

# FOCUS

The magazine of Union Presbyterian Seminary

Winter 2013

Who is  
my neighbor?



# *This Christmas, let your light shine twice as far.*

This Christmas, your light can shine twice as far and twice as bright. The 2012-13 Board of Trustees has agreed to match up to \$170,000 in contributions made to the Annual Fund between now and December 31st. Through the Christmas 2012 Trustee Match, dollar for dollar, your gift is matched. So when you make your gift in support of educating and preparing the next generation of Church leaders, the impact is doubled. With the power of both your light and theirs, the flame will burn bright at Union Presbyterian Seminary this Christmas!

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## WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?



**Brian K. Blount**

Dear Friends,

Community Witness is one of the three highlighted roles in the seminary's new curriculum that will launch in the Fall Semester of 2013. Each of the three roles represents a critical, curricular learning outcome. Because of what students learn in the classroom, supervised ministry, and other related learning environments, we expect them to be better witnesses to and for the transforming power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every communal setting their ministries encounter: social, economic, political, environmental, and religious. At Union Presbyterian Seminary, we want to do more than teach content; we want to incubate and inspire pastoral theologians and congregational leaders who will be communal change agents.

"*Sure you do,*" one very engaged member of our seminary community said. "*You certainly do on paper.*" She was, at the time, holding up a few pieces of paper that were bound into a book. One of my books. *Preaching Mark in Two Voices*. She showed me pages marked up with her highlights and scribbled notes in the margins. She was particularly interested, at the moment of our conversation, about my claim that God was on the loose in the world, engaging and transforming the world through the agency of Jesus of Nazareth. "*Is God still loose in the world today?*" she inquired. "*To be sure,*" I answered. "*And are you still teaching the Gospel of Mark and making this claim?*" she inquired. "*I am,*" I answered. "*Then, shouldn't you be teaching the Gospel of Mark here at Boaz and Ruth so that your students have opportunity to engage our students and our graduates?*"

Boaz and Ruth works with ex-offenders who have been incarcerated in various Virginia penal institutions. The CEO, Martha Rollins, some years ago created this non-profit that assists ex-offenders by providing them with skills that translate into meaningful job opportunities so they can reclaim productive space in society. Boaz and Ruth graduates have spent countless hours learning trade skills and rethinking their orientation to the world around them. At the center of it all is Martha's deep commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and her understanding of Jesus as an agent for change in the lives of individuals and communities.

Knowing all of that, I also knew my answer to Martha. "*Yes.*" And so I am. Teaching Mark to seminary students in the context of Boaz and Ruth students from whom we will learn what it means to be faced with and changed by the transforming power of Jesus of Nazareth. In this context, engaged with this community, I have the sense that the Gospel of Mark and Jesus' powerful ministry will come alive in invigorating and challenging ways. Community Witnessing kinds of ways!

In the coming years, each of our faculty will be rethinking how they teach their courses with this curricular goal in mind. I cannot wait to see how our courses will change as our faculty responds to the pressure of preparing students to be community witnesses who are on the loose in God's world.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian".

Brian K. Blount, President

## ON CAMPUS

## After Celebrating 200 Years, UPSem Answers, “Now What?”



The Vision Conference placed a special emphasis on inviting young clergy and lay leaders. “The Seminary’s new curriculum is right on, the leadership is passionate and vision-oriented, and the atmosphere of the seminary is electric and inspiring,” said **Jenna Campbell** (M.A.C.E.’05), a Christian educator and stay-at-home mom doing contract work for Dwight Mission Camps and Conference Center in Vian, OK. “This conference left me hope-filled and excited about Union’s future in training leaders and resourcing the greater church.”

and Community Witness. Participants then moved into group discussions on the three roles, each led by a group of panelists of one pastor, one student, one faculty member, and one community leader. The data gathered from these sessions will prove invaluable in Union’s efforts to train leaders for the future church.

“It was exciting to be a part of the conversation about the present and future shape of theological education. There was a great deal of energy around the topic of equipping our students to be practicing theologians,” said **Lewis Galloway** (D.Min.’77; Th.M.’79), pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, IN. “The Union curriculum provides a strong theological and biblical foundation while engaging students in practical opportunities to think and act from a theologically informed perspective around issues in the life of the church, community and world.”

In addition, **Ken McFayden** (D.Min.’86), dean of the Leadership Institute and professor of ministry and leadership development, gave a keynote presentation on the expansion of Union Presbyterian’s commitment to support new graduates in the critical, early years of ministry. In concert with numerous continuing education opportunities, the Leadership Institute is currently developing a post-graduate curriculum for alums in new positions to strengthen their skills in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, and reading cultural contexts for diverse ministry settings. Ω

From the ancient church to the modern church, lay and clergy alike have known that ministry is challenging. Union Presbyterian Seminary remains committed, as it has for 200 years, in uncovering the answers to those challenges. On September 26 and 27, 2012, the Vision for the Future Conference was held on UPSem’s Richmond campus where church leaders from across the country—and from across all fields of ministry—came to share their experience-based expertise on the knowledge and skill-sets necessary for ministry in the church of the 21st Century.

**Pamela Mitchell Legg** (M.A.’79; Ed.D.’86), professor of Christian education at the Charlotte campus, opened the dialogue, presenting an overview of the recent revisions to the curriculum which now center on three main roles: Congregational Leader, Practicing Theologian,



Together with Pastor Mark Montgomery of First Congregational Church in Greenwich, CT, Professor Emeritus **Glenn Bannerman** (M.R.E.’57) facilitated one of five after-conference workshops offered in the areas of church development, evangelism, entrepreneurship, and conflict resolution.



**David Renwick** (Ph.D.’88), pastor of National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., listens intently during “Deepening Capacity for Congregational Ministry,” a workshop he led after the Vision Conference.

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## New Charlotte Campus Opens with Exuberance



*“It was a great day, a happy day for the Seminary, when our two campuses could share in worship and fellowship together. In that regard, my hope is that such a day will be the harbinger of many such occasions where each campus complements and strengthens the other.”*

Thomas W. Currie, academic dean of Charlotte campus

On September 15, 2012, Union Presbyterian Seminary celebrated its 201st Convocation at Sharon Presbyterian Church in anticipation of the opening of the new Charlotte campus building located at 5141 Sharon Road. The joint ceremony for both campuses was attended by students, staff, and faculty from Charlotte and Richmond alike, as well as donors, alums, and friends of the Seminary.

The service included greetings from Wanda Towler, an elder of Sharon Presbyterian Church who served on the church’s Seminary Relations Committee, as well as Rev. Kathleen H. Kilbourne, director of the Center for Deacon Education of Wesley Seminary and Pfeiffer University. A sermon by Dean Tom Currie and a chorale offering by the Charlotte campus choir were highlights of the service.

*“It was especially meaningful to see the culmination of a plan that’s been unfolding since I became a student here,”* affirmed Charlotte student and Choir Director Megan Argabite. *“The worship service showed how much of a partnership this new campus will be, with folks from both campuses, students, professors and family members singing in the choir, the organist from Sharon*

*Presbyterian, and worship leaders from our surrounding community.”*

More than 50 students, staff, and faculty from the Richmond campus travelled to Charlotte for the festivities—29 of those on a chartered bus which left Watts Hall parking lot at 6 a.m. in order to make it in time for the 11:30 a.m. ceremony.

*“I wondered why I signed up to spend 10 hours on a bus for a service and luncheon lasting only 2 hours,”* commented Richmond student TJ Remaley. *“But after visiting with friends—old and new, seeing the Charlotte campus in action that day, I felt fortunate. The new building is a beautiful testament to the Seminary’s commitment to providing a quality theological education in exciting new ways!”*

Visitors toured Union Presbyterian Seminary’s new 22,000 square-foot, red-brick building which features classrooms, worship and gathering space for up to 100, a library that can hold 50,000 volumes, two indoor fireplaces, and two courtyards—one with an outdoor fireplace. Stained glass throughout provides a distinctly spiritual feel including the Jesus window

(Above, left) Visitors take a much anticipated tour of the new Charlotte campus facility; (Above, right) President Blount presents a Resolution of Appreciation to Wanda Towler of Sharon Presbyterian Church from the Union Presbyterian Seminary Board of Trustees.

which was originally part of Schaufler Hall (now William Smith Morton Library) on the Richmond campus. Sure to be a centerpiece: An eight-foot, concrete cross commissioned by the seminary to be placed in the front courtyard.

The service marked the official close of Union Presbyterian's year-long bicentennial celebration which began with convocation in September of 2011 at the seminary's place of origin, Hampden-Sydney College.

*"What a vision of community to see the Richmond and Charlotte campuses worshipping together in celebration of 200 years of doing theological education,"* said President Brian K. Blount. *"Whether in Hampden-Sydney, Richmond, Charlotte, or now using the resources of the internet, we teach, study, and worship together in wonderful community. The closing bicentennial convocation at Charlotte was symbolic of this sense of community for me."* Ω

(Below) Tom Currie, dean of the Charlotte campus, delivered the convocation sermon to a capacity crowd in the sanctuary of Sharon Presbyterian Church.



