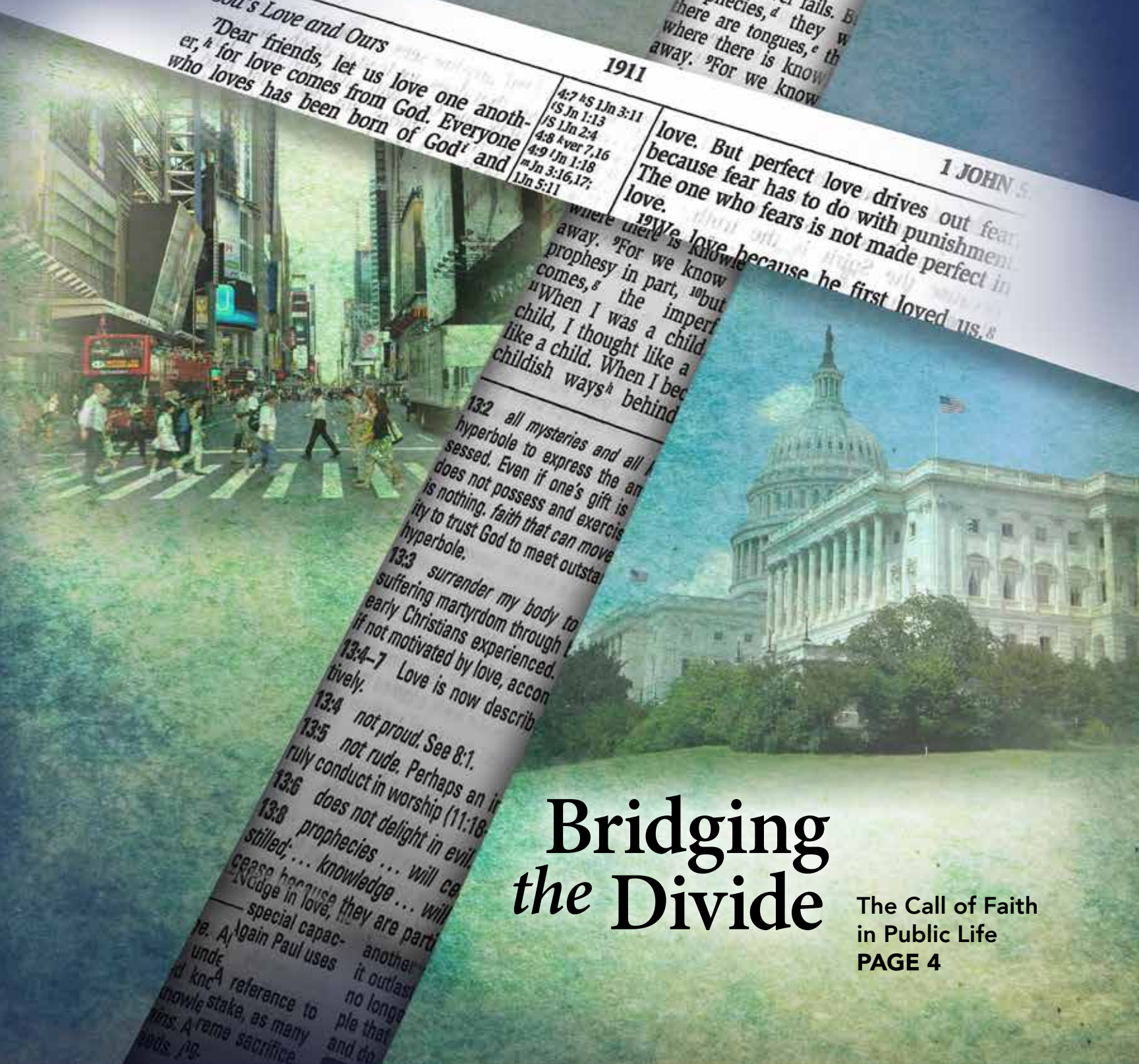


# Chimes

San Francisco Theological Seminary Magazine  
SPRING 2018



1 CORINTHIANS 13:2

<sup>a</sup>Love is patient, <sup>b</sup>love  
not envy, it does not  
proud, <sup>w</sup>It is not rud  
seeking, <sup>x</sup>it is not ea  
keeps no record of wr  
not delight in evil<sup>a</sup> but  
truth, <sup>b</sup>It always f  
trusts, always hopes,  
veres, <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Love never fails. B  
prophecies, <sup>d</sup>they w  
there are tongues, <sup>e</sup>th  
where there is know  
away. <sup>f</sup>For we know

*God's Love and Ours*  
<sup>1</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another,  
<sup>2</sup>for love comes from God. Everyone  
<sup>3</sup>who loves has been born of God<sup>1</sup> and

1911

4:7 <sup>a</sup>S 1Jn 3:11  
<sup>b</sup>S Jn 1:13  
<sup>c</sup>S 1Jn 2:4  
4:8 <sup>d</sup>ver 7,16  
4:9 1Jn 1:18  
<sup>e</sup>1Jn 3:16,17;  
1Jn 5:11

love. But perfect love drives out fear,  
because fear has to do with punishment.  
The one who fears is not made perfect in  
love.  
<sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us.<sup>8</sup>

1 JOHN 5:

where <sup>19</sup>we love because he first loved us.<sup>8</sup>  
away. <sup>20</sup>For we know  
prophecy in part, <sup>10</sup>but  
comes, <sup>8</sup>the imperf  
<sup>11</sup>When I was a child,  
child, I thought like a  
like a child. When I bec  
childish ways<sup>h</sup> behind

13:2 all mysteries and all  
hyperbole to express the an  
sessed. Even if one's gift is  
does not possess and exercis  
is nothing. *faith that can move*  
ity to trust God to meet outsta  
hyperbole.

13:3 surrender my body to  
suffering martyrdom through  
early Christians experienced.  
13:4-7 Love is now describ  
tively.

13:4 not proud. See 8:1.  
13:5 not rude. Perhaps an i  
ruly conduct in worship (11:18)

13:6 does not delight in evil.  
13:8 prophecies ... will ce  
stilled; ... knowledge ... will

cease because they are part  
Judge in love, <sup>11</sup>  
special capac-

Again Paul uses  
te. Al

unde  
A reference to  
knowle  
stake, as many  
ins. Areme sacrifice  
and do

## Bridging the Divide

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in Public Life  
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Moiso, Larry Pickard, Wilderness  
Torah, Ashley Pogue, Ashley Reid,  
Justin Sullivan/Getty Images



Dear Friends,

When I came to SFTS seven years ago, Dean Beth Liebert asked me how I wanted to designate myself as professor. I was startled by the request. “You mean I can choose what I want to call myself?” I asked. It was an intriguing, intimidating assignment.

How would I define myself as a faculty member of a Presbyterian seminary? I’m not sure exactly how I decided, but I chose “Professor of Faith & Public Life.” That seemed to me the closest approximation to what I had actually been doing with my life in ministry since ordination. For 36 years

I had been seeking to bring my life into a faithful engagement with the world, taking my faith beyond the walls of Sunday morning worship into the swirl of life in a global community.

Since choosing that professorial designation, I have explored the ways that the world has been thinking about faith and public life. I’ve learned that:

- ✚ Rev. Dr. Bryan Hehir is the Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life at Harvard University. He is also Secretary for Health and Social Services for the Archdiocese of Boston. His research and writing focus on ethics and foreign policy and the role of religion in world politics and in American society.
- ✚ Rev. Jennifer Butler, a PCUSA minister, is the founding Executive Director of the nonprofit Faith in Public Life and the former Chair of the White House Council on Faith and Neighborhood Partnerships. Before leading FPL, Jennifer spent 10 years working in the field of international human rights representing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the United Nations.
- ✚ Dr. Richard Mouw, who served as president of Fuller Theological Seminary for 20 years, remains at the school as Professor of Faith & Public Life. His most recent book was *Adventures in Evangelical Civility: A Lifelong Quest for Common Ground*.

These are just a few of the ways that people of faith have sought to express it in the public arena. I am also a fan of Krista Tippett, a Yale Divinity School graduate. As her website says, “Krista saw a black hole where intelligent conversation about the religious, spiritual, and moral aspects of human life might be.” In 2003, she launched *Speaking of Faith*—later *On Being*—as a weekly national public radio show.” (You can check it out at [onbeing.org](http://onbeing.org).)

In this new, re-imagined format for *Chimes* you will find a number of articles that explore how various people are finding their own avenues for taking their Christian faith into the public square in order to make a difference. I hope you like what you encounter in the pages that follow.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Dr. James L. McDonald  
President and Professor of Faith & Public Life



# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

## Chimes

SPRING 2018

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*Chimes* is a biannual publication of San Francisco Theological Seminary (105 Seminary Road, San Anselmo, California, 94960, 415.451.2800), a nonprofit corporation conducting a theological seminary solely consecrated to educating persons for the offices and work of Christian service. *Chimes* is distributed without charge to alumni/ae, pastors, friends, and constituents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Total circulation is 6,000 and we also offer *Chimes* online. SFTS does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, color, physical disability, or national and ethnic origin in its educational programs, student activities, employment, admission policies, in the administration of its scholarship and loan programs, or in any other school-administered programs. This policy complies with the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service Procedure 321-1, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments as amended and enforced by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

# The Call of Faith in Public Life

## BRIDGING

By Rev. Dr. James  
L. McDonald

*President and Professor  
of Faith & Public Life*



### Christian Faith is a Public Faith

**W**hen I read the Bible, I see a history of a people, a public. I see a story that pays attention to the rulers of nations and the relationships among the nations. I read a book that tries to set out how citizens should treat one another and how they should treat foreigners and aliens. I read a book that talks about the quality of relationships among people, the way an economy should care for those who are poor, hungry, widowed, orphaned, vulnerable and marginalized.

And when I look at Jesus' ministry, I see that it was first and foremost a public ministry. Jesus didn't operate from a storefront church or a particular synagogue. He didn't just organize activities for his disciples. He was constantly interacting with people he had never met. He was challenging the laws of his day – the religious and political laws that governed health, food, work and commerce.

His agenda wasn't political in the sense of seeking power and authority for himself and a particular group of people. He wasn't the leader of a political party or political movement. Nor was his agenda "political" in the sense of advocating for special interests or trying to establish the dominance of a particular ideology.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:2

*Love is patient,<sup>v</sup> love  
not envy,<sup>w</sup> it does not  
proud.<sup>w</sup> <sup>5</sup>It is not rude  
seeking,<sup>x</sup> it is not eas  
keeps no record of wro  
not delight in evil<sup>a</sup> but  
truth.<sup>b</sup> <sup>7</sup>It always  
trusts, always hopes  
veres.<sup>c</sup>*

*<sup>6</sup>Love never fails. By  
prophecies,<sup>d</sup> they  
there are tongues,<sup>e</sup> t  
where there is know  
away. <sup>9</sup>For we know  
prophecy in part,<sup>10</sup>  
comes,<sup>8</sup> the im  
When I was a c  
child, I thought lik  
like a child. When  
childish ways<sup>h</sup> be*

*13:2 all mysteries are  
hyperbole to express  
sessed. Even if one's  
does not possess any  
is nothing. faith that  
ity to trust God to me  
hyperbole.*

*13:3 surrender my  
suffering martyrdom  
early Christians ex  
suffering called by*

But Jesus's agenda was, and continues to be, very much political in its challenge to the social, economic, and political structures that reward the powerful, the wealthy, and those with high social status at the expense of those who are politically weak, economically poor, and socially disregarded or unjustly treated as human beings. In every sense, Jesus's ministry was a public ministry that extended beyond the individual, beyond the tribe, beyond a particular community, to the entire world.

And beyond his earthly life, Jesus's death and resurrection established a New Creation, God's gift of love to the entire world. And Jesus's ascension and his gift of the Holy Spirit to his disciples were God's way of empowering the Church, the Body of Christ, to continue to evoke and manifest the New Creation established in and through Jesus Christ. This is why the ministry of the Church of Jesus Christ is profoundly public.

What is "public life"? The word in English comes from the Latin *populus*, which means simply "people." In English, "public" is the opposite of "private." Private derives from the Latin *privus*, which means a single individual. So, in general, "public" means those things that affect the entire population. They are civic matters, matters of governance, of the economy, of politics. They are things of general interest to most people. Broadly speaking, public has to do with the things that shape our common life, our life together.

So much of what churches in the United States do is not public. It is probably best described not as private, but as parochial. Parochial means something related to a particular church district. It is limited and narrow in outlook and scope. Churches in the United States seem for the most part to be parochial in the sense that they concern themselves with their own institutional well-being and survival. They are limited in their mission and focused on the activities that will serve their own members but not necessarily their wider community, and certainly not the broader sphere of public life.

## Worship is a Way of Life

Both Jesus and the prophets make it clear that worship does not consist of a set of rituals. It doesn't consist of an hour in a sanctuary on Sunday morning. Worship is a way of life—nothing less. Praising God is a way of being. Listening for God's Word is a way of living. Attuning ourselves to the purposes of God must be a daily practice. Religious practice untethered from everyday ethical action is religious malpractice. It's a little like parents who shower their child with toys and smart phones and computers and stuff, but who fail to show up for their birthdays, their graduations, their sporting events, their piano recitals, and maybe even dinner most evenings.

The prophet Micah succinctly summarized what pleases God (6:6-8): "Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God." Biblically speaking, justice is not about being arrested, tried by judges and juries in a courtroom, and paying a fine or going to jail if you're found guilty. It's not about upholding man-made laws or "serving your time if you do the crime."

Biblical justice is about honoring God's law of love for all humanity. It's about repairing relationships that have become distorted, broken, lopsided, unfair, and damaging to the human spirit and the dignity of each and every person. It's about ending slavery, breaking the yoke of oppression, lifting the downtrodden, releasing the captives, breaking down barriers, sharing resources, valuing diversity, and creating the beloved community.

