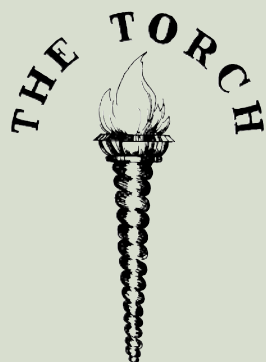
James E. Taneti's (Ph.D.'12) book, *Caste, Gender, and Christianity in Colonial India: Telugu Women in Mission* was honored in April's issue of the journal *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. It was one of fifteen books so honored this year.

Danny Trapp (M.Div.'13) is the new executive director of Mecklenburg Ministries in Charlotte, NC. Ω

Alumni/ae Chapters Need YOU!

Union Presbyterian Seminary is supporting the development of alumni/ae chapters in areas across the country. These groups are primarily intended to connect alumni/ae with each other for fellowship and support. In addition, alumni/ae chapters work with the seminary to identify and recruit new students, provide a context for mentor relationships, assist with fundraising, and host continuing education opportunities. We encourage you to form a new chapter in your area. All interested alumni/ae are asked to contact Lynn McClintock, director of alumni/ae development, at lmclintock@upsem.edu.

Searching for the Torch



The Torch was the first yearbook of the General Assembly's Training School. The seminary archives needs copies of the following years' copies in order to have a complete collection:

- 1929
- 1942
- 1947
- 1948

If you have one of these issues that you would be willing to donate or loan to the seminary, please contact Alumni/ae Development Director Lynn McClintock at lmclintock@upsem.edu or at 804-278-4382.



On The Shelf

Recent books by Union Presbyterian Seminary alumni/ae

Katherine Paterson (M.A.'57), *A Stubborn Sweetness and Other Stories for the Christmas Season*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.

Thom Shuman (D.Min.'86), *Dusty the Church Dog: And Other Sightings of the Gospel*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.

Barrie Kirby (M.Div.'88), *No Such Thing as a Cherokee Princess*, Barrie Miller Kirby, 2013.

Marilyn Johns (M.A.C.E.'94), *Where Everybody Knows Your Name: Best Practices in the Small Church*, Alexandria, Virginia: VTS Press, 2014.

Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty (Ph.D.'02), *Dorothy Day*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.

Jason Whitehead (M.Div./M.S.W.'02), *Redeeming Fear: A Constructive Theology for Living into Hope*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.

James Taneti (Ph.D.'12), *Caste, Gender, and Christianity in Colonial India: Telugu Women in Mission (Postcolonialism and Religions)*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.



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In Remembrance

*Well done, good and faithful servant.**Matthew 25:21***1930 —**

Betty Love Goodykoontz (Certificate '32) of Birmingham, AL, died November 5, 2013. †

1940 —

Millard Stimpson (B.D.'43) of Madison Heights, VA, died November 7, 2013. †

Frances Myers Schmetzer (M.R.E.'44) of Mechanicsville, VA, died March 2, 2014. †

Connolly Currie Gamble, Jr. (B.D.'45; Th.M.'49; Th.D.'52) of Midlothian, VA, died October 13, 2013. †

Barbara Clark Eden (M.R.E.'46) of Martinsville, VA, died February 22, 2014. †

Elizabeth McFarland Bowditch (M.A.'47) of Valdese, NC, died March 6, 2014. †

Anne Lyle Poe Brown (B.R.E.'47) of Lexington, KY, died June 30, 2013. †

M. Elise Merriam (M.R.E.'48) of Orlando, FL, died February 22, 2014. †

Jennie Elizabeth Chester Wilkes Smith (B.R.E.'48) of Clinton, SC, died November 18, 2013. †

G. Thompson Brown (B.D.'49; Th.D.'63) of Stone Mountain, GA, died January 21, 2014. †

Ruth Inez Lessley (M.R.E.'49) of Sylacauga, AL, died November 12, 2013. †

Elbert M. Williamson (B.D.'49) of West Palm Beach, FL, died September 30, 2013. †

1950 —

John William Lancaster (B.D.'50) of Bellaire, TX, died November 24, 2013. †

Lola Totoro Langhart (M.A.'50) of Monroe, LA, died August 21, 2013. †

Martha McDonald McLeod (M.A.'51) of Aberdeen, NC, died October 27, 2013. †

John Venable Moore (M.Div.'51) of Black Mountain, NC, died October 9, 2013. †

Florence Bennett Prince (B.R.E.'51) of Woodstock, GA, died December 17, 2013. †

Romer Delmas Watson (B.D.'52) of Raleigh, NC, died December 15, 2013. †

Rosemary Beachy Banta (M.R.E.'53) of Memphis, TN, died October 20, 2013. †

Barbara Napier Ewing (B.A.'53; B.R.E.'53) of Tyler, TX, died February 4, 2014. †

Herbert M. McCallum (B.D.'53) of Raleigh, NC, died September 2, 2013. †

Samuel Preston Hart (M.Div.'54) of Harrisonburg, VA, died January 18, 2014. †

Robert Price Richardson, Jr. (B.D.'54; Th.M.'62) of Nashville, TN, died December 29, 2013. †

Anne Petree McIver (M.R.E.'56) of Greensboro, NC, died July 14, 2013. †

James Walker Unruh (M.Div.'56) of Blackstone, VA, died December 4, 2013. †

Clarence Harvell Powers, Jr. (PSCE 1956-'57) of Clinton, LA, died March 13, 2012. †

David R. Freeman (M.Div.'58) of Oxford, MS, died January 14, 2014. †

Edwin H. Rayfield (M.Div.'59; M.A.'67) of Chesapeake, VA, died November 8, 2013. †