## Ralston Brings Breath of Experience

Joshua Ralston is the newest member of the Union Presbyterian Seminary faculty. In January, 2013, he joins the community as assistant professor of theology. Trained as a systematic theologian, Ralston brings to UPSem a deep expertise in interfaith issues, Muslim-Christian dialogue, and human migration as a matter for theological reflection. Much of his teaching and research, Ralston writes, concerns "the challenge of faithfully articulating and creatively re-thinking Christian claims about God and the world in light of the history of Christian thought, other religious traditions (especially Islam), and the shifting socio-political landscape of the 21st century." In his work, he has explored how ecclesiology can be a theological lens through which to examine both internal Christian debates about the nature of the church and also external questions of the church's relationship to the world. In an essay, "Preaching Makes the Church," he appropriates Calvin's theology of preaching to construct a Reformed homiletic-ecclesiology.

Ralston is now finishing his Ph.D. at Emory University in the graduate division of religion. He previously earned his M.Div. degree at the same institution. Ralston's other academic credentials come from New College, University of Edinburgh (Th.M. in

global Christianity) and Wake Forest University (B.A. in philosophy). In the midst of his training, he has also had opportunities to teach, most notably at the Candler School of Theology at Emory as a Bandy Teaching Fellow in homiletics and as a teaching associate in theology/ethics, at the ECWA Theological Seminary in Aba, Nigeria, and at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt. In addition, he has taught in the United Methodist course of study at the Candler School of Theology. Currently, Ralston and his family are residing in Ramallah, Palestine, where his wife, Sarah, works in the field of international development.

Ralston is a candidate for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA). He has also worked in churches located in the San Francisco Bay and Atlanta areas. While at Emory, he co-founded a new church development for refugees and immigrants in Clarkston, GA. Ω



Joshua Ralston

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## Alums Approach First Call with Hope...Creativity... Faithfulness

The vast majority of Union Presbyterian Seminary students accept calls to ministry after graduation, most typically serving in congregations. Alumni/ae serve the church in all 50 states and more than 50 countries worldwide. Others find their call working in human service vocations locally or internationally.

Today's job market can be tough for any graduate, including church professionals. Declining numbers throughout mainline denominations have caused churches to tighten their belts and their budgets. According to a recent study by the Barna Group, in the past fifty years, mainline church membership dropped by more than one-quarter to roughly 20 million people. Fewer congregation members can mean fewer church staff positions.

While being a Union Presbyterian Seminary alum does not guarantee a position in the competitive field of ministry, our graduates are finding calls.

*"UPSem continues to have a high percentage of M.Div. and M.A.C.E. graduates serving in churches*

*and church-related calls,"* says **Susan Fox** (M.Div.'89; D.Min.'95), director of supervised placement and vocational ministry and professor of supervised ministry. *"I continue to be very pleased with the first call outcomes of our graduates. In fact, 82% of 2011 graduates accepted first calls in churches, faith-based or social justice related organizations."*

The pathway to securing a position in ministry can be a complicated endeavor. An alum's sense of call and areas of interest, as well as their willingness to serve small congregations, underserved populations, or their potential restrictions on geographical location—all are factors in finding employment in the church post-graduation, and can effect the timeline of the placement process.

Fox continued, *"New alums are approaching the first call climate with hopefulness, creativity, and faithfulness, ready to serve."* Ω



Mimi Siff

### Mimi Siff Joins Staff

Mimi Siff is certainly no stranger to the UPSem community having received her M.Div. degree in 2011. Since late May, she has assumed a new role—as director of student services for the Student Life Office.

Since graduation, Mimi was certified as a court appointed advocate for children in Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Greater Richmond and headed up the Caritas shelter program for her church, Second Presbyterian in Richmond. She holds a B.A. from Davidson College.

*"I'm glad to be back on campus,"* said Mimi, *"giving back to the institution that gave so much to me."*

Before seminary, she was the owner and manager of an acclaimed area restaurant, The Ironhorse, and a wine and cheese shop, The Caboose. Our community lunches have certainly been the benefactor of these experiences! Mimi has a college-aged son and a daughter who is a high school senior, as well as an English Bulldog puppy. Ω



## Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly Dies at Age 92

**Leontine T.C. Kelly** (M.Div.'76) passed away June 28, in Oakland, CA, at age 92. The Black Alumni/ae Association of Union Presbyterian Seminary honored her in February 2012 at the Trailblazers Award ceremony and banquet held as part of the "Ministry on the Ground" conference and UPSem bicentennial.

After graduating from the then Union Theological Seminary, Bishop Kelly went on to be the first African American woman bishop in the United Methodist Church.

The impact of her witness to the love and boldness of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ cannot be adequately measured.

"I know we all join together in affirmation of the joy and promise of resurrection in Jesus Christ of this tremendously faithful and inspirational leader," said Director of Alumni/ae Development **Lynn McClintock** (D.Min.'87), "as well as in prayer for Bishop Kelly's friends, family, and colleagues in the face of such tremendous loss." Ω



Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly

## Lifelong Peace and Justice Advocate Albert C. Winn Dies

Union Presbyterian Seminary gives thanks to God for the life, leadership, and ministry of **Albert C. Winn** (B.D.'45; Th.D.'56) who died peacefully in Clemmons, NC, at the age of 90.

A distinguished graduate of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, Dr. Winn earned two degrees from this institution, a B.D. in 1945 and a Th.D. in 1956. He served as professor of systematic theology at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where he eventually became president (1966-1973).

Dr. Winn's several pastorates included Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, where he was very active in the life of the greater Richmond community. It was during this pastorate that Dr.

Winn was elected Moderator of the 119th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (1979). He chaired the committee that wrote "A Declaration of Faith," a confession of faith widely used in the Presbyterian denomination.

A lifelong advocate for peace and justice in the church and in the world, Dr. Winn became Moderator of the Alabama Synod in 1958 during the Civil Rights Movement. In 1969, he became Moderator of the Kentucky Synod, during the height of the Vietnam War protests. In addition, he was a prolific author, most recently publishing *Ain't Gonna Study War No More: Biblical Ambiguity and the Abolition of War* (1993). Ω

### MISSION:

*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).*

*As a theological institution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) standing within the Reformed tradition: We confess the Lordship of Jesus Christ; 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 serve as a theological resource for church and society; we are a catalyst for the transformation of the church, and through the church, the world.*

**E. Carson Brisson**, associate dean for academic programs, director of graduate studies, and associate professor of Biblical languages, participated as one of three faculty speakers at the Union Family Reunion at Montreat in June. Later that month, he spoke at the UPSem alumni/ae lunch at the Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Roanoke, VA, and attended the service of ordination at which quite a few UPSem alumni/ae and students were present, ordained, and commissioned. Brisson led a Wednesday evening Bible Study at Chester Presbyterian Church in Chester, VA, and one evening at Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, during Lent 2012. He represented UPSem at a Wabash Institute workshop for directors of graduate programs in seminaries and divinity schools at the end of September.



*E. Carson Brisson*



*Thomas W. Currie*



*Susan Fox*



*Charles Davenport*



*Paul Galbreath*



*Frances Taylor Gench*

**Thomas W. Currie**, dean of Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte campus, and professor of theology, preached this summer at First Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC; First Presbyterian Church, Spruce Pine, NC; and First Presbyterian Church, Statesville, NC. He also spoke at Myers Park United Methodist Church and Park Road Baptist Church in Charlotte. Currie's article, "Stuck with Each Other," was published in the Spring 2012 edition of *Insights*. He joined with the rest of the faculty and staff in moving the Charlotte campus from Queens University of Charlotte to the new building at 5141 Sharon Rd.

**Charles Davenport**, associate director of supervised ministry and vocational planning, Charlotte campus, served as the chairperson of the commission to install Robert McCully as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Dallas, NC, in August. He preached at Riverview Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church of Lowell, NC, and Shiloh Presbyterian Church in Grover, NC, in September. Davenport also participated in the service of orientation and installation of **Catherine Taylor** (M.A.C.E.'11) as the pastor of Sweetwater Presbyterian Church, Hickory, NC.

**Susan Fox** (M.Div.'89; D.Min.'95), director of supervised ministry and vocational planning and professor of supervised ministry, preached at Unitarian Universalist Community Church in Glen Allen in July. She gave a presentation on "Politics and Civil Discourse in the Church" at the Richmond District United Methodist Clergy gathering in October.

**Paul Galbreath**, professor of worship and preaching, participated in the annual meeting of the Presbyteries Cooperative Committee on Exams in Savannah, GA, from May 30 until June 4. He served as minister-in-residence for the Community Church in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, during July and August. This included weekly preaching, liturgical leadership, pastoral care, and congregational planning. Galbreath also served as faculty mentor for the Communities of Learning program over the summer.