God's standard of justice should inform, reform, and transform the values that shape our corporate life—our public policies, our laws, our local, state, and federal budgets, and the openness, fairness, and accountability of our political system for the general welfare and the common good. It tells us that our national character should be tested and measured

by the degree to which we, as citizens and communities, care for the least, the lost, and the lonely, the people on the margins, the vulnerable, the persecuted, the disregarded, the stranger.

If justice is about the character of our relationships, including our systems and structures, kindness and mercy are about the personal qualities we bring to our relationships, the humanity we exhibit in our dealings with family and friends, as well as neighbors near and far.

To love mercy is to love those who have never had a break, where the cards are always stacked against them. It's to love—to open our hearts and our arms to embrace those who have been treated harshly, ignored, forgotten, discounted, abused—the immigrant, the Muslim, the Jew, the African American, the Latino, the Asian, the poor and the hungry. It's about honoring all people, no matter their circumstance.

Kindness and mercy are linked to the idea that we should give people the benefit of the doubt. We should be slow to anger, and even slower to judge others. Mercy is about giving people a second chance. It's about forgiveness, about not holding grudges, about wiping the slate clean and appealing to our better angels, in ourselves and others. If we love kindness, we will treat people with the same regard we ourselves want to be treated. Fully embraced, mercy is about loving our enemies.

What does it mean to walk humbly with our God? Is there any other way to walk with God? To walk with God is to admit that we cannot make the world a better place on our own. We need the Spirit of God at work in us, as it was in Jesus Christ. As individuals, I think it means that we have to open our hearts, or perhaps let God break open our hearts in order to make room for the love of God.

But I believe, in keeping with the public nature of our faith, that walking humbly with God is about the importance of living in community and learning to live faithfully in community. No one can really abide living in a community unless one also learns humility. Humility is about valuing the diversity of the human race. It's about appreciating the various gifts that each of us brings, the differences in perspective and ways of seeing the world, the beauty of the diversity to be found and savored in God's marvelous creation.

To walk humbly with God means a life of prayer, means observing the world with a sense of wonder and awe, means

*"Do justice, love kindness,  
walk humbly with God."*

—Micah 6:6-8



listening with the ears of our ears to what people say. It means engagement with communities, not because we can find comfort, affirmation, and support for our prejudices, narrow-mindedness, ignorance, and fears. But because in communities we truly learn what it means to be created in the unimaginably magnificent and utterly incomprehensible image of God in all its grace and glory.

### The Biblical Concept of Jubilee

The Book of Leviticus calls for a year of Jubilee every 50 years (Leviticus 25). People who have lost their land or liberty because of heavy debts are to be freed from this burden. They get their land, and their livelihood, back. Everyone gets a fresh start. The Year of Jubilee is set by counting off “seven Sabbaths of years,” or seven times seven years. The fiftieth year, then, is the Year of Jubilee (25:8-10). It’s a time of rest, of restoration, and of liberation. The land lies fallow. Each Israelite returns to his ancestral land and to his clan. Debts are forgiven, slaves are freed, and land is returned and redistributed within the community. So, if someone has fallen on hard times and is forced to sell his land or even himself to pay off debts, the sale is not permanent. Both land and people are set free in the Year of Jubilee.

Jubilee is a recognition that societies, even societies that operate with a religious foundation, become distorted and unjust over time. The concept of Jubilee recognizes that, despite our best efforts, our social and economic relationships become unfair and slanted over time. The Biblical principle of Jubilee provides a corrective, a fresh start. It is a reminder that we are one human family, each precious, all interdependent. When enacted, Jubilee frees us from the destructive effects of political domination and economic injustice and restores to all a sense of dignity and humanity.

But here’s the kicker: in ancient times the Year of Jubilee seems never to have been observed. As positive a concept as it was, spiritually speaking, there seemed always to be a reason to pass it by. Those in power thought it foolish to loosen their grip, even for a year. Freeing slaves and returning land to the landless seemed only to encourage social and political chaos. It seemed to be a disincentive to those who had worked hard for what they owned. Those who lent money were worried that by canceling debts they might be setting a dangerous precedent—encouraging what the financial community calls



“moral hazard,” the sense that you are rewarding and encouraging bad behavior on the part of borrowers. “I paid my debts,” they said. “So should everyone else.”

So, the more people thought about the concept of Jubilee, the more absurd and counterproductive it seemed. Societies work best, they said, when they are based on hard work, meeting obligations, taking responsibility for our actions, respecting law, and fulfilling contracts. Nonetheless, Jesus begged to differ with this conclusion.

### Jesus and Jubilee

In Luke 4, Jesus begins his public ministry with a Jubilee proclamation. He goes to the synagogue, is given the book of Isaiah, and rises to read: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” (61:1-2)

This is a kind of inaugural address, setting forth the vision and program for Jesus’ life and ministry. Biblical scholarship has helped us understand that this inaugural address was a Jubilee proclamation. Proclaiming good news to the poor, release to the captives, the recovery of sight to the blind, and the “acceptable year of the Lord” were all references to the year of Jubilee.

So, what was Jesus doing proclaiming Jubilee? Luke wants to show that the concept of Jubilee is the very essence of Jesus’ ministry. This is not an aspect of his ministry. It is not tangential or peripheral. It is the message, the main point. The notion of the need to restore “right relationships” among people and with the earth is at the center of what Jesus not only taught but lived and died to bring about.

Proclaiming Jubilee is what Jesus did for us: forgiveness of sin, of debt, of trespasses. The reconciliation of a broken world. The gift of a new kind of life, eternal life. That’s Jubilee. And Jubilee is what Jesus expects us to proclaim, in turn, as his disciples.

The call to live out our faith in the public square and demonstrate our faith in God through actions that serve and benefit the common good is, I believe, the essence of what it means to follow Christ as his disciple. Strictly speaking, it is not simply a call to action, however. It is rather a call to worship in a way that pleases God and serves God’s mission of reconciling the world in spirit and in truth. ✚

# LOVE LIVES IN MARIN

## *Moving from Apathy to Empathy*

By Ashley Reid

*Love Lives in Marin Intern, MDiv Student*

**E**MPATHY is much larger than having the capacity to emotionally connect and care for the suffering of others; it's a call to action. *Love Lives in Marin* is an initiative of the Marin Interfaith Council that is calling the citizens of Marin County to get serious about being a space of radical welcome and inclusion.

*Love Lives Here* is a Montana non-profit organization based in Whitefish, and is committed to co-creating a caring, open, accepting and diverse community, free from discrimination and dedicated to equal treatment for all citizens. Inspired by their work on a recent visit, Rabbi Susan Leider of Congregation Kol Shofar brought the concept back to Marin, creating *Love Lives in Marin* (LLIM). LLIM nurtures a positive, welcoming environment in Marin, and cultivates a culture of love throughout the county that reshapes our public discourse. It aspires to rise above the fray, and speak with—and for—those whose voices are overshadowed and marginalized.

MARGINALIZATION is a term we hear a lot currently, but what exactly does it mean in our daily efforts to be inclusive? Marginalization indicates mistreatment, a lowering of status, a dismissal of human value. It also means to be misrepresented. This can include being labeled, stereotyped, profiled, discriminated against, and more. On the surface, you hear Marin County being described as liberal and progressive but within smaller communities another narrative of marginalization exists.

A total of 2.8 percent of the Marin County demographic is Black/African-American as of July 2016, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. When I moved to San Anselmo in the Fall of 2016 to start seminary, I didn't expect to be hit with so much culture shock. As a New Jersey native, black woman, and previous resident of North Carolina, I thought I was well versed in immersing myself into new places. When I arrived in San Anselmo, I didn't expect to feel the magnitude of my blackness the way I did. Leaving my old car behind in New Jersey, I was forced to walk and use public transportation again. Every day I experienced some kind of staring, sneering, and blatant body language that told me I didn't belong. I found myself asking, "is this really California?" Things got harder. I struggled to find employment that suited a full-time student schedule. The constant suggestions of babysitting drove me nuts because I couldn't visualize



myself babysitting for the same families that grabbed their children when walking past me on the street. My anxiety skyrocketed, and I found my depression setting in again. That fall semester I was diagnosed with Celiac disease after

losing 10lbs. from not being able to digest anything solid.

ISOLATION is what I felt. Outside of the few friends I made through school, I felt no sense of community, no grounding, no connection. I felt like I was in the twilight zone, because my physical cries for help and community were met with blind apathy; the kind of apathy that was complacent with having signs and statements of inclusion at the door, but still left me feeling empty and unwelcomed when I actually entered into these spaces. This feeling of unwelcome and mistreatment almost convinced me I didn't belong here, and it was time for me to leave. It was right in this phase of giving up that I came across the Marin Interfaith Council (MIC).

AUTHENTICITY is what I immediately felt when I walked through the doors to interview with the staff at MIC. What I saw as an opportunity to be financially stable in an unstable time for me became the door that I needed open to feel like I mattered. I found a community that made me feel like I was visible and included. What became a way for me to provide for myself financially, also gave way to a community that helps me care for myself mentally and spiritually. My experiences, joy, sadness, and suffering became the concern of those around me. I was no longer obligated to face these issues alone; I knew I had other people that genuinely cared about my well-being.

WHY DOES LLIM MATTER? Just like me, there are plenty of other people, families, and communities that experience the daily fight of declaring their value. Stories like mine are not rare, and that should bother people. It should disturb the comfort and complacency of Marin residents so much that it shifts them from a place of apathy to active empathy. While *Love Lives in Marin* seeks to celebrate the spaces of love and inclusion already in existence, we also aim to uphold the realities of those who do not have the luxury of feeling welcomed and included. This initiative is more than just a seminary internship for me, it's the opportunity for me do the active work of helping to challenge and change these exclusive behaviors and spaces. It's not just a social media campaign, it is the opportunity for residents to hear the personal stories of mistreatment and isolation, and change their individual and communal behaviors that contribute to this toxic narrative. The only people that can change our communities are the ones living in it. Love and inclusion in Marin won't matter until we make it a priority enough to matter. ✚

**JOIN** this movement, **PARTICIPATE** in ways to better Marin for everyone, and **CHALLENGE** yourself to make the changes necessary to create the space for everyone to be included.

**For more information, please visit [lovelivesinmarin.org](http://lovelivesinmarin.org)**

# Preaching *in the Midst* of ENMITY

By Rev. Scott Clark  
*Associate Dean of Student Life and Chaplain*

When I was first asked to write on this topic, it was for a blog series titled “Preaching Across The Divide(s).” As I worked with that theme, I let the metaphor at the heart of it become a vision. In that vision, I see a church with a broad and spacious aisle splitting the sanctuary. On the right, we see those who are, well, on the right—those who are politically and/or religiously conservative, in different degree and manner. On the left, we have, well, those on the left. We preach to each other... across the aisle, across the divide. Those on the left preach to—or at—those on the right. Those on the right return the favor, each side doing our level best to offer our most articulate and heartfelt good news. No matter how many times I conjure this image, it always descends into a verbal brawl.

Like every good metaphor, this theme offers a glimpse of something that is *and* of something that is not. This vision, in one sense, is who we are. We are a nation divided, a church divided, a community divided. You can substitute pretty much any collective noun; we are divided. We tend to stay on our own side of the aisle. We tend to preach at the other (tend to, not always).

And, at the very same time, this is not who we are—this is not really what real life looks like. Rarely are the sides so well-defined and maintained, even in fairly polarized and segregated churches. In the whole of life, we are more often all mixed up with each other with shades and degrees of right and left throughout. More often, we are in the midst of each other—with all this differing opinion, differently articulated values (perhaps contradictory values), and disagreement, swirling around. More often, we stand in the midst of each other.

## **So how do we preach there? In the midst?**

In the first iteration of this vision, I stand on the left side of the aisle. I am a gay, progressive, Presbyterian, Democrat, activist and preacher, living in the San Francisco Bay Area. I am white, cis-male, and middle-class. I serve as Chaplain and Associate Dean of Student Life at San Francisco Theological Seminary, a seminary that leans progressive and that is part of an ecumenical consortium of seminaries. I preach in our seminary chapel worship services (where the congregation tends progressive), and

*We are  
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a church divided,  
a community  
divided.  
You can substitute  
pretty much any  
collective noun;  
we are divided.  
We tend to stay on  
our own side of the  
aisle. We tend to  
preach at the  
other (tend to,  
not always).*



THE  
BRIDGING  
DIVIDE



*I am from  
Alabama;  
I have  
two degrees  
from the  
University of  
Alabama; I love  
pulled-pork  
barbecue; and I  
watch Alabama  
football every  
autumn Saturday.  
Everyone else in  
my family, except  
my husband and  
three cousins, is  
Republican.  
We agree on  
some things,  
and we disagree on  
others. And, we  
are ever  
in the midst  
of each other.*

also in local Bay Area churches (where the congregations vary). As part of my ministry, I also advocate for the full inclusion and rights of LGBTQI people and our families in the life of the church and the world, and for other progressive justice issues. And, at the same time, I am from Alabama; I have two degrees from the University of Alabama; I love pulled-pork barbecue; and I watch Alabama football every autumn Saturday. Everyone else in my family, except my husband and three cousins, is Republican. We agree on some things, and we disagree on others. And, we are ever in the midst of each other.

The 2016 election hit me hard. With the inauguration of this President, I see many of the things that I value most in deadly peril: the rights and freedom of LGBTQI people and our families; protections for transgender people; work toward undoing America's 400-year-long plague of white supremacy and racism; welcoming the stranger in our midst; inclusion; justice; peace. For much of my adult life, I have been in the midst of disagreement, but never before like this. Not long after the election, I stopped short when I realized that I could not find a way to pray for our President. For someone who professes and advocates the dignity of all people, that was an integrity-challenging debility.