1960 —

Charles Clifton Owen, Jr. (UTS 1959-'60) of Winston-Salem, NC, died December 1, 2012. †

Herman Rudolph Reitz (M.Div.'60; M.A.'61) of Harrisonburg, VA, died October 6, 2013. †

Jong Kwan Ha (UTS 1960-'61) of La Crescenta, CA, died March 9, 2013. †

Thomas B. Bagnal, Jr. (UTS 1959-'62) of Mount Airy, NC, died February 28, 2014. †

Jay Lester Ketchie (M.Div.'62) of Columbia, MO, died September 28, 2013. †

Henry S. Moody, Jr. (B.D.'62) of Salem, VA, died January 13, 2014. †

Edson Johnson (M.C.E.'63; UTS 1956-'57) of Brownsville, TX, died December 3, 2013. †

Robert Nance Lominack, Jr. (M.Div.'63) of Abingdon, VA, died September 18, 2013. †

Ernest H. Mellor, Jr. (UTS 1962-'63) of Germantown, TN, died April 22, 2013. †

Simon Muya (PSCE 1963) of Kananga, Democratic Republic of Congo, died October 23, 2013. †

V. Gary Millwood (UTS 1964-'65) of Louisville, KY, died May 29, 2013. †

Adeline Woolley Morton (PSCE 1965-'66) of Charlotte, NC, died November 15, 2013. †

1970 —

Laura B. Lewis (M.A.'71) of Austin, TX, died June 24, 2012. †

David Louis Martin (Th.M.'72) of Salisbury, NC, died March 23, 2014. †

Alfred Elmer Brough (M.A.'74) of Jacksonville, NC, died December 22, 2013. †

Robert Watkins Lawrence (D.Min.'74) of Cathedral City, CA, died January 28, 2014. †

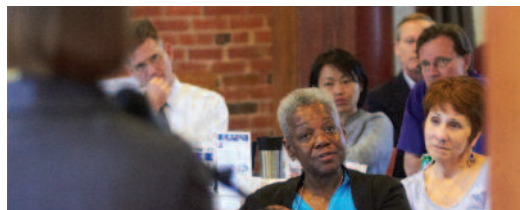
1980 —

Dwayne Summers (D.Min.'82) of Roscoe, IL, died September 2, 2013. †

When you learn of the death of an alumnus or alumna of Union Presbyterian Seminary, please inform the Alumni/ae Office. Call 1-804-278-4382 or email lmcclintock@upsem.edu. This issue of Focus includes information received through April 15, 2014.

Leadership Institute

Workshops, Seminars, and Conferences



July 22-31, 2014 — Richmond campus

Church Business Administration Seminar

Get to know the ins and outs of your church's administration. Topics focus on managing Financial Issues, Legal and Tax Issues, Facilities and Property Issues, Human Resources, Communication Issues, and Strategic Planning Issues. Featuring **Vonna Laue** and **Frank and Elaine Sommerville**.

September 23-25, 2014 — Richmond campus

Faith in Our Music: Many Voices, Diverse Chords, Common Hopes

Three-day conference will introduce new music and new music styles for use in your church's worship. Be inspired with innovative worship and workshops featuring world-renowned musicians. **John Bell, Warren Cooper** and **Amanda Powell**.

September 30-October 2, 2014 — Richmond campus

Finishing with Vitality: Achieving a Healthy Ending

Helpful for pastors who are planning to retire in one to five years in developing and implementing a transition plan for the congregation and departing pastor. Led by **David Rich**.

October 14-16, 2014 — Richmond campus

Digital Discipleship: Exploring, Teaching, and Learning in a Connected, Interactive World

Take away some best practices and enjoy the company of digital immigrants and natives seeking how best to use technology in ministry. Led by **Von Clemans**.

October 20-22, 2014 — Charlotte campus

The Immigrant Church Renewal: Our church can be better than now!

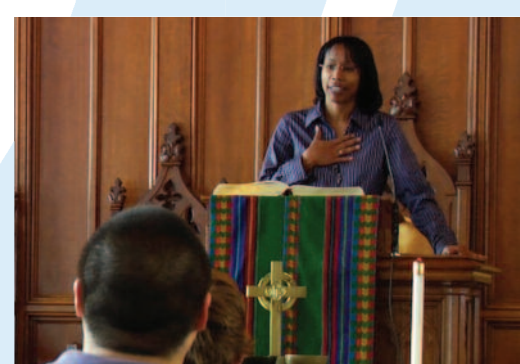
Charlotte Area Asian American Pastors Continuing Education

The Rev. Joon Kwon shares his experiences in returning to, and attempting to change, his home church. The result is that the church has turned from a spiritual nursing home to an influential congregation that now serves the community and many nations in the world.

October 20-23, 2014 — Richmond campus

Strategic Planning in an Uncertain World

Participants will be introduced to a variety of concepts and resources that focus the heart of ministry in a targeted, measurable, yet flexible way. Each pastor will leave with seeds for a planning process which matches the style, timeline, and resources of his or her own church setting. Led by **Jill M. Hudson** and **Laurie Ferguson**.



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For additional information regarding opportunities to support Union Presbyterian Seminary, please contact **Bernie Howell**, bhowell@upsem.edu, (804)278-4243 or (800)229-2990 x243.

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- *President Blount unfolds the Strategic Plan*
- *Christian Education trying something new*
- *The Gargoyle speaks “On Different Deeps”*



PHOTO BY DAVE SWAGER

Congratulations Class of 2014!

The call from God is one that calls us out of ourselves and into the world. Graduates of Union Presbyterian Seminary will go out and serve as pastors, directors of Christian education, international mission workers, social workers, camp directors, and professors of Bible, theology, or religious studies.