**Frances Taylor Gench** (M.Div.'82; Ph.D.'88), Herbert Worth and Annie H. Jackson Professor of Biblical Interpretation, was the spring symposium teacher and preacher for First Presbyterian Church, Burlington, NC, and scholar-in-residence for a weekend at First Presbyterian Church Howard County in Columbia, MD. She also preached at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, and led their Women's Spring Retreat.

**Ken McFayden** (D.Min.'86), dean for the Leadership Institute and professor of ministry and leadership development, preached at Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, and First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, AL. He led a seminar on congregational leadership for the Church Business Administration program at UPSem and led a three-day staff development consultation for Clemmons Presbyterian Church in Clemmons, NC. He also led a two-day congregational leadership retreat at First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, AL. McFayden participated in a delegation to South Korea with **Brian Blount**, president of Union Presbyterian Seminary, and **Syngman Rhee**, special assistant to the president for global ministry and advancement and visiting professor of intercultural studies, to deepen partnerships with Presbyterian Korean Men, National Presbyterian Korean Women, and Church of the Lord in Seoul, Korea. He participated in various activities of the 220th General Assembly of the

Presbyterian Church (USA) in Pittsburgh, PA, and participated in the annual meeting of the Academy of Religious Leadership in Seattle, WA. He served on the editorial board for *The Journal of Religious Leadership* and participated in the annual conference of the National Association of Church Business Administration in Houston, TX. McFayden also participated in a three-day Annual Conference on Distance Teaching & Learning, at the University of Wisconsin—

Madison. He published a book review on *Reading the Bible, Transforming Conflict* by Carol J. Dempsey and Elayne J. Shapiro in *Interpretation*.

A sermon by **Syngman Rhee**, special assistant to the president for global missions and advancement and visiting professor of intercultural studies, was the inspiration for a hymn, “The Love of Jesus Christ Is Urging Us On,” written by Carolyn Gillette.

**Carol Schweitzer**, associate professor of pastoral care, published a paper in the academic journal *Pastoral Psychology* titled, “A Parable, A Pearl and ‘Popular’? How the Broadway Musical *Wicked*—Especially Elphaba’s Character—May Assist Adolescent Girls to Claim Their Uniqueness.” Ideas for this paper were first presented at a conference held in October 2011 at UPSem. Schweitzer also preached and led worship at Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Norge, VA, in July.



Ken McFayden



Syngman Rhee



Carol Schweitzer



John T. Carroll

**John T. Carroll**, Harriet Robertson Fitts Memorial Professor of New Testament, has published *Luke: A Commentary* for The New Testament Library series by John Knox Press.

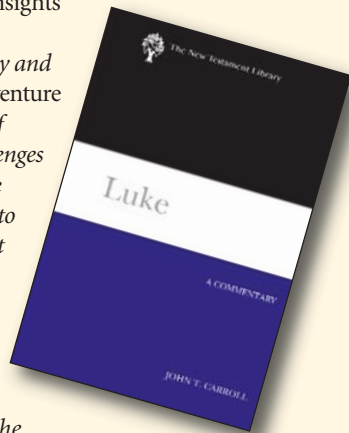
Combining scholarly rigor and theological insight, Carroll not only focuses on the Gospel text but also makes frequent reference to Luke’s second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, to show how the two writings work together to present a full picture of the life of Christ and the work of the apostles. He includes several illuminating notions about special topics in Luke’s Gospel—a comparison of the birth announcements to Mary and Zechariah, an examination of the role

of women, a discussion of wealth and poverty, and insights on the reign of God and the Roman Empire.

“This is a most appealing commentary. It is clearly and magisterially written,” says Robert J. Karris of St. Bonaventure University. “Carroll addresses convincingly issues of interpretation and tackles issues of the heart as he challenges readers and preachers with the principle of Gregory the Great: you only know as much of the text as you put into practice. I enthusiastically recommend this magnificent book to students, colleagues, and fellow preachers.”

J. Howard Marshall, Professor Emeritus of New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, adds, “Largely free from entering scholarly debates (but resting on sound scholarship), this commentary on the Gospel of Luke concentrates on expounding the theological narrative of Luke in simple language so that preachers and study group leaders will have a valuable, easily accessible tool with just the right amount of explanatory comment... This is a sympathetic, readable companion to the Gospel.”

*Luke: A Commentary* will be the subject of The Dean’s Forum on the UPSem Richmond campus in January. Ω





Karen-Marie Yust



Beverly Zink-Sawyer

**Karen-Marie Yust**, associate professor of Christian education, led a Stations of the Cross workshop at St. John's United Church of Christ in Richmond, VA, in March. She keynoted the two-day Center for Youth Ministry Training Summit in Memphis, TN, and gave a presentation on teaching and spirituality via Skype to a doctor of ministry seminar at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX, in May. Yust participated in the

12th International Conference on Children's Spirituality in Norwich, UK, in July and published an article titled, "Children as Targets of Violence" in the *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* in August.

**Beverly Zink-Sawyer**, Samuel W. Newell, Jr. Professor of Preaching and Worship, served as worship leader and communion cele-

brant at Ginter Park Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA, in July and preached at Ashland Presbyterian Church in Ashland, VA, in August. Her review of *Conversational Rhetoric: The Rise and Fall of a Women's Tradition, 1600-1900* was published in *Homiletic*, the journal of the *Academy of Homiletics* on whose editorial board she serves. Ω

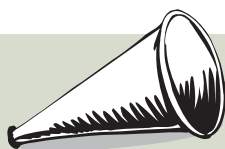
***Squaring the Womanist Circle: Translating Black Women's Religious Scholarship into Community Service*** is a project that is a launching pad for a continuing Institute of Womanist Studies at Union Presbyterian Seminary. Project directors are **Katie G. Cannon**, professor of Christian ethics at Union Presbyterian Seminary; **Angela D. Sims**, assistant professor of ethics and Black church studies at Saint Paul School of Theology (Kansas City, MO); and **Erica E. Kierulf**, Ph.D. candidate at Union Presbyterian Seminary.

*Squaring the Womanist Circle* will open a multi-voice-conversation among a diverse group of women to explore and address lived concerns of African American girls and women. The project will give voice to women working for justice from a religious framework and will send an important and timely signal to the broader community that women of faith are committed to discerning new ways to focus on the well-being of women and girls of African descent in a multi-religious world.

"For almost three decades, African American women, religious scholars and theologians have engaged in discourse on race, gender, sexuality and social class," says Cannon. "Yet, a consistent criticism is that our womanist work as academicians is separated from our labor as scholar practitioners who address issues and needs throughout the Black community."

Over a period of three years, *Squaring the Womanist Circle* will bring together activists who are academics, religious practitioners, healthcare providers, artists, researchers, policymakers, and students from a variety of disciplines. They will share life lessons learned from embodied mediated knowledge, so that together women can imagine alternative ways of being and establish healthy and innovative agendas for their future.

This initiative has been awarded a three-year \$150,000 grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. Education, particularly graduate theological educational institutions, is of particular interest to the Foundation. The project's kick-off took place in November 2012 with a lunch and workshop, "Prophetically Moving Toward Womanist Possibilities," facilitated by Cannon and held in conjunction with the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology's Ellison Convocation, at Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA. Ω



## Student Shout-Outs

Richmond student **Dawg Strong**'s eucharistic prayer written for Paul Galbreath's Eucharist class was accepted for publication in the November issue of *Call to Worship*. The course explores the history and theology of the Lord's Supper and provides workshop opportunities to develop practical application of the sacraments in congregational life. Strong is a third year M.Div. student.

**Kristen Pike** was selected for a study seminar in Ireland next April spending two weeks studying in Belfast and Dublin as part of the PC(USA) Peacemaking Office. Pike is a student at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte campus.

M.Div. Charlotte student **Elizabeth (Liz) Raver Wagner** has been appointed by the General Assembly of the PC(USA) to the Special Committee on the Confession of Belhar. Wagner is a member of Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. Ω

# Who is my neighbor?

## *Union Presbyterian Seminary's New Curriculum Equips Students for Ministry With "the Least of These."*

In May 2012 the Seminary's Curriculum Task Force recommended a new set of requirements for the dual M.Div./M.A.C.E. degree program, which was approved by the faculty. The task force made this recommendation based on careful listening, wide consulting, and creative thought about how the Seminary's professional degree programs could be strengthened. The task force included faculty members from each of the five academic departments (Bible, Christian Education, History, Practical Theology, and Theology/Ethics) and was co-chaired by professors Beverly Zink-Sawyer and Pamela Mitchell-Legg.

One result of the recommendation was a new conceptual framework of the degree program. There were three roles that would be emphasized in the new requirements: Practicing Theologian, Congregational Leader, and Community Witness. These roles were meant to be distinct but interrelated.