About the same time, the lectionary rolled around with this Gospel text: "You have heard it said, 'Love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, 'Love your enemy, and pray for those who persecute you.'" And so, I took on the challenge of that text—that Jesus command—in my day-to-day walk and (perhaps sooner than I was ready) in my preaching. As I did, my first discovery was that I had enemies, or at least that I finally recognized that I did. For the first sermon I preached, I floated a definition of enemy as "someone who stands in opposition to the well-being of another," and I used three categories to frame my thinking. For the purposes of this topic and essay, we could just as easily use the definition, "someone who is opposed to another."

Here's my topology:

**FIRST**, there are those we identify as enemy, whether they know it or not, whether they intend it or not. These are folks who get under my skin, or whom I have named as opposition—whether or not they have ever

thought of me, or done anything to harm me. In my mind and heart, I place us on opposite sides of the divide. The next two categories break along lines of power and privilege.

**SECOND**, there are those who oppose us, whether we know it or not, whether we intend it or not. I began the ordination process at a time when the PCUSA did not openly allow the ordination of openly gay ministers. There were those who opposed my ordination—and my marriage—without me engaging them at all, and they had power and privilege to do so.

**AND THEN THIRD**, if we are honest, there are all the ways that we stand in opposition to others, whether we intend it or not. We need to acknowledge all the ways that we are enemy to others. For me, this makes me acknowledge and inventory all the ways that I am complicit in systems of oppression—the ways, for example, that I participate in American systems infected by white supremacy. Whether I intend it or not, I am standing in opposition to the well-being of another.

And with this sorting and naming, what I came to see was this intricate web of broken relationships—all the ways that we oppose (collectively and individually) the well-being of each other, all the ways that we oppose God's desire for the well-being of everyone—through our participation in systems of oppression, through our complicity, through our own daily action, through our silence. And all the ways that others do that to us. In terms of preaching, we could all very well be in the same congregation together in any given preaching moment.

### **How do we preach, or even live, in the midst of that?**

In my first attempt at a love-your-enemy sermon (and in my early self-work this year), I could muster three timid suggestions (what I called "the least we can do.") First, following a pair of Buddhist thinkers: If we aren't quite ready to love our enemy, perhaps we can begin by just not hating. Second, in terms of "praying for those who persecute you," the very least we can do is pray for their humanity, that today they will have food and shelter and love and dignity. And third, we don't stop praying—and proclaiming—justice, and/but we can broaden that prayer to pray that God will show us both/all how to engage and move the world toward

*"You have heard it said, 'Love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'  
But I say to you, 'Love your enemy, and pray for those  
who persecute you.'"*

justice, freedom, and peace (acknowledging our own responsibility to move forward together).

But this is a piece on preaching. So in the months that follow (and with this writing assignment), here is how I have translated this into additional exegetical and homiletic steps in my preaching and writing—some thoughts for preaching in the midst of enmity:

- ✚ What is the core message that is arising out of this Scripture, and how am I proclaiming this clearly and courageously, without shirking away? That for me is the starting place. Even in a context that is fraught and in the midst of enmity and division, it's not an option to sit down and shut up. As a gay man, I have sat in far too many sermons or rooms where someone shirked away from proclaiming clearly that gay people are fully human and loved by God because they were too concerned about offending or stirring up this great divide. Those sermons dehumanized me. In my preaching, I need discipline not to do that to others—not to shirk away from saying truths that might help liberate marginalized people in the room, or in the world.
- ✚ With that commitment in place, what am I then doing to also create space for someone who might disagree to listen, to see themselves in the story, and to engage and perhaps change? What am I doing to engage them in conversation, rather than preaching at or to them—across the divide? This, for me, is related to the commitment to, at the very least, recognize the dignity of those with whom I disagree. As I've explored that this year, at times I have just named the disagreement—without necessarily creating moral equivalency if I don't think there is such, but at the very least candidly naming the divide(s). In one sermon, when engaging the President's order temporarily banning refugees, I named our constitutional right to vote in different ways, and then distinguished the clarity and unanimity across Scripture of the command to welcome the stranger. No matter how someone had voted, I hoped to offer room to get on board with welcoming the stranger.

- ✚ What am I doing to honor the dignity of the other, the opponent, the one who may be across the divide(s)? Among other things, for me, this involves the discipline of watching my rhetoric to avoid name-calling. In a recent sermon on our responsibility to hold power accountable, in my next-to-last draft, I finally deleted the word "henchmen" in reference to certain public officials. What is sobering for me is that it survived to the next-to-last draft. I can't do that (let my rhetoric range toward personal attack) if I am honoring the practice of praying for the humanity of the other—praying that, today, they will experience dignity.
- ✚ How am I inviting myself and others (all others) to engage in the work of the gospel of Jesus Christ—the work of compassion, healing, justice, and peace? J. Alfred Smith, Sr., says that a sermon isn't finished until we've given people "something to do." As I try to create space for us both/all to listen, am I also offering concrete actions that anyone can take, wherever they fall along the divide(s)? Is there a shared work we can join in?
- ✚ And, perhaps most effectively for me, I imagine my family in the room. Remember when I said that everyone (but five of us) in my family is Republican? I imagine them in the congregation. I love them. Do I think they would be able to hear what I am saying? Am I honoring their humanity? Am I being faithful to the religious convictions that they know I have—and that they have come to expect in me? Would we be able to continue in conversation after the worship service? This final question and practice, for me, embodies the task and the question and the challenge and makes it real. And I think, that after a lot of words, in this last bullet point, I have found my point and my practice: In the midst of enmity and divide(s), what are we doing to make sure that we are preaching in love? ✚

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*This article has been adapted from the blog Ecclesio,  
[www.ecclesio.com/2017/10/preachingmidst-enmity-scott-clark/](http://www.ecclesio.com/2017/10/preachingmidst-enmity-scott-clark/)*

By Rev. Aimee Moiso, *SFTS Trustee, MDiv 2006*



The musical *Fiddler on the Roof* tells the story of Tevye, a Russian Jewish milkman with five daughters. As Tevye's three older daughters grow into adulthood, they question the norms of marriage and family. The first two daughters resist traditionally-arranged matches and ask to marry for love, even when that means poverty or moving away from home and family. Tevye weighs the decisions heavily, eventually giving in to the desires of his daughters out of love for them, despite the tension with his beliefs. When his third daughter, Chava, expresses her hope to marry an Orthodox Christian, Tevye cannot acquiesce. Having flexed and changed for his first two daughters, he anguishes over his love for his third daughter and faithfulness to God. In prayer, he considers the cost of turning his back on his faith and his people. "If I try to bend that far, I will break," he confesses. When he discovers Chava has married the young man in secret, he tells his wife, "We have other children at home. You have work to do, I have work to do. Chava is dead to us. We will forget her."

## ON BENDING, BREAKING & STANDING TALL

Tevye's choices are set in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Russia amid simmering revolution and Jewish persecution. By the end of the musical, Tevye's entire village is broken up by a pogrom. As various families leave to seek fresh beginnings in other places, they ask what they should (quite literally) take with them and what they must leave behind.

Especially in times of dramatic change and turmoil, the choices of maintaining tradition or bending to newness weigh even more heavily, because what seem to matter most—community, ritual, boundaries, family, safety—are exactly the things being challenged from within and without. When the ground is shaking beneath our feet, how do we choose what to cling to, what to defend, and what to let go?

The fraught and divided political climate of the United States is not a perfect parallel to the violent upheaval of revolutionary Russia. Yet the questions of yielding to stiff winds blowing in all directions, shifting and changing to accommodate that which is strange and new, and grasping with both hands that which we hold dear, feel painfully familiar. In recent months, I have had multiple conversations with people who are dramatically at odds with family and friends over U.S. politics. Some have tacitly agreed to avoid controversial topics at the dinner table, while others have been driven to no longer speak to each other at all. Political beliefs suddenly seem completely entwined with who we are,

who we see ourselves to be, and what we believe about others: from racial identity and prejudice to gender equality and expression to patriotism and nationalism to religious conviction and freedom.

For preachers (and their hearers), weekly sermons have become a daunting reality. Church communities are frequently as divided as the society around them, but comprised of disciples trying to live lives of shared, faithful witness. In many of our congregations, those words—shared and faithful—are two of the hardest to keep together, because what we believe to be faithful might be precisely the thing we do not share, and might be precisely the thing about which we vehemently disagree. Throughout our history, when differences could not be reconciled, we in the Reformed tradition often picked faithful over shared and separated over our disparate beliefs—not unlike Tevye. Change pushes him to the breaking point, and he comes to believe that faithfulness to God requires severing his relationship with his daughter.

## PREACHING ACROSS THE DIVIDES

In our season of national upheaval, many of the questions before us as Christians have to do with bending, breaking, and standing tall. Where are we who follow Christ called to flex, to open wider and broaden our thinking? Where are we called to draw a line, to say, “No, this is not who we are”? Is it more faithful to try preserving an uneasy or shallow veneer of relationship across our divisions, or to take an uncompromising stand that further deepens our division? What are the consequences of being too inclusive, or too conclusive?

Perhaps, as we preach—and reach—across the divides, “faithful” need not always be pitted against “shared.” There might be something faithful about not being resigned to division. We are to love God and our neighbors and our enemies. As we grieve existing alienation, we can leave our hearts open to the possibility that something someday may transcend what separates us, and we can resist closing ourselves to that possibility. Maybe standing tall, bending, and being broken don’t have to be distinct choices, but three simultaneous ways we creatively respond to God among us: bending in some places but prepared to stand tall, standing tall while recognizing the costs of being broken, and breaking where we know God can make healing and regrowth possible. ✚

*This article has been adapted from the blog Ecclesio, [www.ecclesio.com/2017/10/bending-breaking-standing-tall-preaching-across-divides-aimee-moiso/](http://www.ecclesio.com/2017/10/bending-breaking-standing-tall-preaching-across-divides-aimee-moiso/)*

# HOWE STILL STANDS

By Laila Weir

Days after the outbreak of wildfires that would devastate vast stretches of northern California's wine country, David and Maureen Behrs were volunteering in a temporary shelter for displaced people in Sonoma County. The couple lived in the area and volunteered in the shelter after work, mostly alongside neighbors and people from nearby communities.

Right: A sign is posted outside Cline Cellars on October 13, 2017 in Sonoma, CA.

Photo by Justin Sullivan/Getty Images



THE LOVE IN THE AIR  
IS THICKER  
THAN THE SMOKE

LOVE sculpture at Paradise Ridge Winery in Santa Rosa, CA becomes a symbol of hope after the wildfires.



Peter Byck

And then there was the trucker from Colorado. He was supposed to be just passing through, but he couldn't leave. "He was so impacted by what he saw, he parked his truck, slept in his cab, came into the shelter and worked all day," recalls Behrs, who is SFTS's Vice President of Enrollment Management and now a third-year MDiv student.

This man was a stranger from a swing state in blue California, a trucker driving through an area where billionaires and wine elite exist alongside migrant workers and struggling families. But none of those divisions mattered in the face of the life-and-death devastation. "Nobody cared where you came from," says Behrs. "It was really a community coming together, regardless of their station in life."

Behrs was among many members of the SFTS community, and the wider Presbyterian community, to extend help during the last year's widespread natural disasters. In the process of taking their faith into the real world—what Behrs calls "true street ministry"—many witnessed a bridging of divides that gave them renewed hope. "It gave you a little more faith in this country and the core values that make us so strong," comments Behrs.

One group joined an effort to minister to northern California fire evacuees returning to their homes—or what remained of them—for the first time. The group consisted of seminary president Rev. Dr. Jim McDonald, his wife Rev. Dr. Dean McDonald, Associate Dean of Student Life and Chaplain Rev. Scott Clark, and alumna Julie Barnes, a teacher at Marin Academy, spiritual director and wilderness guide.

With the other volunteers, they were among the first people back into burned-out neighborhoods that were closed and secured by armed guards with tanks to prevent looters. They walked the streets of Santa Rosa, offering supplies and a listening ear to returning residents. "It was just huge tanks and empty plots of land, with some chaplains wandering around," says Barnes.

Jim McDonald recalls the destruction with a vividness he says continues to haunt him: "It was like a bombed-out area: nothing left standing, or odd things left standing—one wall or a chimney."

McDonald describes one scene that captured the moment for him. Several adults were raking through the remains of a house for whatever they could salvage, while their elderly mother just sat in their midst, staring blankly into the rubble of her lost home. "In one sense, material goods don't matter," reflects McDonald. "But the table in the kitchen holds the memories of all those meals you've had together, all the conversations, that piece of what your life was at that time."

Yet even in this landscape of loss, the volunteers found evidence of resilience. "The first emotion we heard was gratitude for being alive," Barnes says of her conversations with survivors. "There were a lot of stories about what was lost, but the first story was usually about how they survived, thankfulness for that and for neighbors who helped them."

They also found a welcome reminder of commonalities in joining forces with other chaplains. The Salvation Army

organized the ministering efforts, training volunteers and providing supplies, including Salvation Army vests for the chaplains to wear. "I haven't always agreed with the Salvation Army, but it was humbling to be working with them and recognize that we were able to do this work together," reflects Barnes.

McDonald describes a similar sentiment: "We get stuck in our stereotypes from the past about various religious groups or kinds of people. Being together is when those stereotypes get destroyed, rightfully, and replaced by something much more human and humanizing."

At the emergency shelter, Behrs cited a similar humanizing effect, as the shelter drew volunteers and donors from all backgrounds and walks of life.

"There were people who were African American, Latino, Asian American, Buddhists, Catholic nuns, every tradition you could imagine," he says—and everyone set aside ideology in favor of helping others. "We had some people that were dealing with substance abuse, who came in and got a hot meal, and nobody cared. There were illegal immigrants there and nobody cared. It was just people helping people."

## Helping others in Puerto Rico

Meanwhile, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance delegates visited Puerto Rico, where local presbyteries were on the front lines of relief work after the destructive Hurricane Maria. Delegates visited a local Presbyterian church, where the pastor preached a message of hope, reports Presbyterian News Service (PNS).

