Endowed Scholarship Keeps Family Connected to PTS

Phillips Theological Seminary was always close to the hearts of the Rev. Doran and Jean Myers. In 1942 Doran Myers and Jean Powell both enrolled at the College of the Bible in Enid, Okla. Two years later they married at the University Christian Church on campus. Doran was ordained into the ministry of the Christian Churches, Disciples of Christ in 1947. While raising four children he and Jean pastored congregations in Watonga and Tulsa, Okla.; Pratt and Newton, Kan.; and Fremont, Neb. They retired in 1987 and moved to Hobart, Okla., where Jean continued to serve in many leadership positions in the Christian Church and Doran served as an interim minister for other congregations and as a part-time associate regional minister for Oklahoma.

After many years of financially supporting The Annual Fund at PTS, they seized upon the opportunity to establish an endowed scholarship in their names at PTS in 2002 when they found out their gift would be matched by Chester and Debbie Cadieux. Ruth Moore, the Myers daughter, reflected, “I was thrilled when my parents established this scholarship. I was amazed that they had the funds to do that. They were incredible mission supporters. Dad and Mother championed all the special offering days as well. They always managed to have the resources to give to something else. Our parents complemented each other so well. They were such a good match in ministry. The fact that they established the scholarship gives me and my siblings a place to honor them on their birthdays and on their anniversary.”

Kathryn Brown, another Myers daughter also said, “I thought their establishing the endowed scholarship was awesome, because it just carries on what our parents believed, that education is so important for clergy and congregations. They jumped at the chance to establish the scholarship, they were so excited. Then it gave us something to give to in their honor. After awhile what can you give to your parents? To establish the scholarship, I thought it was an extension of their whole DNA.” In 2009, PTS received their bequest matching their original gift.

On August of 2008, Clint Collins, 2010, sent a thank you letter to Doran Myers in response to receiving the Doran F. and M. Jean Myers Endowed Scholarship. Here is an excerpt from Clint’s letter:

“There are many times when we reach out to help others on faith, not knowing how our support makes a difference but trusting God that it will. While it is good to act in faith, a little affirmation goes a long way. I can say this with great confidence because my call to ministry is continually affirmed by people like you who support Phillips Theological Seminary.”

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student scholarships at PTS. So I would like to take this opportunity to return the blessing and affirm your gifts not only to me, but to the growing ministry of God’s church. When I moved to Oklahoma to attend seminary, I had to adopt a more faith-driven approach to life. Thankfully, you and many others were already modeling that type of faithfulness through your support of students. I want you to know that the example you set for me is every bit as important as the financial assistance you provide. I want to thank you for being my partner in our shared ministry to the world."

You can establish a named endowed scholarship today... More than eighty-five percent of students at PTS need financial aid from PTS. A minimum of $12,500 is needed to establish a named scholarship which will be matched by a fund established by Chester and Debbie Cadieux.

Designate a percentage of your estate to the charities that you value the most... When you make your will you are making one of the most important acts in your lifetime. One of the easiest ways to make a planned gift is to designate a percentage of your estate to those charities that are most important to you. Since you do not know now what the size of your estate may be or how much of your assets you may use until your death, designating a percentage is very attractive.

Another way to make planned gifts... You may consider transferring the actual ownership of unneeded life insurance to charity.

Tax-deferred IRAs... these can be given to tax-exempt charitable organizations when a donor reaches 70 ½.

Consult with legal counsel... Choose an attorney who has experience drafting wills, ask a friend or relative for a recommendation or contact your local bar association if you don’t know an attorney with such experience.

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- Kathryn Brown, daughter of Doran & Jean Myers

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Cultivating vital communities, vital conversations, and the public good is at the heart of a new strategic plan approved by the board of trustees. The plan builds upon PTS’s reputation for educating leaders for service in both congregations and the wider community and includes new statements and new programs to reach broader audiences.

The new identity statement reads: Phillips Theological Seminary offers theological education dedicated to learning the way of Jesus in order to cultivate vital communities, vital conversations, and the public good. PTS’s newly stated mission is to learn and teach how to be: attentive to God; responsible biblical and theological interpreters; faithful individuals and communities acting with God to transform the world.

As expressions of the commitment to engage broader audiences, PTS is introducing two new programs this Fall and has created options for non-degree students within current course offerings. The Interreligious Understanding program is designed to facilitate broad-ranging conversation among adherents of different religious traditions. PTS aims to prepare individuals for life and work in religiously diverse communities.

The FaithLife Connections (FLC) program is a topical, weekend lecture and workshop series where PTS faculty members will present Friday nights and Saturday mornings at a local congregation in each of 7 cities. FLC will be offered twice per year over a 3 year period. The PTS faculty has also opened select-ed courses in biblical languages and also biblical studies for non-degree students. In addition, a General Studies graduate certificate is available.

When asked why the seminary made these changes, PTS President Gary Peluso-Verdend responded, “The world of graduate theological education for ministry is in the midst of a radical change. At PTS, we’re reimagining the seminary enterprise. We will continue to educate candidates for professional ministry. In fact, we’re devoting considerable resources to re-thinking the coursework and outcomes for the mas-
PTS Student Thank You’s:

“My undergraduate degree was in journalism, and I worked as a journalist for our regional newspaper, the Southern Illinoisan, for many years. My favorite beat was faith and values. I love to tell the stories of people’s faith journeys, and help people understand other faiths and faith-based issues. For the last seven years I have been a member of the Carbondale Interfaith Council, and I currently serve as president. Building bridges and working together to help realize God’s peaceable kingdom inspires me. I plan to continue to write and edit, hopefully one day for religious publications, and to continue to teach and serve the church in whatever way I can. Thank you so much for your part in helping prepare me for whatever God has next.” - Marlene Shepherd

“It is with a deeply grateful heart that I write to simply say thank you for your generous support. My wife and two sons are truly blessed beyond words by the faithfulness of brothers and sisters in Christ, like you, who share of your resources. Your financial gifts make it possible for so many, like me, to pursue the higher education necessary to follow our calling with excellence. My passions are for evangelism, teaching, preaching and casting-vision. Although I do not know exactly how God will use me in the days ahead, whether planting a church, serving as a pastor, or traveling as a teacher and speaker, I do know that God will develop my gifts through this experience and education at Phillips.” – Todd Guinn

“I want to thank you for the gift of this scholarship. I appreciate your helping me fulfill my dream of finishing my seminary education. I had enrolled a year ago, but had to withdraw due to my husband’s health issues. He was diagnosed with cancer and had to begin treatment right away. The money we had set aside for my course work had to go toward his treatment. Your scholarship money has been a great blessing.” - Judy Conner