Reflecting specifically on the role of community witness in ministry, this edition of *Focus* magazine is asking the question, "Who is my neighbor?" The new curriculum is designed to not only help students discern the answer, but equip them with tools for

service and advocacy. **Stan Skreslet** (D.Min.'79), academic dean of Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond campus, and the F. S. Royster Professor of Christian Missions, described the community witness role in this way:

*"Community witnesses practice ministry by participating in God's mission in the world. In a multi-cultural and multi-religious world, they bear witness to Jesus Christ. In response to Christ's call to serve the least of these, these witnesses seek to encourage communities of faith to proclaim the gospel, work for justice, and resist powers of sin and evil. They do so joyfully, anticipating the fullness of God's reign."*

What follows is a story of how a UPSem alumna is using her seminary education to live into the role of community witness. **Joan Stewart** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'03) is the executive director of West Virginia's Ministry of Advocacy and Work Camps (WVMAW). In addition, Professor **Rodney Sadler** offers an explanation of the role of community witness as it relates to the new curriculum.

Above, M.Div. students Allysen Schaaf and Shelby Etheridge sort clothes during Service Day at Boaz & Ruth, a local Richmond non-profit organization.

# Making A Difference



Joan Stewart  
(M.Div./M.A.C.E.'03)

Born in West Virginia, **Joan Stewart** left to spend most of her adult life in North Carolina. She swore to never return. A mission trip to Reynosa, Mexico with St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church in Wilmington changed her life.

Stewart became involved in mission and mission coordination, and soon realized that life as a banker was not what she wanted. In 1999, she entered Union Presbyterian Seminary with plans to get a Masters in Christian Education and eventually she added a Masters of Divinity degree. Despite having no plans to preach or be the pastor of a church, her first call was Montgomery Presbyterian Church, in Montgomery, WV, as well as its sister church, Falls View Presbyterian in Falls View. So much for never returning to West Virginia.

*“When I was in seminary I was always wrestling — doubting my call, struggling with academics, wondering what God was thinking,”* remarked Stewart who received her dual M.Div./M.A.C.E. in 2003. *“Those seminary years took all that life experience and mixed it into a foundation of Bible, faith and skills. Then they threw me out into the world to test it out—in hospital chaplaincy, in church service, in pastoral internship—all the while giving me a soft place to land while I learned. I treasure the seminary years for preparing me to see the world through God’s eyes.”*

Inspired by the mission trip that changed everything, and the Seminary that had equipped her for ministry, Joan looked for ways her congregations might be involved in local missions. Enter the West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and Workcamps (WVMAW), the mission of which is “to provide opportunities for discipleship by partnering with those in need whose lives have suffered devastation by natural disasters or by the devastation of poverty in West Virginia.”

*“Everything I have been is who I am.”*

Stewart spoke with the then Executive Director of WVMAW Bonnie (Mallott) Gilson, about what it would take for Montgomery Presbyterian Church to become a mission location. It seemed complicated. Stewart prayed to God saying, *“You’re going to have to make it easier than that!”*

An hour later she received a call from friend Bette Jean Aman from St. Andrews-Covenant in Wilmington who asked, *“What if we helped build a place to come and do mission at your church?”*

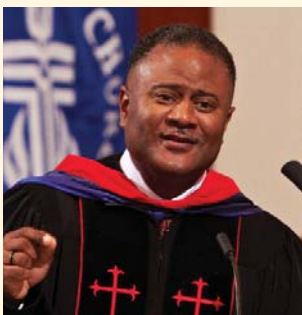
Said Stewart, *“I’ve never had a prayer answered so quickly or so clearly in my life!”*

In 2006, with much prayer, Joan became the executive director, as well as a quarter time pastor for the two churches. In 2009 she became the full time executive director. During the 2012 calendar year, West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and Work Camps will coordinate 62 work groups from as many as 14 states to add up to 900 volunteers working in devastated areas across the state.

When reflecting on her time with WVMAW Stewart said, *“Everything I have been is who I am. That is what God has used. I get to do this. I am so very grateful for Union Presbyterian Seminary, and the wonderful professors whose words still echo in preaching and teaching and finding theological ways of looking at life.”* Ω

What is a “community witness?” A “community witness” in our new paradigm refers to a minister as a leader in the context of the larger world. I am pleased to have served on the Curriculum Task Force, the group that revised the curriculum in light of the three roles: Practicing Theologian, Congregational Leader, and Community Witness. That we chose to add the third role is a testimony to our belief that we are not just training people to be theoreticians or leaders within the sanctuary, but to be leaders who recognize that the church of Jesus Christ exists in the larger world and should have an impact on communities outside the four walls of the church building. A community witness, therefore, bears witness to Christ in the world by building bridges across the fictive boundaries of human difference in the world, by proclaiming Christ’s message in word and deed, and by embodying Christ’s commitment to justice for the “least of these.”

## What is a Community Witness?



As we begin to employ our new curricular commitments, I celebrate the fact that we are taking this role seriously as a seminary. I truly believe that the clergy of tomorrow need to be trained to fulfill their vocations

both within and outside of the confines of the institutional church. In part I am pleased because this role represents our fidelity to the vision of Christian service found in several key biblical passages.

For example, *Revelation 7:9-17* gives us a picture of the ideal of the Kingdom of God. In this passage,

four terms are used to describe human groupings—nations, tribes, peoples, languages. Each of these groupings is preceded by a form of the Greek term *pas* meaning “all” or “every.” Literally, “some of everybody” is included in this depiction of God’s Reign. We need to train our students to be those who actively build relationships with those who differ from them, for the call on our lives is a call for us to witness to Christ and find common ground with those who are dissimilar to us.

Another passage that lifts up the challenge to be community witnesses is *Matthew 28:19-20*, the Great Commission. This passage is also intentionally diverse. In this instance, however, the call is not just to engage in fellowship with those who differ, but to make disciples of “all nations.” The passage is a call for our institution to prepare students to take that message to a diverse world by means of their words and their deeds, and to baptize, or extend the scope of the church throughout the world. This passage reminds us that we need to make sure our students are equipped to take the Gospel abroad, and build the church by their subsequent activities in evangelism, Christian formation, and teaching, in ways that are contextually relevant.

Finally, this role calls to mind the powerful narrative at the end of *Matthew 25:31-46*. In this account the charge that Jesus gives is to care for those whom the world often overlooks—the least, the lost, and the left out. Jesus in this parable makes these groups our concern as he declares in verse 40, “. . . *just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*” Since this is a core concern of our faith and indicative of how we would treat Christ were he standing before us, we need to teach our students to minister to those in need who are gathered outside the doors of our sanctuaries. We need to instill within them the “know-how” from practical theology classes and non-parish based supervised ministry placements to address the issues faced by the chronically underserved in our midst.

For these and other reasons, I am pleased that UPSem has as part of its new curricular core an emphasis on training community witnesses. I am sure that our future alumni/ae will be even better prepared to meet the needs of the ever changing church and to stand firm in their witness as they engage an increasingly diverse world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ω

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*Rodney S. Sadler is associate professor of Bible at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Charlotte campus.*



Each year, the Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond campus, academic year starts off with Service Day as students, faculty, and staff volunteer their time with local non-profit organizations. The annual event introduces students to opportunities to serve in the community beyond the seminary walls.

M.Div. student Whitney Caswell

*“Service Day is a great way to give back to the larger Richmond community while strengthening relationships within our own community.”*

**Kate Fielder Boswell** (M.Div./M.A.C.E. '07)  
Director of Admissions

# service



M.Div. student Nathan Huffman and International student Arun Peters



M.Div. student Kelly-Ann Rayle and M.Div./M.A.C.E. student Molly Spangler

*“Service Day is such an important part of life at Union. It makes a statement that service is a priority on our campus. My hope is that Service Day will open the door for a continued relationship between Union students and the many volunteer organizations in our community.”*

**Anna George**, M.Div. student  
Director of Service Committee and organizer of Service Day





M.Div. student Rachel Erb and Professor Beverly Zink-Sawyer (background)



M.Div. student Tommy Taylor

“Service Day is about eradicating our egos and our expectations and letting ourselves be drawn to the place that requires us. It is about serving faithfully and joyfully in that place at that time—together.”

**Christopher Tweel**, M.Div. student



M.Div. student Rachel Jenkins



M.Div. students Luke Woodcock, Cam Thomas, and Daniel Erwin

“We shredded papers, addressed envelopes, and moved furniture. At the end of our time, our group reflected on the importance of the mundane tasks that keep organizations going. We realized it enables ministry in ways we can’t predict or know. When we humbly give ourselves to those mundane tasks, we are letting God use us in powerful ways.”

**Rachel Jenkins**, M.Div. student



## Community Witness: “Limping Hallelujahs?”



E. Carson Brisson

For approximately 15 years after graduating from seminary, David, along with a cadre of gifted congregational leaders, coordinated mission efforts among the five (four after one was knocked down and replaced with dwellings of less density and perhaps more hope) low-income neighborhoods in a mid-sized, southeastern U.S., coastal city.