"Even after 53 days of no electricity, we should be asking, 'What have I given?' instead of 'What have I received?'" PNS quotes the Rev. Arelis Cardona Morales as saying. "Our generosity makes us feel richer inside...the disaster in some ways has been a blessing. At first, we were so full of fear. But now we see this [is] an opportunity to be together to share and work together."

At another Puerto Rico church, delegates witnessed the relief efforts in full swing. "The congregation has served as a community distribution and support center, processing and distributing thousands of meals for neighbors daily," Rev. Dr. Laurie Kraus, director of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, told PNS.

"New faces are showing up in worship, having seen the face of Christ in the generosity of the congregation's members, who, in deprivation themselves, have shared what they have with open-hearted kindness," Kraus added.

PNS also reports on the disaster assistance program's work in Florida in the wake of Hurricane Irma. There, network leaders visited a poverty-ridden community of migrant farmworkers that was greatly affected by the hurricane.



"Those who are most at risk before a disaster are disproportionately impacted most often," Presbyterian Disaster Assistance official Jim Kirk told PNS. "We want to make sure they are not overlooked in the response."

## Coming to the aid of others in Montana

In Montana, where wildfires raged for two weeks and destroyed over 1.2 million acres in September last year, SFTS Trustee and local pastor Rev. Tim Lanham worked with his congregation to send funds to nearby relief efforts after wildfires ravaged swaths of the state.

Lanham's congregation sent the money to Mountain Lakes Presbyterian Church of Seeley Lake, located in a fire area. That assistance formed part of a chain of kindness that is still affecting people in need, according to Mountain Lakes Pastor Carrie Benton.

Her community received donations from far-flung sources, including a church in North Dakota that sent a truckload of supplies. "I don't think they even had any connections here," says Benton—but that congregation had survived flooding in the past and knew what it was like to need help. "They'd received such an outpouring of support from people all over the place, they paid it forward."

Now, Benton's church is on the giving end. The winter of 2017/18 has been Montana's worst in decades, and heavy snow cut off the Blackfeet Indian reservation in the north of the state, creating a humanitarian emergency. Inspired by the assistance it received during the fires, the church is raising funds to help the Blackfeet reservation. "Now our congregation wants to pay it forward," Benton says.

"There's a weird sense of trauma and uncertainty uniting people," she reflects. "You begin to see one another as human, rather than whatever other labels we had for each other before and used to separate each other. Political party divides are huge here; those things sort of dissipated for a while. We were able to reach out to the humanity in one another."

Perhaps that's what David Behrs means when he describes the "silver lining" of disaster: "This community coming together, any way they could." ✚

Cardinal Newman High School,  
Santa Rosa, CA



Gabrielle Lurie/The Chronicle

# Dancing with the Divine

By Dr. Wendy Farley,  
*Professor of Christian Spirituality, Director of the Program  
in Christian Spirituality, Rice Family Chair in Spirituality*

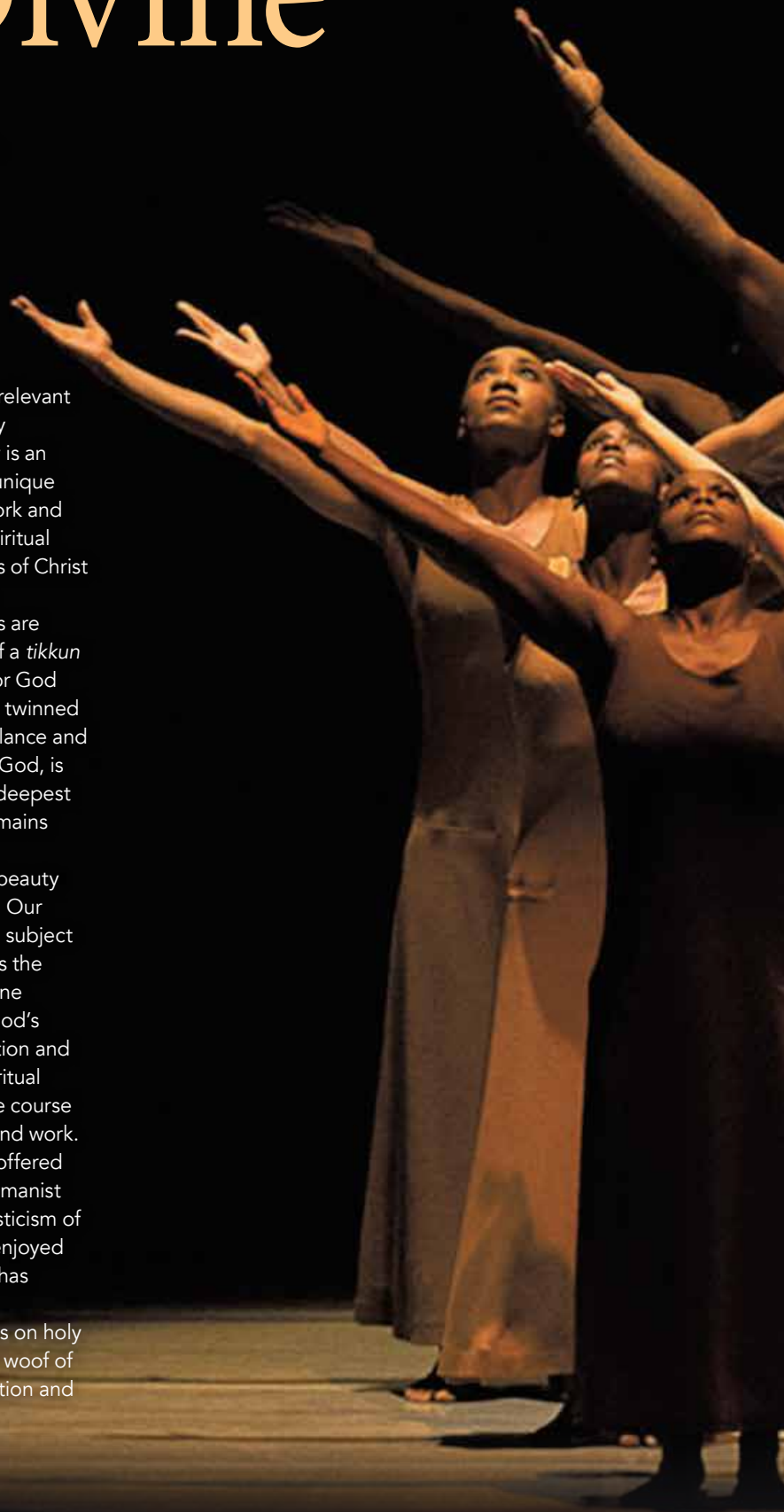


In our own interior work and in walking with others on spiritual journeys, we are privileged to know more about the deep secrets of the human heart and the always mysterious nearness of the divine beloved. But we may be tempted to think of this work as private or individualistic. For some, that makes it seem irrelevant to the challenges to seek justice, so important to the identity of many Christians. This strange binary between personhood and community is an unfortunate heritage of the modern west. We are called to heal our unique wounds and to seek a “closer walk with” the divine. This is interior work and prayer, best done in conversation with spiritual friends and even a spiritual director. Paul calls the Corinthians to be transfigured into the likeness of Christ (2 Cor 3:18). But this personal vivification is always within and for the community—extending to the community of all creation. “Our hearts are restless until we rest in Thee, oh God,” but this resting in God is itself a *tikkun olam*—a healing of the world, as our Jewish friends put it. Longing for God and thirsting for justice are not two separate aspects of our spirit but twinned from the foundation of creation. Each of us will live out a different balance and be inspired by unique vocations. But inner transformation, rooted in God, is always an awakening to the beauty and suffering of others. And the deepest transformation of the world includes this sense of tenderness that remains encouraged even when the historical situation seems very bleak.

Our work is inspired and made joyful by celebration of the great beauty of creation and its infinite diversity—in nature and in human cultures. Our work is given urgency as we consider the ways in which this beauty is subject to disrespect, violence, and indifference. Abraham Heschel describes the prophet as a person that participates in the “divine pathos”—someone whose heart is courageously broken open by the harm suffered by God’s beloved humanity. It is our hope that the programs in Spiritual Direction and Formation at SFTS deepen people’s capacity to sit with others in spiritual direction, or develop programs in spiritual formation, or integrate the course work and practices from the DASD program into their everyday life and work.

This summer (June 4-8, 2018) the Program in Spirituality at SFTS offered a session that focused on these connections. Dr. Andrea White, a womanist theologian from Union Seminary, led us in an exploration of “the mysticism of activism.” We read Howard Thurman and Kelly Brown Douglas. We enjoyed Alvin Ailey’s glorious choreography as well as music and poetry that has inspired, delighted, and consoled the spirituality of social justice.

This coming January 2019 (see sidebar), we will continue our focus on holy listening, discernment, and contemplative practices. In the warp and woof of these sacred practices, we witness to God’s profound delight in creation and to the wonder that arises in us as we participate in that delight. ✚





# THE BRIDGING DIVIDE

## COMING SOON! DASD Winter Session & Retreats

### SESSION ONE: JANUARY 7-11, 2019

(Open for new students in spiritual direction as well as retreatants)

#### **Contemplative Listening**

Core course for all spiritual direction and formation diploma and certificate programs.

#### **Leading with Courage and Equity**

This course explores obstacles to and resources for working with the Spirit to listen and lead with courage and equity in a diverse world.

**Instructors:** Dr. Daeseop Yi and Dr. Gloria Burgess

### SESSION TWO: JANUARY 13-18, 2019

(Continuing DASD students only)

#### **Discernment**

Individual and group practices for discerning the movement of the Spirit as one attunes to others as a spiritual director or other spiritual companion.

**Instructor:** Dr. Elizabeth Liebert

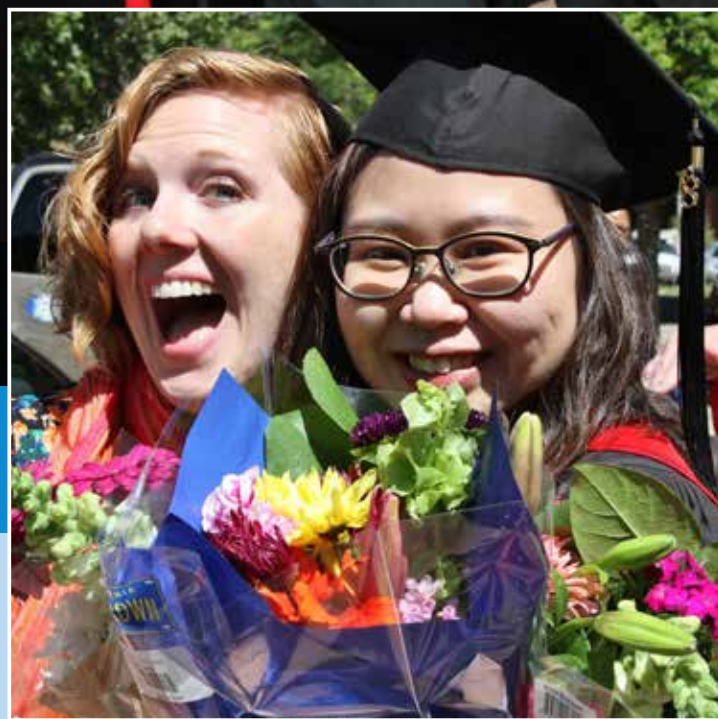
#### **Fundamentals of Spiritual Direction**

Foundation course for all spiritual direction students.

**Instructor:** Dr. Maria Bowen

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
[sfts.edu/winter](https://sfts.edu/winter)

June's *Mysticism of Activism* session featured Alvin Ailey's *Revelations* to fervently explore the places of deepest grief and holiest joy in the soul.



***Congratulations!***

# CLASS OF 2018

**CERTIFICATE IN TRAUMA AND SPIRITUAL CARE (CTSC)**

**Anna dos Ramos** San Francisco, California

**DIPLOMA IN SPIRITUAL FORMATION STUDIES (DSFS)**

**Andreas Pielhoop** Antioch, California

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# COMMENCEMENT 2018



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## GTU MASTER OF ARTS (GTU MA)

*Conferred by the Graduate Theological Union  
with the recommendation of SFTS.*

<b>Aaron Terris Grizzell</b>	San Francisco, California
<b>Jonathan Paul Guevara</b>	Vallejo, California
<b>Yunha Hwang</b>	Seoul, South Korea
<b>Sung Eun Kim</b>	San Anselmo, California

## MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (MATS)

<b>Patrice Elizabeth Drew</b>	Joshua Tree, California
<b>Byongho Lee</b>	Seoul, South Korea

## MASTER OF DIVINITY (MDIV)

<b>Katie Lynne Brendler</b>	South Seaside Park, New Jersey <i>Concentration: Christian Spirituality</i>
<b>Joseph Reid Chapman</b>	Charlotte, North Carolina
<b>Molly Kathleen Morris</b>	Staunton, Virginia
<b>Vera Eyvonne Porter</b>	Enid, Oklahoma
<b>Rebecca Rhodes Sandness</b>	Dallas, Texas
<b>Brook M. Scott</b>	San Rafael, California
<b>Asefa Wakjira</b>	San Anselmo, California
<b>Elizabeth Veronica Zupp</b>	Robbinsville, New Jersey

## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY (DMIN)

<b>Kelle J. Brown</b>	Columbus, Georgia <i>“Moving from the Gate to the Porch: Solidarity as a Hallmark of Authentic Christian Discipleship”</i>
<b>Barbara Galloway-Lee</b>	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania <i>“Compelled for Health and Healing in the African American Congregation: A Pilot Project in Partnership with the Health Care Community”</i>
<b>David C. Isom</b>	Chicago, Illinois <i>“Pain in the Pew: Addressing Violence Against Women in the Christian Community”</i>
<b>Robert M. McClellan</b>	Fairfax, California <i>“A New Old Walk: The Mainline Protestant Church and a Contemporary Practice of Pilgrimage as a Pathway to Religious Experience”</i>
<b>Joyce Parry Moore</b>	Seattle, Washington <i>“Searching and Knowing: An Exploratory Study in the Use of Artistic and Somatic Therapies in Counseling Women”</i>
<b>Déborá Angélica García Morales</b>	Managua, Nicaragua <i>“Responsive Justice: A Feminist Theo-Ethical Fundamentation”</i>
<b>Vanla Rudolph Peters</b>	Stockton, California <i>“The Reparation Paradigm as a Vehicle for Racial Justice in the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church”</i>
<b>Mary Spohn Romo</b>	Tiburon, California <i>“Aggiornamento: The Second Vatican Council and Contemporary Catholic Women in the United States”</i>

# Where God Speaks Most Clearly

By Mary Widdifield

Four years into his practice, environmental lawyer Zelig Golden felt that he had lost his way. He was a successful advocate for the natural world he loved, but felt profoundly empty.