Once in a while during those years, David and I would touch base. On such occasions he usually had a story which, regardless the difficult details it might entail and David’s deep sorrow concerning them, he always managed to relate with a sense of hope that sometimes crossed into outright wonder. These anecdotes, more often than not, bore testimony to broken lives restored, afflicted communities demonstrating courage, wit, and wisdom, and structures of power and privilege—ecclesiastic, academic, civic, and what David called with respect “street”—surprised or even stunned into tangible and sacrificial compassion by some form of witness.

One of David’s accounts I think I shall never forget. His community had arranged to rent a gymnasium every Friday night from mid-January through the end of March. On the first Friday of February, 57 young children and ten adults, (seven women, three men) had gathered in the warmth and welcome and wideness of the gym to do crafts, practice some life skills, play games, eat, sing songs, hear Bible stories, and—one of the children’s favorite activities—enjoy hearing their “outside” voices bounce and boom around the canyon-sized inside space during a period creatively called “Get-it-out-now” time. Around 7:00 pm that night, a man, unknown to the community and perhaps in his early thirties, came to the gym door and asked to enter. The door was opened. He was greeted and offered a seat at a table with several other adults. He was brought warm food and hot coffee along with a thick slice of homemade pound cake. I’ll call the man Paul.

After a few delicious minutes, Paul, at first quite calm and clearly delighted to be in out of the winter cold, rose and followed his second and steaming cup of coffee over to where one small group of children was enjoying a craft session. He soon grew, for reasons perhaps unknown even to him, agitated. Efforts by several adults to determine why he had become anxious were rebuffed. Offers of conversation in a more private corner of the gym were declined. Paul’s agitation grew into language, and that language at some point began to cross—in tone, volume, and content—the community’s language line. Many of the children noticed Paul’s behavior, and became frightened. Further attempts to find out what was troubling Paul and to render care failed.

Finally, the adults decided that Paul could not stay, and that whether this strategy was completely perfect or not it would be best for one individual, at least initially, rather than for a group to communicate this to him. The person to whom that task fell went to Paul, and politely asked him to leave, explaining to Paul that his language was frightening the children and was simply not going to be allowed to continue. Paul was assured that he could come back on another Friday night, and that he would be warmly welcomed if he did.

Upon hearing he had to leave, Paul, David tells me, said something very loudly, reached into the coat he had insisted on keeping on even after entering the gym, produced a handgun, and pointed it toward the face of the adult who stood before him. I later asked David what kind of gun it was. He responded simply, and has since never elaborated, “The kind that cocks.”

David tells me that the gym, the children, the adults, and the world froze when the weapon appeared. He tells me that in that moment of fierce stillness the adult facing Paul gazed directly into Paul’s eyes, and said, without hesitation but no doubt with a prayer in a gym now fallen silent as night, exactly this: “*And in addition to not allowing bad language here, we don’t allow guns.*” To summarize the rest, the adult then counseled Paul to surrender the firearm, and to sit with the community until authorities arrived. Paul was promised the community’s support and prayers, beginning at that moment, for as long as needed whatever transpired, however complicated, convoluted, and precarious things got, a promise lodged solely he was assured in a Presence that had itself—be it as sweet whisper or as unremitting

flame—refused to abandon the community in life and in death. Paul asked for another piece of pound cake as they waited. It was brought to him, gladly. “*My mother made this,*” the community remembers him to have said as he reached for it. Years later and at most recent word, it is my understanding that the community’s promise to Paul made on that cold night so many Februaries ago endures.

Gentle Gargoyle reader, please forgive me if at this point I make any offense for no offense is intended, but to you I must confess that if David’s story of Paul and of the community that is now his and that stands by and with him to this day does not, at least in part, bear testimony to one troubling, frightening, dangerous, imperfect, yet hopeful, courageous, creative, and inspired incarnation of community witness, then surely there is no hope, none whatsoever, for my own limping hallelujahs. Ω

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

## SPRUNT LECTURES

May 1-3, 2013

# Why Are Americans So Religious and How Did They Get That Way?

**E. Brooks Holifield**

Emeritus Professor of American Church History  
Emory University

PREACHERS **Hoffman F. Brown, 3rd** (M.Div.’81), pastor, Wayland Baptist Church, Baltimore, MD, and **Teresa McRoberts** (M.Div.’06) associate pastor, Shady Grove United Methodist Church, Glen Allen, VA



1812-2012

The following article by **William “Bill” Sweetser** (M.Div. '89; Th.M. '90; Ph.D. '00), visiting associate professor of church history, is a culmination of a four-part series published on the history of Union Presbyterian Seminary as part of the Bicentennial celebration. Sweetser asserts we are who we are based on the curriculum of 17th century Scottish universities and the character of early 19th century America. He is also writing a book titled, *A Copious Fountain: 200 Years of Union Presbyterian Seminary, 1812-2012*.

The first article in the series, “Reformed and Always Reforming,” was written by **Don Shriver** (B.D. '55), President Emeritus of Union Theological Seminary in New York, about the seminary's history in the 1950s and the way professors used the Bible to inform students on social and ethical issues of the day, especially the desegregation of schools. Part two of the series, “A Protective Community,” written by **Peter Hobbie** (D.Min. '84; Ph.D. '87) examined UPSem as a place for progressive and open-minded ministers to learn and affect change in the Presbyterian church. The most recent article, “The Removal,” by **William Thompson** (B.D. '61; Th.M. '62; D.Min. '92) described the seminary's move from its place of origin at Hampden-Sydney College.

All of these articles are historical descriptions as well as celebrations of what the seminary has meant to the Church, how its earliest defining attributes continue to shape modern theological education, and lay the foundation for great things in its future.

## The Foundation Part IV

One of the most important Biblical concepts is that of remembering. Every time the Lord appears to a patriarch, prophet, or king the injunction is to remember, and the Psalmist continually calls Israel to remember. Scripture reminds us that once we recall what our God has done for us in the past, we can have confidence in the Lord's gracious acts in the future. We like to think that we are a forward-looking, future oriented people. Yet, in the midst of uncertainty it is worth recalling our past. For in examining our history we may discern those commonalities which will keep us together in the future. Our forbearers created Union out of a vision of an educated ministry on the foundation of a curriculum which unites us still.

On October 27, 1706, the seven ministers present at what is considered to be the first General Assembly heard Mr. John Boyd as he preached “a popular sermon [on] Jno. i. 12., Defended his Thesis[,] gave Satisfaction as to his Skill in the Languages, & answered to extemporary questions.” The ministers approved his ordination and call to a church in Freehold, New Jersey.

Although candidates preaching and answering questions are familiar to us, Boyd's examination was new. Most Presbyterian ministers in colonial America received their education in Scotland or Ulster, were ordained

by their home presbyteries, and then sent to the colonies. Presbyterians insisted on a theological education in the old country because they wanted to make sure their ministers were properly educated in Biblical languages, orthodox theology, history, and polity.

Once the colonies began to grow, however, there were not enough ministers from across the sea; the church needed educated, native-born preachers. And what defined an educated minister were the five subjects specified in the Church of Scotland's *Book of Discipline* (1560): Greek language and exegesis, Hebrew language and exegesis, theology, church history, and polity. Indeed, education was so important to Presbyterians that they would rather have their pulpits vacant than to employ ignorant ministers.

Virtually every synod and General Assembly meeting in the 18th century received petitions from congregations and presbyteries appealing for ministers. Yet, with such high educational requirements there were just not enough qualified candidates. It was clear that attending a privately-owned log college and then studying under a tutor would not produce enough suitable ministers; the quality was too uneven.

The Old Side, New Side split in 1741 was precipitated by the pressure for more ministers. The Old Side wanted to maintain educational requirements that could only be met by British universities. New Side Presbyterians were willing to try other ways to increase the supply of ministers and founded the College of New Jersey in 1746. As early as 1770, Hanover Presbytery discussed the "suitability" of establishing a theological school within its bounds because they were unwilling to send their money north to support the College of New Jersey.

In 1790, the General Assembly suggested a three-year theological course for ministerial candidates and this action spurred the Synod of Virginia to rethink theological education. In 1791, a synod committee recommended something like a seminary education, proposing that two schools be opened—one at Liberty Hall; the other in Washington County, Pennsylvania. These colleges would teach both undergraduates and ministerial candidates. It is curious that the synod never mentioned Hampden-Sydney College, founded in 1775, as a potential site for their school.

At its 1806 meeting, Hanover Presbytery heard an overture from the previous year's General Assembly, recommending each presbytery establish a fund to provide for the theological education of "poor and pious youth." Hanover Presbytery responded not only by establishing a "poor & pious youth" fund, they also started a theological library and called a theological professor. Hanover Presbytery was doing something new—systematic theological education. In October 1807, they called Moses Hoge as both president of Hampden-Sydney and theology professor. Hoge was one of the best known ministers in America. In 1797 he published *The Christian Panoply*, responding to Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*, published two years previously, pointing out that Paine had no answer for the problem of evil. He was also a noted preacher. John Randolph said: "There is but one man in all of Virginia who ought to preach, and that is Dr. Moses Hoge."

**Yet, in the midst of uncertainty it is worth recalling our past. For in examining our history we may discern those commonalities which will keep us together in the future.**

As far back as 1755, there had been calls for schools dedicated to theological education. At the 1808 General Assembly, the church finally acted. Archibald Alexander gave a sermon calling for literate, trained men to meet the challenge posed by the modern world. Responding to Alexander's sermon, the assembly sent a memorial to each presbytery asking them to approve one of three plans for theological education—one central seminary; two seminaries, one for the North, one for the South; or one seminary for each synod.

Virginians wanted to keep what they had at Hampden-Sydney. Consequently, on April 19, 1810, Hanover Presbytery voted that the church should have one seminary for each synod. Less than one month later, the General Assembly met and referred the votes to a committee chaired by Ashbel Green. The committee decided that those who voted against one national seminary could not have truly understood the need for a centralized seminary, so they disregarded the negative votes.

In 1811, Green and his committee presented their plan for a seminary. Unlike the log colleges, the General Assembly would own the seminary and appoint all professors. The curriculum was straight from the *Book of Discipline* requiring Greek, Hebrew, theology, church history and polity, in addition to preaching. These courses would be completed in “no less than three years.” The 1811 assembly chose Princeton as the site of the seminary; a neutral location in northern New Jersey.

There is no record of protest from Synod of Virginia concerning the ignored votes, but their attitude was clear. On October 22, 1812, the synod appointed a committee to “inquire into the expediency of establishing a Theological Seminary within the bounds of Synod.” On October 24, the committee recommended that Lexington, Virginia (meaning

Liberty Hall) be the permanent site of the synodical seminary and that “Hampden-Sydney College be the temporary seat of this institution.” Thus, by 1812, Moses Hoge had become the nexus of theological education in the Synod of Virginia.

The church expected Hoge to be a college president and theology professor, but he would never be able to fill these competing roles. Education was changing. In the first decades of the 19th century, the natural and physical sciences replaced the classics in college curriculums. Undergraduate education was no longer designed to produce ministers, but men who understood science. The two curriculums were incompatible and Hoge could please no one. College and seminary enrollment declined near the close of Hoge's life and after his death on July 5, 1820, the college called their own president, who was not a minister. The seminary officially languished, yet there were students receiving a theological education.





While the church may have doubted the viability of Hoge’s school, the students had no such reservations. In the William Smith Morton Library on the Richmond campus today, there is a worn volume with the title *The Theological Society Minutes, 1812-1823*. The purpose of the Theological Society was to promote “improvement in Theological knowledge and practical piety.” Students gathered every other Friday at 7 p.m. to hear a presentation on a previously assigned question on Biblical, theological, ethical, and liturgical topics. A general discussion usually ensued afterward, as in a section discussion today.

Even at this early date the seminary had an expansive vision—Edward Baptist, founder of Powhatan Academy, later the University of Richmond, was a student leader. After Hoge died in July 1820, the society evolved into more than a discussion group. They granted “certificates” to those they deemed qualified. There were no stated requirements—the minutes just record that certificates were granted on September 2, 1820, August 25, 1821, and June 6, 1823, to a total of nine students.

Despite the leadership vacuum, the students knew what they needed. On November 30, 1822, they saw the future of their seminary and sent a letter to John Holt Rice, pleading with him to accept a call to be the Theology Professor. He accepted and Union Theological Seminary (a named conceived by Rice) would establish itself as the first seminary in the south. He continued the same curriculum from the *Book of Discipline*, and declared that his school would “know no ism, but Bibleism.” It was his generous vision of what a seminary ought to be that attracted Baptists, New School Presbyterians in the 1850s, and even Presbyterians from the north. Rice defined an educated ministry as those who mastered the traditional five subjects, and from this curriculum Union graduates would confront each succeeding generation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ω

## Is Your Congregation Or A Congregation in Your Presbytery Doing Innovative Ministry?

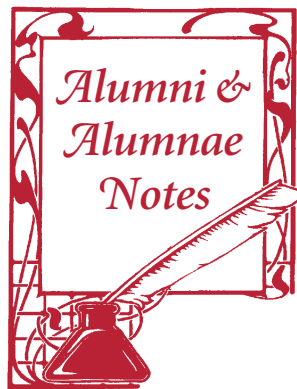
Each year UPSem awards Congregational Leadership Awards for innovative ministry for a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregation. Since 1991, 93 churches in 28 states have received these awards. Each of the eight awards carries a \$1,000 prize to support the congregation in its ministry.

For more information or to apply for one of the UPSem Congregational Leadership Awards, the brochure and application can be downloaded at:

[www.upsem.edu/leadership\\_institute/congregational\\_leadership\\_awards/](http://www.upsem.edu/leadership_institute/congregational_leadership_awards/)

or you can request an application from April Swofford — email: [aswofford@upsem.edu](mailto:aswofford@upsem.edu) or phone: 1-800-229-2990, ext 231.

The application and instructions are only available electronically. **The deadline for the 2013 awards is February 15, 2013.** Ω



If you have moved, changed your e-mail, or have other contact information that has recently changed, please contact Alumni/ae Development Director Lynn McClintock at [lmclintock@upsem.edu](mailto:lmclintock@upsem.edu) or 804.278.4382.

If you have news to share, please mail it to:

**Alumni/ae Office**  
Union Presbyterian Seminary  
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Or e-mail:  
**Lynn McClintock**  
[lmclintock@upsem.edu](mailto:lmclintock@upsem.edu)

This issue of Focus includes information received through September 24, 2012.

## 1950s

**William M. Clark** (B.D.'52; Th.M.'54) celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on July 22, 2012. He preached at a special service at Bethesda Presbyterian Church in Aberdeen, NC, where he has served as an interim pastor and his wife is a current member. Visitors and greetings came from churches where Bill had served.

## 1960s

**Steve "Sam" Martin** (M.Div.'62) was elected to the board of trustees for Winston-Salem State University (NC) filling a vacant position until June 2013.

**Matthew M.K. Whong's** (B.D.'63; D.Min.'80) book, *Power of Dream, Love, Mission*, was chosen as one of the top ten self-published books of the year by *World* magazine.

**Tom Spence, Jr.** (M.Div.'64) is serving as pastor at Summerville Presbyterian Church in Lillington, NC. He retired from the Kirk of Kildaire Presbyterian Church in Cary, NC, in 2002 and has served six churches as an interim pastor since then.

**Pokhei Kim** (M.C.E.'68) began serving as director of Christian education at Alameda (CA) Presbyterian Church on May 13, 2012.

## 1970s

**Huw Christopher** (Th.M.'71) recently retired as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Marianna, FL, where he had served since September 2004. His previous pastorates had been at First Presbyterian Church in Washington, NC, First Presbyterian Church in Kinston, NC, and Little Chapel on the Boardwalk at Wrightsville Beach, NC. He and his wife, **Rachel Micol Christopher** (M.A.'72), have moved to Tustin, CA, where their son, Micol, lives. Rachel has used her Christian education training in many ways at the local church and presbytery levels while ably assisting her husband in forty years of ministry. They look forward to meeting other UTS and PSCE graduates in southern California.

**Gordon Garlington III** (M.Div.'72; D.Min.'76) was recently awarded the M.A. degree in history from the University of Central

Arkansas. He credits his church history professor at Union, James Smylie, as one who encouraged his love of history.

**Gary Cockerill** (Th.M.'73; Ph.D.'76) is a research professor of New Testament and biblical theology at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, MS. Eerdmans published his new commentary on Hebrews in April 2012 as part of the *New International Commentary* on the New Testament. His work on Hebrews began at Union under his doctoral advisor, Mathias Rissi.

**Richard Lindsey** (M.Div.'75) retired in 2011 after 29 years as pastor of Southminster Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA. In July 2012, he and his wife, Nancy, moved to Charlotte, NC.

**Steve Aschmann** (D.Min.'76) retired on June 30, 2012, from serving as pastor of Oakland Presbyterian Church in Clayton, NC. He has served churches in Louisiana, KY, and NC. He and his wife, Carol, plan to stay in the Raleigh, NC, area.

**D. Wayne Burkette** (D.Min.'78) received the 2012 John Hus Award from the Moravian Theological Seminary Alumni/ae Association's governing board for bringing distinction to parish ministry, administration, and education.



1980s

**John Bracke** (Ph.D.'83) retired from Eden Theological Seminary in Saint Louis, MO, in June 2012 after 28 years of teaching Old Testament and studies in ministry. He lives in Columbia, MO.

**J. Selden "Sel" Harris, Jr.** (M.Div.'83) is assistant professor of history at Norfolk State University in Norfolk, VA. He will be part of the department of African diaspora studies. He was previously pastor of King's Grant Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, VA.

**Jim Singleton** (M.Div.'83) is associate professor of pastoral leadership and evangelism at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, MA. He previously served as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Colorado Springs, CO.

**Will Heyward** (M.Div.'87; M.A.'88) is pastor of Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church in West Jefferson, NC. He was previously pastor of Smyrna Presbyterian Church in Waynesboro, VA.