Then he learned about guided tours into the desert. Having experienced deep connection to wilderness before, he decided a vision quest could help. For four days and nights, Golden sat alone in the vast desert, where he fasted and prayed. Golden retells his profound journey in "Rekindling the Flame of Earth-based Judaism" on Eli Talks (EliTalk.org). Golden says praying in the desert made him grow hungry for an answer. On that fourth and final morning, as light burst onto the horizon, Golden received the message: Get your people back to nature.

For more than ten years, Rabbi Zelig Golden, a current student in the Shaw Institute for Spiritual Care and Interreligious Chaplaincy (CPE) at SFTS, has been doing just that: guiding others toward discovery of identity and life purpose through celebrating the ancient rites and rituals of the Torah in nature. Golden's organization, Wilderness Torah (WildernessTorah.org) started with a few friends recreating Jewish festivals and rituals in nature, growing to over 250 people planned for the upcoming Spring

*Recent CPE graduate Rabbi Zelig Golden  
Inspires the Spiritual Journey through  
Love of Nature and Jewish Scripture*



festival. Currently over 130 youth (grades K through 7) now participate in year-round nature-based education and rites of passage work.

To fully appreciate Golden's arrival at his life's work is to learn about what Golden refers to as the "pearls on the string that make up a life."

During early years in Spokane, WA—a "one-synagogue town"—Golden says, "Jewish identity was very important to me." His deep involvement with the local Jewish community even superseded his family's practices. But after leaving Spokane for college, he explains that Judaism faded away and nature became more important. "I totally fell in love with being in the wilderness," Golden commented, "there was something about the way my soul connected with the wilderness." From this passion, Golden grew into an avid skier and backpacker and later, became a park ranger in Alaska and a wilderness guide with Outward Bound.

Golden found that the wilderness-spirituality connection described in biblical texts has been known to rabbis and Old Testament scholars for thousands of years. The Hebrew word for both wilderness and desert is **מִדְבָּר**, or phonetically, "midbar." This word also contains meanings of "with" and "to

speak." "Wilderness" therefore, translates as "the place with the speaking." Says Golden, "It's where God speaks most clearly."

"Each individual must recognize they are a divine being with a gift or multiple gifts and a task in life." He acknowledges, "One of the greatest challenges in being human is discovering those gifts and task." Having rediscovered his gifts, his truth, and his task, Golden recognized that others are suffering, creating a Western culture he views as "uninitiated, adolescent...highly selfish." But cultural healing and growing can happen one individual at a time.

"It doesn't matter whether you are Christian or Jewish, it's equally applicable," he says. One can find fulfillment and serve their community by going "into the wilderness to truly learn who you are, get the gift, that broad view, higher wisdom, the divine connection, and then return to your community to serve from that place." ✚

Bringing Jewish prayer alive at Passover in the Desert 2017. Gathering together as a tribe to awaken and celebrate the earth-based traditions of Judaism. Learn more at [wildernesstorah.org](http://wildernesstorah.org).



# Connecting with Alumni: Meet Your New Director of Alumni Relations

By Laila Weir

This spring, SFTS hired a full-time Director of Alumni Relations—a familiar face on campus—Marissa Miller, formerly the seminary's Communications Manager. Her goal? To implement new initiatives aimed at better connecting with and supporting alumni.

"I'm so excited that the seminary is renewing its commitment to alumni relationships with the addition of a full-time Director," says SFTS Associate Dean of Student Life and Chaplain Rev. Scott Clark, who is also an alumnus. "Marissa is just the perfect person to nurture these vital relationships and to expand and strengthen our community in this way."

The alumni initiative will be a multipronged effort to strengthen relationships with former students, according to Miller, who says she'll work closely with the Alumni Council to do so.

"I'm excited to connect with our alumni, to engage them in the seminary's exciting events and programs, and to offer any resources to help their ministry and their work that we can," comments Miller.

The initiative includes new benefits to SFTS grads, such as a robust alumni directory, a network of mentors to connect alums with each other and current students, and a dedicated alumni website with personal and professional resources. Increased outreach will include local alumni chapters, an alumni reunion weekend October 11-13, alumni events around the country, and opportunities for volunteering and continuing education.

"Marissa brings a commitment to our mission and a knowledge of our alumni relations communication efforts," comments SFTS Vice President of Advancement, Walter Collins. "Marissa has been an important partner in our marketing efforts, frequently supporting our alumni communications and taking a leadership role in the production of our Chimes magazine with creativity and grace."

Before coming to SFTS, Miller was involved in fundraising and managing events for nonprofits, and her background in networking and event planning will significantly benefit this role. She credits SFTS's social justice focus with drawing her to the seminary, and says she's grateful to be part of a community of people who care for others. ✚

*Marissa welcomes input and new connections from SFTS alumni. She can be reached at [mmiller@sfts.edu](mailto:mmiller@sfts.edu) or 415.451.2826. To receive regular email updates from the seminary, please sign up at [sfts.edu/alumni](https://sfts.edu/alumni)*



Marissa Miller, your new Director of Alumni Relations, bringing the Seminary Bells campaign to life. [sfts.edu/bells](https://sfts.edu/bells)

## 2018 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

By Eva Stimson

A pastor in San Francisco's Chinatown for nearly 40 years, Rev. Norman Fong has become a nationally recognized leader in advocating for affordable housing and community empowerment. Fong is currently the Executive Director of Chinatown Community Development Center (Chinatown CDC), and oversees a staff of 200 seeking to meet the needs of an underserved, immigrant community. Chinatown CDC manages and provides housing for 3,600 residents in 30 affordable housing properties throughout San Francisco.

"Norman has demonstrated over the decades that church and society can work closely together in creating change," says Rev. Harry Chuck (M.Div. 1962), who nominated Fong for the Distinguished Alumni Award. "His vision and mission for the church is grounded in his understanding of the imperatives of scripture and the challenges of an evolving theology consistent with his foundational studies at SFTS."

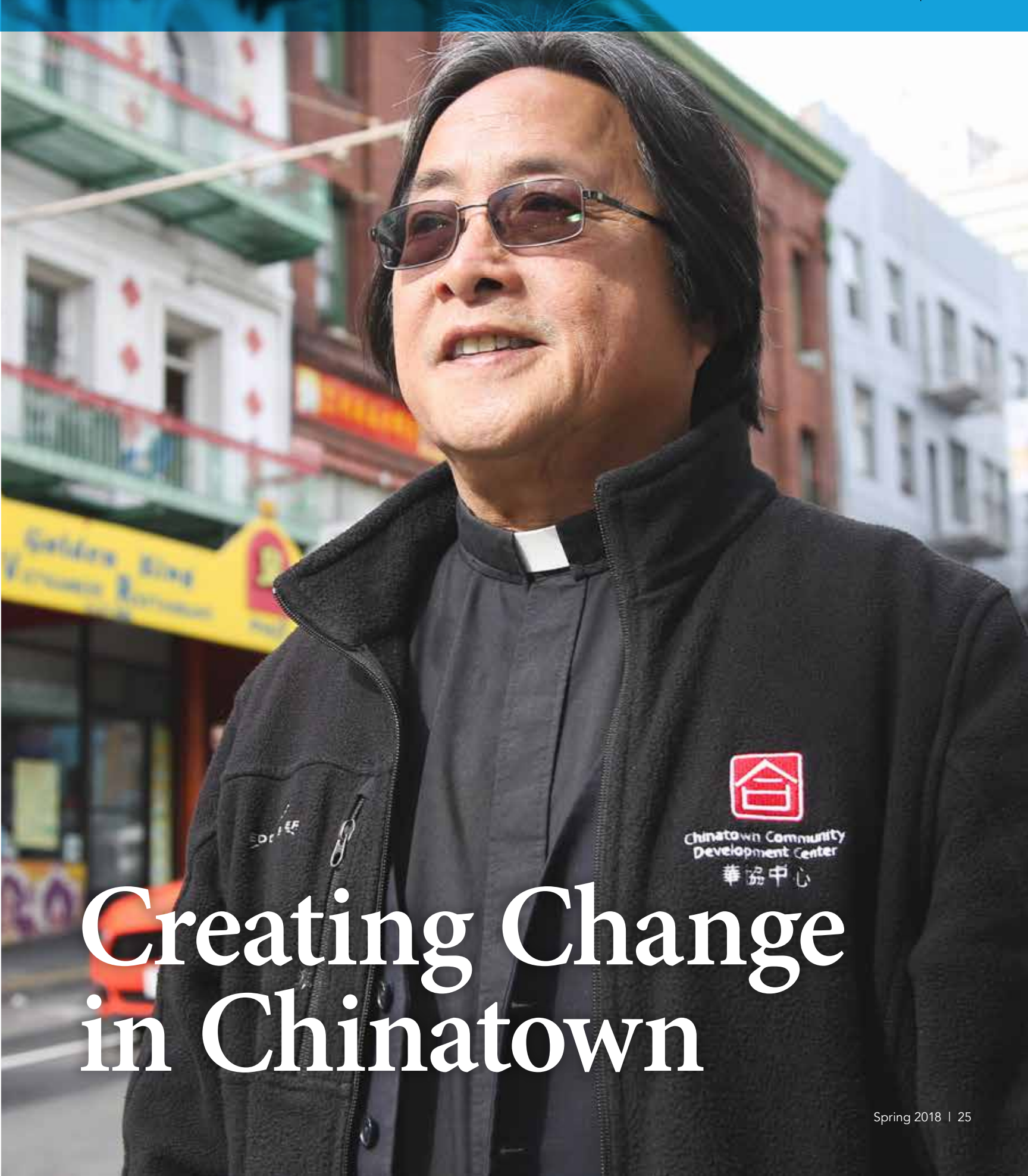
Fong grew up in Chinatown in the 1950s and 1960s, when segregation policies forced San Francisco's Chinese residents to develop their own hospitals, schools, and churches. He began his career working at the Donaldina Cameron House, a social services organization founded by the Presbyterian Church in 1874 as a mission to Chinese girls and women.

Ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1981, Fong was called to the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown, where he continues to preach and serve as parish associate. He has served on committees of the Presbytery of San Francisco working for social justice. He has also brought together church and community groups to feed the hungry and helped organize town hall meetings on tenant rights, safety, and other issues. In 2013, Fong was named a "White House Champion of Change."

When asked about his experience as a seminary student, Fong says, "For me, it has always been about the link between faith and action, loving God by loving your neighbor, doing justice and loving compassion... SFTS pulled it together for me in a progressive and relevant way. Power to you, SFTS." ✚



# REV. NORMAN FONG



# Creating Change in Chinatown

# LOVE LIVES IN FEEDING SOULS



## The Modern Ministry of Alumna Rev. Jeannie Kim

By Laila Weir

**T**he SFTS Board of Trustees recently welcomed new member Rev. Jeannie Kim (MDiv 2001)—entrepreneur, former pastor, mother, and recent cancer survivor who immigrated to San Francisco from Korea at age 12.

Kim wants to help SFTS adapt to 21st century realities. “Times have changed and our culture has changed,” she says. “I feel the older model of church as an institution has to change as well. I’m hoping that in some small way I can contribute and see if the seminary can think outside the box, to see the reality of our culture now and what people are looking for.”

After SFTS, Kim spent years as a pastor before a divorce and the necessities of raising three young children caused her to go into business. Today, she owns three popular restaurants in San Francisco, but she’s never really left her calling behind.

“I’ve never left ministry, it just took on a different form,” reflects Kim, who says she thinks of herself as providing pastoral care to her customers and employees, listening to their stories and “feeding their souls” as well as bodies, at her three restaurants: Sam’s American Eatery, Fermentation Lab and Anonymous Asian. When she sees someone in emotional pain or appearing lost in troubled thoughts, she’ll sit down and ask

how their day is going—what a kindness when the owner of a restaurant takes the time to say hello. And to her surprise, Kim found people open up to her more freely now than when she was a pastor.

Kim says many of her employees and customers have never been into a church and “don’t even know how to have a conversation about God or spirituality.” Internet companies have brought millennials and money into San Francisco neighborhoods formerly more notable for their seediness, and housing developments have sprouted up at an incredible pace—but not a single new church, Kim says.

Her experiences led Kim to feel churches must find new ways to reach people. “Churches are so removed from their communities and the culture,” she comments. “For someone who’s never been to church—to go one day and have a conversation with a pastor—that’s very intimidating.”

Kim says she has more questions than answers about how churches can adapt and how SFTS can help spearhead that movement. But, for a start, she’s convinced that leadership needs to reflect the times: “The language has to change; the form has to change; the color has to change.” ✚

## UPDATES



**Rev. Bruce Reyes-Chow (MDiv 1995)** has been named Interim Director of Coaching for the Center for Progressive Renewal (CPR), an organization dedicated to church renewal, training of entrepreneurial leaders, and support for progressive ministries to bring about a more just and generous world. Chow, moderator of the 2008 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), has served as a coach and consultant with CPR for the past four years. He is a blogger, the author of four books, and a popular speaker on faith, race, parenting, and technology. A Presbyterian minister for more than 22 years, he was the founder of Mission Bay Community Church, a young, progressive, and multicultural congregation in San Francisco. He currently serves as interim pastor of Broadmoor Presbyterian Church in Daly City, CA. Chow was the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from SFTS in 2009.



**Rev. Cameron Highsmith (MDiv 2014)** was ordained as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) on March 11, 2018 at First Presbyterian Church of Argenta, in North Little Rock, Arkansas. Other SFTS alums in attendance were Lora East, Marissa Danney, Jeffrey Ferguson, and Rachel Pence.



**Rev. Dr. John Edward Mulvihill (DMin 1990)**, a Catholic priest, is a decorated knight of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. His 50-year career includes service in numerous pastoral and judicial positions in the Midwest. He has worked for the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Latin patriarchate of Jerusalem, taught at such schools as the Graduate Theological Foundation and the Pastoral Institute of St. Xavier University, and offered his expertise in clinical pastoral education at

St. Joseph Hospital. In recent years, he has served as a judge and an adjutant judicial vicar for the Interdiocesan Appellate Tribunals of Milwaukee and Chicago. His studies in philosophy, theology, archaeology, education, and other fields have taken him all over the world, allowing him to develop fluency in at least four languages.

**Rev. Ellen Baxter (MDiv 2006)** is now serving as pastor of two congregations north of San Francisco: Calvary Presbyterian Church in Bolinas and Stinson Beach Community Presbyterian Church. The two churches endured consecutive tragedies last year when their pastors died in April and December. Baxter says she is interested in widening the reach of the congregations, possibly through interfaith worship services.



**Rev. Denia Segrest (MDiv 2015)** was ordained on December 12, 2017 as a Tentmaker Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Livermore, CA. Rev. Segrest works with church staff for pastoral support. She is especially involved with older adult ministry, working with the Deacons and worship leadership. Denia has been a part of First Presbyterian Church of Livermore since 2003, and "feels very blessed to be a part of ministry" in her home congregation.



**Rev. Nick Morris (MDiv 2015)** has joined Marin Interfaith Council as the Executive Director of their Street Chaplaincy program. He is also the multi-cultural Minister at Good News Presbyterian Church, a Korean-American Congregation based in San Francisco, and is an avid explorer of world religions with a strong commitment to the interfaith movement and his own faith tradition.



**Rev. Leslie Vogel (MDiv 1985)** has answered the call to serve as Presbyterian World Mission's new regional liaison for Guatemala and Mexico. She began her new duties June 1, and will continue to live in Guatemala. Vogel has been a mission co-worker in Guatemala since 2013, serving with the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA). She says she has learned a great deal from her experiences and continues to learn daily. Among the most important lessons is respecting people who are different and who have different ways of seeing the world. Vogel will be in the U.S. this summer to serve as a MAD (Missionary Advisory Delegate) and as a speaker in churches and presbyteries on interpretation assignment. ✚



*Have an update to share? Email us at [alumni@sfts.edu](mailto:alumni@sfts.edu). We'd love to hear from you!*



*Spirituality and Bereavement* seminar participants take in the natural beauty of the Institute of Noetic Sciences' Earthrise retreat center.

# How Good Ideas Become Great Innovations

By Mary Widdifield

Creating positive social change is an arduous process that begins with good ideas in response to genuine need. Good ideas are actually everywhere. The inability to turn ideas into innovations and create mass adoption is where some potential changemakers lose their way.

Collaborative Seminars offered by the Center for Innovation in Ministry are specifically designed to cultivate and convert relevant ideas into innovation through a collaborative, scholar-practitioner process. Since our instructors draw from their personal experience as leaders on the front lines of social issues, they can ignite energy around the academic material and group dialogue. When participants return from the field to evaluate successes and challenges with their cohort and instructors, ideas get real—and it's catching on:

✚ *Spirituality and Mental Health* has grown from 8 participants to 30 participants—the rich dialogue and quality of projects have provided breakthroughs for the seemingly intractable chasm of clinical psychologists and pastors working together for community mental health. By popular demand, this seminar now repeats three times per year.

✚ *Spirituality and Bereavement*, led by SFTS alum Terri Daniel, kicked off with 20 participants in its first cohort. The seminar was so compelling that a northern California consortium of the regional hospice organizations would like to roll this out for training in the fall.

✚ Participants hailed from across the nation to attend *Bipolar Faith*—developed in response to the pressing need for faith leaders to learn how to support congregants who live with mental illness. Led by Monica A. Coleman, MDiv, PhD, *Bipolar Faith* is a “train the trainer” program in which each participant leads their own seminar or workshop to build a community coalition for spirituality and mental health in their home church.

How is the Center creating a lasting benefit to accelerate adoption of ideas? By keeping participants' immediate network intact and growing in outward circles of influence. The student cohort that coalesces in each seminar remains constant. Each seminar has a private social networking site, a safe space for creative, passionate, engaged people to continue learning from one another. This

ongoing support is inestimable when dealing with delicate and stigmatized social issues. These rich and varied voices in an issue-driven cohort become the force for informed ideas to become innovations and lasting social change.

## Applied Wisdom Institute— Wisdom in Doing, and Doing in Wisdom™

There is arguably no other time in history when skilled and ethical leadership has been more crucial than during these socio-politically charged times where technology moves information and messaging at an unprecedented rate. *The Certificate in Spirituality & Social Entrepreneurship* provides necessary and practical business tools for leaders and influencers seeking to advance solutions rooted in faith and ethics. Successful leaders possess integrity, strategic vision and passion. Without all three, “you will not effectively touch society and move things forward,” says Center Director Floyd Thompkins.

From the Collaborative Seminar learning model came a cry for deeper engagement in the pedagogy of “learn + apply + collaborate.” *The Certificate in Spirituality & Social Entrepreneurship* offers a more robust dive into applying theoretical learning into

fieldwork, followed by more opportunities for evaluation and feedback. Upon each return to fieldwork, students apply deeper wisdom to meeting the needs of their constituents. This reevaluation cycle results in more responsive leadership.

This May kicked off the first cohort—a group with broad interests and a “big vision.” Participants include everyone from a hip hop artist to a speech and language pathologist to a computer engineer at Lawrence Livermore Labs. One of these participants will receive a Wisdom Seed Grant of \$2,000 to help move their project forward.

## Global Faith & Justice Project Goes to the United Nations

Over 100 people crowded into a conference room at the Church Center for the United Nations, New York City, to listen to the life stories of Yvette Abrahams from South Africa and Ymania Brown from Samoa at the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the UN. The notion of “family” has become contested in UN spaces and limited to the so-called nuclear family only. So, the Global Faith and Justice Project of

the Center for Innovation in Ministry partnered with the Ethics of Reciprocity Project and the Global Interfaith Network to offer “Reclaiming Faith and Family by Recognizing the LGBTQI Community” on March 16 at CSW 2018.

Yvette and Ymania are LGBT activists who advocate for the human rights of all, and called the CSW to recognize their lives, identities and families. Yvette is a lesbian and honors African traditional religion, and Ymania is transgender from a Christian faith background. The intersection of faith, gender and sexuality with human rights from an LGBT-affirming perspective is far too rare an occurrence at the UN, so this topic drew a packed and interested audience from a diverse range of perspectives.

Dr. Michael J. Adee, Partner of the Global Faith and Justice Project, attended on behalf of the Center for Innovation in Ministry. Adee said, “I was grateful to see leaders from conservative organizations present with a large group of young adults from all over the world. This gives me hope for future dialogue about faith and LGBT issues at the UN.” ✚

Right: presenters Yvette Abrahams from South Africa and Ymania Brown from Samoa surround Michael Adee at the United Nations CSW 2018.



Below: Applied Wisdom Institute's first cohort of social entrepreneurs kick off the pioneering new certificate program.



## JOIN US

### “Beyond Pink & Blue—Transitions and Transgender Care”

*Dissolving Barriers through Transgender Training with Presbyterian Outlook*

This summer kicks off a new initiative in diversity training for the entire PCUSA. At the request of pastors and the executive presbyters, the Center is teaming up with *Presbyterian Outlook* and Westminster Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville, VA for a series of regional educational forums addressing the pastoral response to transgender persons in congregations. The learning outcomes of the training are to:

- ✚ Create safe and caring places for transgender people;
- ✚ Learn from transgender persons, educators, & pastors with relevant experience in providing pastoral care to transgender people and their families;
- ✚ Gain insight, language and practical skills to enable you to offer pastoral care and affirming transgender ministry.

**The first of 3 regional conferences takes place October 21-23, 2018 in Charlottesville, VA.**

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
[innovation.sfts.edu/transgender-care](http://innovation.sfts.edu/transgender-care)

# LUTHER

*out of Germany*

*Muilenberg-Koenig History  
of Religion Workshop draws  
international scholars to SFTS*



By Christopher Ocker  
Professor of  
Church History



Guest presenters Dr. Naomi Seidman (GTU, Center for Jewish Studies), Dr. Devin Zuber (GTU, Center for Swedenborgian Studies) and Dr. Kirsi Sterna (California Lutheran University)

The Muilenburg-Koenig History of Religion Workshop is an international workshop held in conjunction with the Muilenburg-Koenig History of Religion Seminar, an annual seminar at SFTS organized by Christopher Ocker, Professor of History, and supported by a generous gift from the Rev. Dr. Robert Koenig (M.Div. 1969). To help SFTS mark the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, Ocker joined forces with Kirsi Stjerna, Professor of Reformation Theology at the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and a colleague at the GTU. They dedicated the seminar to "Luther and Reformations." The accompanying workshop considered "Luther out of Germany." The workshop highlighted how international the Protestant legacy has been, and still is, and it brought special attention to two dimensions of Luther's impact. One recurring theme was the eclipse of the polemical, confessional narratives familiar a century ago with positive views of Luther. The other theme was Luther's role as a figurehead of human liberation.

Alicia Mayer, Professor of History at the Universidad Autonoma de Mexico in Mexico City, described the spread and stability of Catholic polemical views of Luther during the Spanish colonial era, and their decline as soon as that period ended. In the nineteenth century, positive reassessments of Luther in historical scholarship, literature, and the dramatic arts spread across the post-colonial sub-continent. By the late twentieth century, in the aftermath of liberation theology, the earlier demonic portrait of the reformer was eclipsed by positive and sympathetic portraits. Xiaoyuan Zhu, Professor of History at the University of Peking, described the movement of intellectuals away from an earlier Marxian interpretation of the Reformation during his generation. In Zhu's account, he and his students are replacing an image of Luther as combatant against feudalism with an approach that stresses Luther's constructive role in social reordering and harmony. Moses Penumaka, Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, stressed how Lutheran missions provided outcasts in India (Dalit) an unprecedented opportunity to escape the psychic and social confines of the caste system, an achievement

that he associated with Lutheran scholarship produced at the University of Halle in the eighteenth century, during the era of Lutheran Pietism, when the Lutheran mission to India began. His own deep appreciation for Luther as a Telugu speaker from Andhra Pradesh spoke eloquently of the importance of Luther to Dalit-Christian identity. Devin Zuber, Professor of Religion and Literature at the GTU, highlighted the survival of a concept of Luther's prophetic, innovative voice, partly mediated by the writings and doctrines of Emmanuel Swedenborg, which in turn

carried into Swedenborg's often hidden influence on American philosophy and literature. Zuber illustrated this on the example of the writings of William James, the founder of the American Pragmatic school of philosophy, and his brother the novelist Henry James. Uncoincidentally, their father, Henry Sr., was a Swedenborgian theologian. Karlfried Froehlich, Emeritus Professor of Church History at Princeton Theological

Seminary, unveiled the deep entanglement of Protestant biblical scholarship and Catholic ecumenical theology, on the example of Oscar Cullmann, shedding light on an important and little known dimension of the Catholic reassessment of Martin Luther's legacy in the twentieth century.

These presentations were complemented by responses from Eduardo Fernandez and George Griener of the Jesuit School of Theology, Purushottama Bilimoria of the Graduate Theological Union, Naomi Seidman of the Center for Jewish Studies at the GTU, and Kirsi Stjerna of PLTS, and introductory and concluding remarks by Christopher Ocker, together with the questions and observations of members of the Muilenburg-Koenig Seminar, who chaired each of the sessions, and students and faculty of SFTS attending sessions.

The workshop put the variety of Luther's global reception on full display, and, as one might expect, it also highlighted the importance of Luther as a Protestant—particularly Lutheran—figurehead. But the workshop also highlighted how Luther still exerts an influence beyond those Protestant denominations that identify most closely with him, as a central figure in the politics of pluralistic societies, religious reform, and democratization. Zhu's Luther, for example, seems to reflect clearly the liberalization of historical outlooks in China, as the Cultural Revolution becomes an increasingly distant memory. Perhaps one could say that in Xi Jinping's China the deconstructive Luther of a very deconstructive Cultural Revolution has been replaced by a constructive reformer, while in the ruling party, political stability, economic development, and the assertion of Asian-Pacific and international leadership rise as high-order priorities. Froehlich and Cullmann's Luther foregrounds Luther's bible-oriented theological method, which Catholic reformers in the twentieth century heartily embraced. The James' effort to revolutionize the study of philosophy as a practical exercise in cultural criticism was inspired not so much by any particular idea in Luther's thought as by Luther's reputation as a prophetic voice. The rejection of polemical anti-Lutheran stereotypes in current Latin American historiography not only reflects the impact of liberation theology but also the fact that a particularly Latin American pluralism has come out of the closet in recent decades: one in which Protestant-Catholic conflict has yielded to free movement of the laity between Pentecostal, traditional Catholic, and other spiritual practices.