**Beth McCrary** (M.Div.'89) has been pastor of Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church in Fort Defiance, VA, since 2010. The church recently renovated its historic sanctuary, which has been in use since it was completed in 1749. It is the oldest continuously-used Presbyterian church in Virginia.

1990s

**Jeff Paschal** (M.Div.'90) is pastor at Guilford Park Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC. He was previously pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Wooster, OH. He also writes regular "Town Square" columns in the *Greensboro News & Record* on topics like environmental justice and how our faith calls for equal rights for the LGBT community.

**Dan Williams** (D.Min.'90) is transitional executive presbyter for the Central Florida Presbytery. He previously served as pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Staunton, VA.

**Julie Hester** (M.A.'92; M.Div.'93) is associate pastor for children and their families at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. She previously served as a parish associate at Rocky River Presbyterian Church in Concord, NC.

**Douglass Key** (M.Div.'93) has published several "Living by the Word" columns and "Blogging Toward Sunday" posts for *The Christian Century*. Doug is pastor of Clover (SC) Presbyterian Church.

**Mary Beth Eubanks** (M.A.'94) is director of Christian education at Rocky River Presbyterian Church in Concord, NC. She was previously director of Christian education at Olivet Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville, VA.

**Laura Mendenhall** (M.A.'71) received the 2012 Ernest Trice Thompson Award at the *Presbyterian Outlook* luncheon that was held as part of the 220th General Assembly (2012) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She has served as Christian educator, pastor and, most recently, senior philanthropy advisor for the Texas Presbyterian Foundation. Mendenhall was president of Columbia Theological Seminary from 2000 to 2009.



Laura Mendenhall

**Christopher Davis** (M.A.'96) is pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Beaver Dam, WI. He was previously associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Bel Air, MD.

**Denise Bennett** (M.Div.'99) was featured in the August 2012 issue of *Belle* magazine for her devotion to the art of storytelling. She is a chaplain at the Hermitage, a United Methodist retirement home in Richmond, VA, and loves to hear and share stories with the residents.

**Stephen Robertson** (M.A.'99) is associate pastor for congregational care at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis, MN. He previously served as associate pastor of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC.

and is active in UPSem's Black Alumni/ae Association.

**Anita Mays** (M.A.C.E.'01; M.Div.'10; Th.M.'11) is pursuing her Ph.D. in New Testament studies at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX. She was previously a chaplain at the Hermitage retirement home in Richmond, VA.

**Bocheol Chang** (M.Div.'02; M.A.C.E.'03) is an assistant professor of pastoral care and counseling at Busan Presbyterian University in Busan, Korea.

**Christopher Greenwell** (M.Div.'02) and his wife, Emmanuelle, are the proud parents of a son, Colin Sean, who is a year and a half old and a daughter, Camille, almost seven. Chris teaches global studies and Emma teaches French at the same high school in Roanoke, VA.

2000s

**William Freeman** (M.Div.'01) retired on June 23, 2012. He was previously pastor of Boulevard United Methodist Church in Richmond, VA,

**Sarah Lockridge Hill** (M.Div.'02) is associate pastor of Lexington (VA) Presbyterian Church. She is serving as Christian education

*Continued on next page*

coordinator and youth director.

**Gordon Mapes** (D.Min.'02) is pastor of Chester (VA) Presbyterian Church. He previously served as pastor of Bon Air Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA.

**Clint Mitchell**

(M.Div./M.A.C.E.'02; Th.M.'03) is the pastor of Wythe Presbyterian Church in Hampton, VA. Wythe Presbyterian received the Elinor Curry Award, which Union gives to a church whose social justice and outreach ministries change the congregation. The church was recognized specifically for ministering to the community of refugees from Myanmar.

**Monica Gould** (M.Div.'03) was accepted to the inaugural class of the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program, a two-year program of leadership development and pastoral reflection at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, IN. She is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Mount Vernon, IN.

**Bruce Aycock** (M.A.C.E.'04) is program director at New Hope Camp and Conference Center in Chapel Hill, NC. He previously served as youth director at Cape Fear Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, NC.

**Barry Chance** (M.Div.'05) is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Hammond, LA. He previously served as pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Shreveport, LA.

**Veronica Cannon** (M.Div.'06) is serving as temporary supply pastor at Black's Memorial Presbyterian Church in Monroe, NC.

**Don Simpson** (M.Div.'06) is stated supply pastor at Fishing Creek (NC) Presbyterian Church.

**Michael Whaley** (M.Div.'06) is associate pastor for missions and membership at Davidson (NC) United Methodist Church. He previously served as associate pastor at Woodlake United Methodist Church in Midlothian, VA.

**Helen Bessent Byrd** (M.Div.'07) recently celebrated three years as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Norfolk, VA, as the church was celebrating its 58th anniversary. She is active in UPSem's Black Alumni/ae Association.

**Jason Stanley** (M.A.C.E.'07) married Megan J. Saucier on April 14, 2012. He is minister of youth and education at Peakland United Methodist Church in Lynchburg, VA.

**Berry French** (M.Div.'08) and Katie French celebrate the birth of their first daughter, Aubry Katharine French, on March 28, 2012. Berry is the associate pastor at Black Mountain (NC) Presbyterian Church.

**Andrea Skeens** (M.A.C.E.'08) is a bereavement care coordinator for Hospice of Virginia. She previously served as assistant to the registrar at Union's Richmond campus.

**Jenny McDevitt** (M.Div.'09) is associate pastor for pastoral care at Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, KS. She was previously associate pastor at Bayside Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, VA.



**Keith Cornfield** (M.Div.'10) received the 2012 Good Preacher Award. He said it "speaks to the training and mentoring that nurtures students at seminary as they learn to preach, and plants seeds to inspire them once they are in the pulpit full time." He is pastor of New Providence Presbyterian Church in Raphine, VA.

**Rhonda Dunbar** (M.A.C.E.'10) is the special education teacher at Francis Howell Union High School, an alternative school in St. Charles, MO. She is also the Southside youth coordinator, working with youth through the combined efforts of Christ Lutheran Church, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, and St. Thomas Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. She previously served as a teacher with CHAT (Church Hill Activities and Tutoring) in Richmond, VA.

**Inho Kang** (M.Div.'10) was ordained on October 31, 2011. He is associate pastor of Lord Jesus Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA.

**Eric Spoon** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'10) and **Melanie McFarland Spoon**

(M.A.C.E./M.S.W.'09) live in Piney Flats, TN, where Eric is pastor of New Bethel Presbyterian Church. He was previously associate pastor at Highland Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville, NC, where Melanie served as director of Christian education.

**Kim Stamey**

(M.Div./M.A.C.E.'10) is serving as a chaplain in the Carolinas Medical Center hospital system in Charlotte, NC, in addition to her career in finance.

**Mary Taneti** (M.A.C.E.'10) is children and youth ministries coordinator at First Presbyterian Church in Goldsboro, NC. She previously served as parish secretary at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church in Richmond, VA.

**Denise Watkins** (M.Div.'10) is director of adult ministries at Woodlake United Methodist Church in Midlothian, VA. She previously served as assistant director of Christian education at Salisbury Presbyterian Church in Midlothian, VA.

**Tom Winstead** (M.Div.'10) was ordained in March 2012 to the work of evangelism and continues to work as headmaster of Mountain Island Day School in Charlotte, NC.

**Vera Witherspoon** (M.Div.'10) is serving as associate pastor at El Bethel A.M.E. Zion Church in Fort Mill, SC.

**Nadine Ellsworth-Moran** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'11) is worship and church relations

coordinator for Union's Charlotte campus in addition to advancement work.

**Tom LaBonte** (M.Div.'11) is interim pastor at Franklin Presbyterian Church in Salisbury, NC.

**Sam McFerran** (M.Div.'11) visited Union's campus to participate in the Urban Ministry Fair and Forum in April, 2012. He is associate administrative director of Christ House in Washington, DC, a ministry that began by helping homeless people recuperate from hospital visits.

**Mairi Renwick** (M.Div.'11) is a chaplain at the University of Kentucky Hospital in Lexington, KY. She was previously a Clinical Pastoral Education resident at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, GA.

**Kathleen Sheets** (M.Div.'11) is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Jesup, IA. She was ordained at First Presbyterian Church in Maumee, OH, on October 21, 2012. Kathleen previously served as pastoral assistant at First Congregational Church in Williamstown, MA.

**Jamie Thompson** (M.Div.'11; Th.M.'12) is pastor of Brooks Frizzell United Methodist Church and Mount Herman United Methodist Church, both in Maury, NC.

**Mason Todd** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'11) was ordained in May 2012 and is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Mayfield, KY.

Mason was previously director of youth at New Kirk Presbyterian Church in Blythewood, SC, and **Katie Todd** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'11) was director of youth ministries at Philadelphia Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC.

**Mike Watson** (M.Div.'11) is associate pastor at University Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge, LA. He was ordained at Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church in Augusta, GA, on August 26, 2011. **Peter Hobbie** (D.Min.'84; Ph.D.'87) preached at the service.

**Newton Cowan** (M.Div.'12) is interim director of Christian education and associate pastor for visitation at Jamestown (NC) Presbyterian Church.

**Claire George Drumheller** (M.Div.'12) and **Matt Drumheller** (M.Div.'12) were married on July 28, 2012, in Watts Chapel on Union's Richmond campus.

**Meg Lindsay Dudley** (M.Div./M.A.C.E.'12) is associate pastor for youth ministry at First Presbyterian Church of Tupelo, MS. She was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in October at Little Falls Presbyterian Church, Arlington, VA.

**Christy Fisher** (M.Div.'12) is the social justice outreach coordinator for the Wesley Club at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA.

**Duck-ho Oh** (Ph.D.'96) was elected as the new president of Hanil University and Theological Seminary in Junju, Korea by the board of trustees on September 27, 2012. Oh served as professor at Ho Nam Theological Seminary in Gwangju from 1986 until 2002 when he was called to serve as pastor of Susuk Presbyterian Church. **Syngman Rhee**, special assistant to the president for global ministry and advancement and visiting professor of intercultural studies, attended his installation service on November 8th in Gwengju, Korea.



Duck-ho Oh

**Holly Frisk** (M.Div.'12) and her husband, Scott, welcomed their first child, Ethan Luke Frisk, in March 2012.

**Patricia Greene** (M.Div.'12) is pastoral resident, a year-long position, at First Presbyterian Church in Muscatine, IA.

**Kelly Hames** (M.A.C.E.'12) is minister of youth and children at Indian Trail (NC) Presbyterian Church.

**Jill Isola** (M.Div.'12) is pastoral assistant at the Gayton Kirk in Richmond, VA, where she previously served as seminary intern.

**Jill Kimbirl** (M.A.C.E.'12) is director of Christian education at First Presbyterian Church in Gastonia, NC.

**Christopher Lee** (M.Div.'12) is director of youth, Family Life Center, and summer ministry at Avondale Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. He was previously director of church development at Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church in Charlotte.

**Jane Mitchell** (M.Div.'12) was ordained in September 2012 as a chaplain at Carolinas Medical Center Hospital Northeast in Concord, NC.

**Bill Rountree** (M.Div.'12) is pastor of Mary Horner Walker Memorial Presbyterian Church in Claudville, VA.

**Jeff Smith** (M.Div.'12) was ordained and installed in February 2012 as associate pastor at Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC.

**Catherine Taylor** (M.Div.'12) is pastor of Sweetwater Presbyterian Church in Hickory, NC. She was ordained and installed there on September 23, 2012.

**Laura Thompson** (M.Div.'12) is director of Christian education and youth ministry at Swansboro (NC) United Methodist Church. Ω



## On The Shelf

Recent books by Union Presbyterian Seminary alumni/ae

**Richard L. Morgan** (M.Div.'53; Th.M.'56; Ph.D.'66), Howard C. Morgan, and John C. Morgan  
*Dear Brothers: Letters Facing Death* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010).

**Dr. Robert H. Ramey, Jr.** (B.D.'54; Th.M.'55; D.Min.'73), *You and Your Pastor: Fulfilling God's Mission* (CreateSpace, 2011).

**William E. Thompson** (B.D.'61; Th.M.'62; D.Min.'92), *Bad Friday: April 17, 1865* (Farmville, VA: Zebra Books, 2011).

**Louis Weeks** (B.D.'67), *A Sustainable Presbyterian Future: What's Working and Why* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2012).

**Thom Shuman** (D.Min.'86) contributed several prayers in *50 New Prayers from the Iona Community* (Glasgow, Scotland: Wild Goose Publications, 2012).

### 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](mailto:lmclintock@upsem.edu).

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## In Remembrance

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

**James Munn McChesney, Jr.** (B.D.'37; Th.D.'53) of Tarboro, NC, died April 4, 2012. †

**1940** ■

**Marguerite Florence Payne Boyce** (PSCE 1939-'40) of Decatur, GA, died July 9, 2011. †

**Ethel Emma Dickson Smith** (M.R.E.'40) of Asheville, NC, died August 20, 2012. †

**Ralph L. Buchanan** (Certificate'41) of Spruce Pine, NC, died May 7, 2012. †

**Sarah Mercier Buchanan** (B.R.E.'42) of Lenoir City, TN, died April 3, 2012. †

**Rachael Scott Glass** (B.R.E.'42) of Atlanta, GA, died June 14, 2012. †

**Attie Camp May** (M.R.E.'44) of Columbia, SC, died April 27, 2012. †

**Sarah Lacy Miller** (B.R.E.'44) of Harrisonburg, VA, died June 14, 2012. †

**Albert C. Winn** (B.D.'45; Th.D.'56) of Clemmons, NC, died July 17, 2012. †

**Thelma Louise Rogers Fish** (B.R.E.'46) of Willow Springs, NC, died June 6, 2012. †

**Jean (John) Abel** (Th.M.'47) of Manosque Alpes, France, died June 7, 2012. †

**William Howard Kryder** (B.D.'48) of Anniston, AL, died March 16, 2012. †

**Zane Ross** (UTS 1947-'49) of Richmond, VA, died April 12, 2012. †

**Robert C. Vaughan, Jr.** (B.D.'49) of Midlothian, VA, died April 23, 2012. †

**1950** ■

**Henry Middleton "Middy" Raynal** (B.D.'50) of Harrisonburg, VA, died May 21, 2012. †

**Daniel Rees Thomas, Jr.** (B.D.'50) of Brunswick, GA, died April 29, 2012. †

**Emma Jane McAtee Patterson** (M.R.E.'52) of Memphis, TN, died April 10, 2012. †

**Alfred Amin Saleeby** (B.D.'52) of Troutman, NC, died December 1, 2011. †

**June Mansour Ingram** (M.R.E.'53) of Leesburg, FL, died September 11, 2012. †

**Sherrill Hawkins Todd** (M.C.E.'59) of Richmond, VA, died April 11, 2012. †

**Carolyn Cathey Voye** (M.C.E.'59) of Palmetto, FL, died June 30, 2012. †

**1960** ■

**L.M. Allison** (Th.D.'60) of Due West, SC, died June 13, 2012. †

**John Ashenfelder** (Th.M.'60) of Suffolk, VA, died April 14, 2012. †

**Roy K. Patteson, Jr.** (B.D.'61) of Harrisonburg, VA, died August 30, 2012. †

**J. Layton Mauzé III** (B.D.'62) of Waynesville, NC, died June 7, 2012. †

**Sheldon A. Tostengard** (Th.M.'62) of Roseville, MN, died April 29, 2012. †

**James H. Grant, Jr.** (M.Div.'63) of Tazewell, VA, died September 16, 2012. †

**Robert Scovel Wells** (M.Div.'63) of Harrisonburg, VA, died June 18, 2012. †

**James Robert Dellert** (M.Div.'66) of Forest, VA, died August 1, 2012. †

**Wayne Hamilton Wiley** (Th.M.'66) of Lynchburg, VA, died May 31, 2012. †

**James M. Hovland** (M.Div.'67) of Glencoe, NM, died September 11, 2012. †

**Elizabeth Ann Mahler** (M.C.E.'68) of Lynchburg, VA, died June 19, 2012. †

**William S. Morris** (M.Div.'68; D.Min.'76) of Kilmarnock, VA, died August 3, 2012. †

**1970** ■

**William Emory Elmore II** (D.Min.'74) of Madisonville, LA, died May 20, 2012. †

**Robert W. Ratchford** (D.Min.'74) of Richmond, VA, died September 23, 2012. †

**C. Santana Krishnan** (UTS 1974-'75) of Cincinnati, OH, died January 3, 2012. †

**Leontine Turpeau Current Kelly** (M.Div.'76) of Oakland, CA, died June 28, 2012. †

**Charles D. Walters** (PSCE 1979) of Gloucester Point, VA, died July 25, 2012. †

**1980** ■

**Anne Goodpaster Wilson Batte** (M.A.'85) of New Minas, Nova Scotia, Canada, died June 6, 2012. †

**Harriett Gene Houston Cale** (M.Div.'87) of Baton Rouge, LA, died July 4, 2012. †

**1990** ■

**William Frank Daniels** (M.Div.'94) of Raeford, NC, died June 29, 2012. †

**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 [lmclintock@upsem.edu](mailto:lmclintock@upsem.edu).**

*This issue of Focus includes information received through September 24, 2012.*

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February 25-27, 2013

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March 9-10, 2013

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focus



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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE —

- *The ministry of a community witness called home to serve*
- *The role of community witness in relation to the new curriculum*
- *“The Formation,” the last of a four-part series celebrating the seminary’s history*



**Richard Boyce, associate professor of preaching and pastoral leadership at the Charlotte campus, serves communion during the 2012 Union Presbyterian Seminary Convocation.**