Stjerna and Penumaka gave abundant evidence of Luther's enduring importance as a founder of the many churches of the Lutheran World Federation and Protestantism overall. That legacy has been deepened by recent scholarship foregrounding the role of women in sixteenth-century reforms and by critical awareness of the role, for better and for worse, of reformers in the history of anti-Semitism and racial prejudice and the politics of oppression. Equally clear, however, is Luther's enduring importance in post-denominational Christendom and secular society. Part and parcel of Luther's legacy is an influence whose meaning shifts over time and extends well beyond those who mean to follow his teachings. He has become, in a remarkable way, the property of all Christians, and anyone who wants to understand the force of Christianity in the world. ✚



SFTS MDiv student Denise Diaab, symposium panelists Dr. Courtney Bryant-Pierce and Dr. Teresa Fry Brown, and SFTS Assistant Professor of Old Testament Yolanda Norton

# “But I’m Still Here” Womanist Symposium Reflection

By Ashley Reid, MDiv Student

“Black women have an idea of who God is,” said Rev. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown as she uplifted the resilience and faith of Black women navigating a biased system and society. Dr. Fry Brown shared these words of wisdom as part of her lecture during the Womanist Symposium in February. Rev. Yolanda Norton, Associate Professor of Old Testament at SFTS, orchestrated a week of worship, wisdom, and empowerment through the lens of Womanist interpretation.

The term “Womanist,” coined by Alice Walker, essentially celebrates Black womanhood by voicing and acknowledging their wisdom, experiences, spirituality, and service to all of humanity as a realistic respected lens. This week of worship at SFTS provided the space for Black women to be prioritized, and for students, faculty, and staff to engage with the struggles, faith, and resilience of Black womanhood.

The week kicked off with an interdisciplinary lecture led by Professor Norton and guest Dr. Courtney Bryant-Pierce focusing on the Black woman’s agency to negotiate and fight for survival amid empire. Norton and Bryant-Pierce utilized biblical texts to draw correlations with how Black women have been forced to combat various forms of violence like the women in the Hebrew bible.

During Thursday’s Worship Lab in Stewart Chapel, students of Norton’s *Beyoncé and the Hebrew Bible* course led a powerful service focused on navigating the emotional journey of Black women in their fight for freedom, and provided space to lament the sufferings

and oppression of those from marginalized communities.

Kescha Mason, an MDiv student from American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley reflected, “The Beyoncé chapel service was a new and different way of doing worship using pop culture music to experience the divine and the Spirit.” Fellow students echoed Mason’s sentiments, especially after hearing Dr. Fry Brown’s lecture Thursday evening.

“The symposium was illuminating and powerful, especially learning the personal stories and struggles of Black women in academia. The worship service was unlike any that I experienced at SFTS especially through the power of Dr. T’s sermon...and her ability to weave together conversations about religion and social systems,” commented Ashley Pogue, a second year MDiv student at SFTS.

Friday’s worship service concluded the week with Dr. Fry Brown’s sermon about sustaining yourself in the ever-constant fight for justice. Utilizing Isaiah 40:28-31, Dr. Fry Brown applied the metaphor of an eagle molting before rising again to the need of restoration and rest in our fight for justice. She emphasized that in our most vulnerable moments, community steps in to protect us and guide us back to full health. The importance of communal support in the fight for justice has been a testament to the Black woman’s testimony of, “But I’m still here.”

The Womanist Symposium opened eyes to the lived reality of Black women. SFTS MDiv student John Lyzenga said, “Through

presenting various experiences of Black women in different arenas, the Womanist Symposium challenged white normativity and privilege, especially by naming the ways in which individuals and communities that consider themselves progressive still perpetuate systems of oppression and isolation. As the Womanist Symposium appropriately challenged me in my privilege, I was invited to participate in worship services and seminars that were powerful, moving, and transformative.”

Equally as important, the symposium empowered Black women in attendance to stay the course in their respective journeys, and to stay connected to the sisterhood that Black womanhood provides.

Denise Diaab, second year MDiv student at SFTS reflected, “The entire symposium experience was powerful because it spoke to me personally as an African-American woman: the chapel, the symposium, and the Friday worship service all resonated with me at a gut level...I appreciated Dr. Fry Brown’s comments affirming the need for self-care and also the fact that she sees her job as providing help for those coming along now—either so they don’t have to go through some of what she had to go through or to have a first aid kit to clean the wounds if we decide we need to walk through the glass anyway.” †

To view the video footage of the lectures and chapel services, please visit [sfts.edu/sfts-womanist-symposium-recap](https://sfts.edu/sfts-womanist-symposium-recap)



UPDATES



**Wendy Farley (Director of the Program in Christian Spirituality, Rice Family Chair in Spirituality, Professor of Christian Spirituality)**

presented two lectures at Newport Presbyterian Church in Bellevue, WA, entitled “Good News for Dark Times: Practices of Hope, Beauty and Compassion,” as part of their Meekhof Lecture Series. Dr. Farley spoke about terrible times in the Old and New Testament and how the beauty and compassion of the Divine are especially glimpsed amid trauma and destruction. The following day, she explored practices of beauty and compassion that are designed to help participants take awareness of God’s universal love and compassion into their hearts and bodies. Farley also traveled to Montana to lead a three-day retreat, “Practices of Hope and Compassion,” at Glacier Presbytery’s beautiful camp located on the shores of Flathead Lake. Other retreats this year included a Marin Interfaith Council Retreat at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, co-led with Qayyum Johnson of Green Gulch Zen Center, “For the Benefit of All Beings: Buddhist and Christian Views of Radical Compassion,” and “Beauty as the Threshold of the Divine” with Companions on the Inner Way, part of the Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church, at Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center in Nevada. In late February, Professor Gert Melville, distinguished Professor of Medieval History, and Founder and Director of the Research Center for the Comparative History of the Religious Orders at the University of Dresden—Europe’s foremost institute of the comparative study of monasticism—visited Wendy Farley and Chris Ocker’s seminar, “Comparative Contemplative Practices,” after lecturing at the University of California at Berkeley. Before moving on to lecture at Stanford, Dr. Melville attended services at Montgomery Chapel with esteemed guest Rev. Dr. Teresa Fry Brown preaching.



**Chris Ocker (Professor of Church History)**

was a panelist in a roundtable session on Willi Winkler’s *Luther: Ein Deutscher Rebel*, and moderator of the session “Faith and Frontiers: German Protestants and the Edges of Empire,” both at the annual conference of the German Studies Association, Atlanta, 5-8 October 2017. In November, Dr. Ocker organized the Muilenburg-Koenig History of Religion Workshop “Luther out of Germany” at SFTS (see pp 30-31), and preached the Reformation Sunday sermon at Carmichael Presbyterian Church, in Carmichael, CA.

In December, his article “Unintended Consequences: How the Reformation Expanded Theology,” appeared in the *Reformation Forum of Marginalia: A Los Angeles Review of Books Channel*. Additionally, Dr. Ocker was published in the journal *Renaissance and Reformation*, edited by Robert Bast and Andrew Colin Gow, with an article entitled “After the Peasants War: Barbara von Fuchstein Fights for Her Property.” Another article, “Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism,” appeared

in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*, ed. Derek Nelson, Paul Hinlicky. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

His latest book, *Luther, Conflict, and Christendom: Reformation Europe and Christianity in the West*, will be published by Cambridge University Press this summer. Dr. Ocker has been invited to join the editorial board of the monograph series *Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte*, published by De Gruyter publishing house in Berlin, founded in 1925 by the church historians Karl Holl and Hans Lietzmann. He also continues to serve on the editorial boards of the series *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions*, the *Journal of the Bible and Its Reception*, and the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.



**Gregory Love (Associate Professor of Systematic Theology)**

recently taught a seven-week adult education series on the Reformation at First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame, CA, and also a four-week series on The Early Church. In April-May, he taught a four-week series on his book on Jesus and salvation, *Love, Violence and the Cross: How the Nonviolent God Saves Us through the Cross of Christ* at Montclair Presbyterian Church, Piedmont, CA. June 24-29, Prof. Love will be teaching at The Zephyr Experience at Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center at Lake Tahoe. His course, “Across the Divine: Conversing and Finding Connection with Those with Whom You Vehemently Disagree,” begins with neurology and evolutionary biology, which explains why we so vastly disagree. It then looks at two recent works by political scientists who explore the virtues that lead to the ability to talk and create positive movement with those of vastly different views. Next fall, Prof. Love is teaching his course “God and Human Suffering” one weekend per month for four months, a schedule more accessible for working people. He is also recreating “Introduction to Systematic Theology II” for our new 100% online MATS degree.



**Eugene Eung-Chun Park (Dana and Dave Dornisfe Professor of New Testament)**

presented a paper, “Crying out for Debt-Cancellation in the Sermon on the Mount” at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) held in Boston, November 2017. He gave the following series of lectures: “Greek Philosophical Thoughts that Influenced Early Christianity” at the First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame, February 2018; “Reformation Traditions and the Bible” at Evergreen Presbyterian Church, Wheeling, IL, December 2017; “Socio-Political Reading of the Parables of Jesus” at Montclair Presbyterian Church, Oakland, September 2017. He also preached at San Rafael Korean Presbyterian Church, March 2018. He also led the popular SFTS Seminars at Glacier Presbytery’s Camp May 6-8, with the topic of “The Parables of Jesus.” ✚

## Beloved SFTS Professor John Hadsell's 179 Interfaith Carvings Find New Home at SFTS

"My father loved wood carvings. He started this collection as a young man, as one of Christian clergy. Over time, like my father, the collection became international, intercultural and interfaith, reflecting his own deeply held values and commitments. It is so good to see these figures once again. It is like greeting old friends for whom one has great fondness. How fitting that they now reside at SFTS, and how wonderful that many people can enjoy them."

— Heidi Hadsell  
*President, Hartford Seminary*



FROM THE ARCHIVES



## IN MEMORIAM

# Remembering Rev. Jack Hoggatt, Former SFTS Music Director

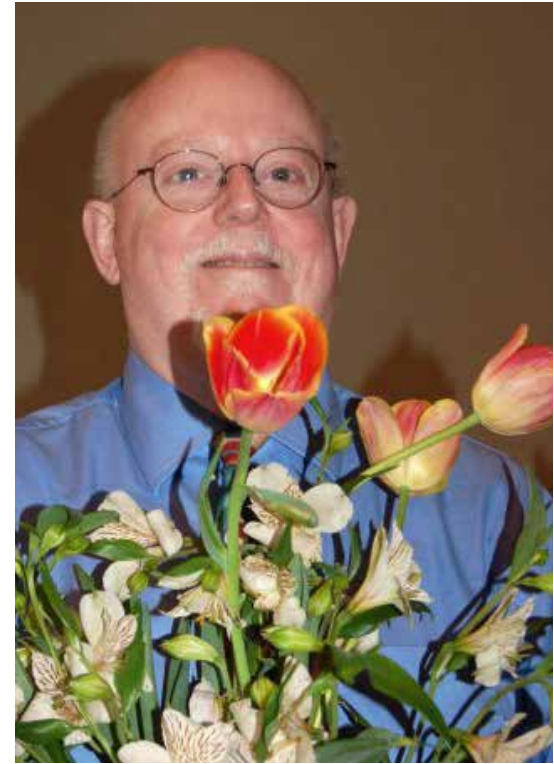
**R**ev. Jack Hoggatt, a part-time staff member and worship leader at SFTS from 2010 to 2015, died December 30, 2017.

"Jack worked with the worship team, crafting chapel worship and teaching us much about how the grace and expansiveness of the gospel can be embodied in our music," said Rev. Scott Clark, SFTS Associate Dean of Student Life and Chaplain. "Jack originated our Taizé worship liturgies, which we still sing in worship on Tuesdays, and he led the choir for several years in our annual Lessons and Carols service."

Born February 21, 1951, in Corvallis, OR, Rev. Hoggatt was the brother of Dr. Daniel Hoggatt, a longtime professor of music at SFTS. He graduated from the Pacific School of Religion, a member school of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, and was ordained in the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC).

In addition to his work at the seminary, Rev. Hoggatt served as music director and member of the pastoral staff of the Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco. He was also a registered nurse and master quilter.

"Jack loved students, and he nurtured and mentored chaplains' assistants and choir members with tender care in his years with us," Clark said. "As Chaplain and one who worked closely with Jack, I personally give great thanks for all of the music and wisdom and laughter and tenderness that Jack brought to this community over the years." †



**Rev. Dr. John Kenneth Borresen Jr.** died September 23, 2017, in Bedford, NH, at age 88. Born in St. Louis, MO, he graduated from Westminster College in Fulton, MO, and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, VA, later doing graduate study at SFTS. He earned graduate degrees in psychology from Marshall University in Huntington, WV, and the Blanton-Peale Institute in New York City. He was an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ, and served congregations in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, and New Jersey. He also worked as a licensed psychotherapist and volunteered with the American Red Cross. Dr. Borresen's wife, Betty Jane, died in 1993. He is survived by a sister, two daughters, one son, five grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

and Interim Pastor of more than 20 Presbyterian congregations in Oregon, Wyoming, and Washington. He was a commissioner to the General Assembly in 1973 and to the Synod of Alaska-Northwest in 2000 and served as moderator of the Presbytery of the Cascades in 1985–86. A Chinese-American, Rev. Chan was praised by presbytery colleagues for his witness to a gospel that transcends the divisions of racism. He also served on committees of Ecumenical Ministries Oregon. Chan is survived by four daughters, six grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



**Rev. Dr. Robert Dalton Christian (DMin 1980)** died December 18, 2017, in Gallatin, TN. He was born March 19, 1927, in Birmingham, AL. A Baptist minister, he served as pastor of congregations in Louisiana and Alabama before becoming a chaplain in the National Guard. His chaplain duty took him to bases in Turkey, Greenland, Thailand, and Texas. During his travels, he climbed Mount Ararat twice and led devotions at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, the possible site of Jesus' burial. He also served as president of Kiwanis multiple times. Dr. Christian is survived by his wife, Ann; one sister; his son; four stepchildren; two grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.



**Rev. Dr. Jack Carroll Bush Sr. (DMin 1986)** died December 26, 2017. He was born June 18, 1929, in Waco, TX, and married Ruth Louise Kline in 1950 after graduating from Baylor University. After his first job, as a high school band director, he spent the rest of his career as a minister in the United Methodist Church. Bush served as Pastor of Congregations in Texas and was Director of Chaplains at Methodist Hospital in San Antonio for more than 15 years. He played trumpet and arranged music for bands, orchestras, and choral groups. Dr. Bush is survived by his wife of 67 years, Ruth; two sons; three daughters; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.



**Rev. Dora Owens Ford (MDiv 1992)** died September 30, 2017, from pancreatic cancer. She was born March 3, 1944, in New York and grew up in Vermont and California. Drawn to serving people in need, she became ordained to the ministry and worked in the California prison system. She retired in 2015 in Eureka, CA, where she worked with special education students and was active in United Congregational Church of Christ. Rev. Ford is survived by a sister, two brothers, two sons, one daughter, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.



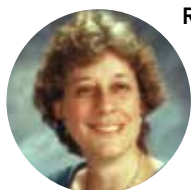
**Rev. Albert (Jack) Chan (BDiv 1957, MDiv 1961)** died February 18, 2018, in McMinnville, OR. He was born February 8, 1931, in Portland, OR, and earned degrees from Whitworth College and SFTS. Ordained to the ministry in 1957, he served as Pastor

**Rev. Dr. Nelson Miles Griffiths Jr. (DMin 1979)** died January 26, 2018, in Gainesville, FL, at age 86 after a 10-year battle with Parkinson's disease. Born on the family farm in South Killingly, CT, he attended the town's one-room schoolhouse and was the first in his family to attend college. He was ordained in the American Baptist Church and served for 42 years as pastor of congregations in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Nebraska. He also served for six years as Director of College Ministries in Western Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Joyce, created and sent more than 250 birthday and anniversary cards each year. Dr. Griffiths is survived by his wife of nearly 62 years, Joyce; a brother and sister; two daughters; one son; nine grandchildren; and one great-grandson.



known for his detail and craftsmanship. Rev. Shontz is survived by his wife, Susan; a sister; one son; one daughter; four grandchildren; and five step-children and their children and grandchildren.

**Rev. Kenneth W. Smith (BDiv 1955)** died September 7, 2017, at age 90. Born in Lackawanna, NY, he attended Sterling College in Kansas, where he met his wife, Betty Marie Ramsey. They married in August of 1950, and began mission service as teachers at Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, AK. Ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Smith served as Pastor of Congregations in Alaska and Hawaii for 40 years, including 22 years at Chapel by the Lake in Auke Bay, AK. He led mission trips throughout Alaska aboard the Anna Jackman, one of several vessels in the legendary "Presbyterian Navy." In retirement, he held numerous community posts and wrote 19 books. Rev. Smith is survived by his wife, Betty; four sons; one daughter; and two grandchildren.



**Rev. Gail Michele Snodgrass (MDiv 1977)** died September 29, 2017. She was born January 6, 1952, in Champagne, IL, and moved with her family to Las Vegas in 1961. At age 11, Rev. Snodgrass was diagnosed with diabetes, and at age 20, she lost a leg in an accident. Yet she was determined to overcome all obstacles in her career as a pastor and a hospital and prison chaplain. In 1977, she became the first woman in Las Vegas to be ordained as a Presbyterian minister. In 1979, she married Rev. Dr. Stanley Hall, a professor at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, who preceded her in death in 2008. She is survived by her mother, Peggy Hamel; a brother and sister; and nieces and nephews.



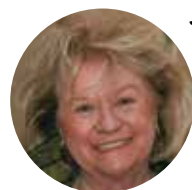
**Ruth Solomon (BDiv 1950)** died December 11, 2017, in Nampa, ID. Born June 23, 1927 in Phoenix, AZ, she showed a gift for music at an early age. She earned a degree in music education and then enrolled in SFTS, where she met her husband, Alfred Solomon (BDiv 1950, DMin 1976). They married in May 1950 and served together in congregations in Oregon, California, and Washington until retiring in Nampa to be near grandchildren. Ruth served as a deacon, choir director, and accompanist and sang in numerous community groups. She also taught piano and led music in early childhood education programs. She is survived by two sons, a daughter, and six grandchildren.

## FRIENDS OF THE SEMINARY



**Donald A. Duerr**, business administrator at SFTS until his retirement in 1984, died December 6, 2017, in Elk Grove, CA. Born November 17, 1921, in Melrose Park, IL, he served in the Army Air Corps as a navigator/bombardier in World War II, flying 66 missions in France and Italy. In 1956, Duerr became the first city manager of Sausalito, CA. While at SFTS, he was president of the San Anselmo Chamber of Commerce and president of the Marinwood Community Services District board of directors. He married Sybil Shirley, who preceded him in death after 52 years of marriage. The two were members of Christ Presbyterian Church in San Rafael, CA. Duerr is survived by a brother and sister, two daughters, two granddaughters; and three great-grandchildren.

**Monte B. Hill**, a faithful supporter of SFTS, died July 8, 2017. He was born August 22, 1926, in Los Angeles but grew up in San Francisco. He served in the U.S. Navy in the South Pacific during World War II and then graduated from City College of San Francisco. He married Ruth Allen, his high-school sweetheart in 1949. Hill worked as a movie projectionist for 50 years and was a member of Lakeside Presbyterian Church in San Francisco. He is survived by his wife, Ruth, and their son and daughter.



**Jane Caswell Hansen Tschannel**, a faithful supporter of SFTS, died January 21, 2018, at age 86. Born in Iowa, she studied music at Stanford University and used her musical gifts as a volunteer for the Red Cross, working with veterans and in homes for senior citizens. She served on boards of numerous organizations, including the Girl Scouts, the Hospice Giving Foundation, and the Steinbeck Center, where she helped preserve and restore the boyhood home of John Steinbeck. Tschannel is survived by two daughters, three grandchildren, and two great-granddaughters.

**Rev. Dorothy Lou Lairmore Michel (MDiv 1984)** died March 17, 2018 in Jefferson City, MO. She was born June 17, 1937 and married Rev. Alan Christian Michel in 1991. Having graduated with a BA from Sonoma State University, she received her Master of Divinity from SFTS in 1984. An ordained United Church of Christ Minister in Prescott, AZ, she first served First Congregational Church of Christ in Prescott and later served Faith United Church of Christ (New Braunsfel, TX), Tipton Church of Christ (Tipton, OK), Latham Christian Church (Latham, MO), Zion-Saint Paul United Church of Christ (Hermann, MO), and as Associate Minister at First United Methodist Church, (Jefferson City, MO) from 1993 until her retirement in 2001. Rev. Michel was a member of Hartsburg United Church of Christ, past president of the Jefferson City Ministerial Alliance and was recognized for her contributions to art and painting. She is survived by her two children, and four stepchildren, a sister and brother-in-law, a sister-in-law, and many step-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren.



**Rev. Wayne K. Shontz Jr. (BDiv 1954, STM 1956)** died September 15, 2017, after a brief illness. Born April 29, 1928, in Oil City, PA, he earned a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Detroit before studying theology at SFTS and Boston University. After being ordained to the ministry, Rev. Shontz served for 58 years as pastor of congregations in Utah, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. He also owned a miniature furniture business and was



*Please consider a planned gift to ensure the continuing expansion of the seminary's mission and vision. We invite you to connect with Walter Collins, Vice President of Advancement, at 415-451-2822 or [wcollins@sfts.edu](mailto:wcollins@sfts.edu)*

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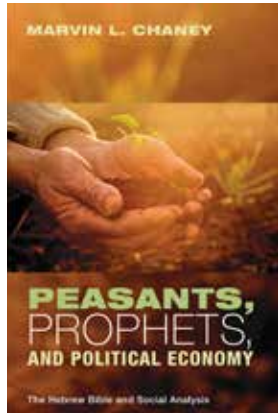
# CAMPUS NEWS



## *Peasants, Prophets and Political Economy*

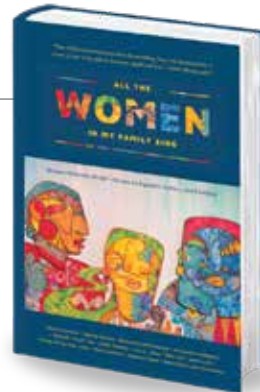
by Dr. Marvin Chaney Review by Dr. Herman C. Waetjen

Dr. Marvin Chaney, SFTS emeritus professor of Hebrew Exegesis and Old Testament, has recently published *Peasants, Prophets and Political Economy*. A weighty collection of thirteen essays, this volume covers the distinctive beginnings of Israel in its peasant movements and the formation of premonarchic Israel and continues into the written prophets of the eighth century, ending with an absorbing socio-historical comparison of pre-modern Korea and biblical Israel with a discussion of that comparison's significance for Old Testament interpretation. In his treatment of prophetic texts, Chaney offers a more accurate and detailed understanding of the dynamics



of change in the political economies of eighth-century Israel and Judah that contribute to a more meaningful comprehension of these ancient texts. This book will be the subject of a review panel in the "Economics in the Biblical World Section" of the meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Denver in November 2018. Dr. Chaney came to SFTS in 1969 to teach Old Testament, and through his 37 years here he explored and shared his critical sociological interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures with masterful enthusiasm. In 1980 he was installed as the Nathaniel Gray Professor of Hebrew Exegesis and Old Testament, and retired as emeritus professor in 2006.

*"[This] collection is of immense importance not only for historical reasons, but because it constitutes a wake-up call in our own highly contested political economy to read the Bible knowingly and critically."* —Dr. Walter Brueggemann



## *All the Women in My Family Sing*

MDiv Student Denise Diaab, Contributor  
DASD Student Deborah Santana, Editor

Since the Women's March in January 2017, there has been a growing sense of solidarity among women who refuse to be silenced. What began as a protest by women from every racial and socioeconomic background has evolved into a social and political movement. The last several months have proven that women's voices really do matter and can make a difference. The women in the anthology, including current MDiv student, Denise Diaab, share stories of living with courage, navigating injustice, and the complicated negotiation of culture, family

and society. This monumental and timely collection of poetry and prose raises the voices of women of color and represents the growing solidarity among women who speak truth.

*"These brilliant and moving essays show the astonishing, brave and passionate lives of women of color as they fight for autonomy, equality and love."* — Isabel Allende, author



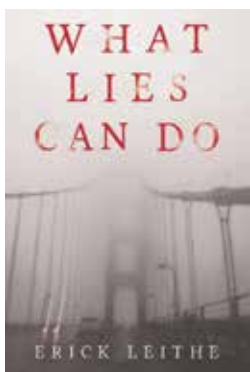
## *Courage in the Face of Evil*

by Mark Shaw  
(MATS 2008)



For Vera Konig, a Christian German nurse, the decision is clear: She must risk her life and that of Andrea, an orphaned Russian girl she is hiding at Ravensbrück Concentration Camp by trusting the enemy, a Nazi prison guard who may save Andrea or parade them both before a firing squad. Based on a true story, this daunting scenario sets the stage for an inspiring novel of faith, redemption, and the blur between good and evil where three people's lives are transformed. Through Vera's eyes, we are reminded that love may be universal when human survival is at stake. On June 3, MATS alum and author Mark Shaw hosted a reading and book signing at Book Passage in Corte Madera—one of the most prestigious independent bookstores in the San Francisco Bay Area. Proceeds from the event were generously donated to SFTS.

*"I believe this is a special book, and so relevant in today's world when division and hatred runs rampant. I'm hoping the book's theme will really make people stop and think and realize inclusion is the Christlike way to connect people, the only way."* — Mark Shaw, Author



## *What Lies Can Do* by Erick Leithe (MDiv 1971, DMin 2005)

MDiv and DMin alum Erick Leithe has self-published a gripping mystery novel about a seminarian interning in a prominent East Bay church who is drawn into a web of deceit and death. Protagonist Matt Beringer changes his career plans post-college and enrolls at a San Francisco seminary. Disturbing events occur as he begins his internship at a wealthy East Bay church when two fatal accidents stun the congregation. It becomes personal when he survives an attempt on his own life. As one Amazon



reviewer commented, "He captures nuances of life in this attention-grabbing tale; with artful speed he sets up the complex mystery, and barrels onward to its unwinding and ultimate resolution."

*"The story involves a good amount of action, some suspense, and a little romance. It also deals with some important issues that ministers confront, such as forgiveness, suffering, trust, selfishness, judging others, evil, and professional ethics."* —Erick Leithe, Author

# BRING BACK THE BELLS

Last year, the antiquated computer system that automates the hourly bells stopped functioning and we found it was badly in need of replacement. In our small town, the seminary's iconic bells have lifted the spirits and brought peace to our neighbors and friends since 1922. **With your help, we can replace the system and get our bells ringing across the Ross Valley again!**



An endearing fictional character created by MDiv students Andrew Quick (center, as Carl) and John Lyzenga (top right).

*Carl Modo is the seminary's bell ringer. From a long line of bell ringers, Carl learned to ring the bells at his grandfather's knee. Sadly, due to budget cuts, the seminary has had to let Carl go. Unfortunately, all Carl knows how to do is ring the bells at San Francisco Theological Seminary, yet he must venture into the world and find work elsewhere. As you'll learn in the entirely student-produced video, Carl's special talents don't quite work in the outside world. The seminary needs to get Carl back, and the only way we can do that is with your help!*

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## Make Carl go viral!

WATCH THE VIDEO and  
PLEASE SHARE TODAY!  
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**SAVE THE DATE**

# Join us for Alumni Weekend!

**OCTOBER 11–13, 2018**



During this special weekend, you'll have the opportunity to attend thought-provoking academic presentations, engage with current SFTS students and faculty, and experience restorative spiritual practices and community worship.

A special welcome is extended to members of the jubilarian class of 1968, as well as graduates and spouses of class years ending in 3 or 8.

**Invitations will be going out to you mid-June, so please be on the look out!**

**If you have questions or suggestions for content, please email us at [alumni@sfts.edu](mailto:alumni@sfts.edu).**