church leaders find ways to be spiritually and physically revitalized.

One presentation will explore sabbatical leaves for ministers and the availability of Lilly Endowment grants to fund such experiences. Guidelines for writing winning grant proposals and suggestions for possible research projects will be provided.

Ministers’ Week, an annual gathering of ministers and other church leaders, is a favorite time for many participants to get away from their daily responsibilities, especially after a demanding Christmas season. It is a time when friends enjoy getting together. There will be a reception with refreshments at the close of the program Tuesday afternoon. You can enjoy dinner on your own, and the rest of the evening is free.

The schedule for Ministers’ Week 2006 and a registration form can be found on page 7 of this issue.

In her highly acclaimed Alban Institute book, *The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a New Old Church*, she writes that rather than calling mainline churches to change, her research is showing that many such churches are changing by “reaching back to their native stories, drawing out practices known to their ancestors, and finding new ways of being faithful in a fragmented, detraditionalized world” (p.102).

During her two lectures, Butler Bass will explore the practices through which many traditional Protestant churches are becoming revitalized.

Stephanie A. Paulsell, Houghton Professor of the Practice of Ministry Studies at Harvard Divinity School, will preach at both the opening and closing worship services as well as lead a presentation on clergy renewal with Kay Bessler Northcutt of our faculty.

Paulsell is noted for her work in bridging the gap between the academic study of religion and the practices of ministry. She is also the author of *Honoring the Body: Meditations on a Christian Practice* published by Jossey-Bass.

**Personal Renewal**

Personal renewal will also be an emphasis during Ministers’ Week 2006. Workshops will be offered that are designed to help pastors and other church leaders find ways to be spiritually and physically revitalized.

For those who like to read ahead and be prepared for the Ministers’ Week 2006 discussions, we recommend three websites: www.practicingcongregations.org, www.congregationalresources.org, and www.alban.org.
The President’s Column

Two enormously important events have occurred on our campus this year. The first was Ministers’ Week—Homecoming in January 2005 with an emphasis on a new vision of ecumenicity. The second was Ministers’ Week–Wheeler Lectures in September, which focused on the need for greater interfaith understanding and engagement.

Both of these events go to the heart of how PTS understands itself and its mission to prepare women and men for effective Christian ministry.

As a seminary community, we see ourselves as intentionally ecumenical in terms of other Christian traditions and intentionally engaged with persons of other faiths. Our students must be prepared to creatively enter a world of growing diversity and to be able to embrace opportunities to deepen ties among Christians and people of other faiths.

I was privileged to be asked to address the topic of “Sailing the Ecumenical Boat in the 21st Century” for the January event. In those lectures, I argued that during the last two or three decades, a “New Ecumenism” has developed. A new ecumenical boat has been constructed, so to speak, that includes five new principles (or at least reshaped planks), which helps the boat to sail better.

The current issue of Call to Unity, published by the Council on Christian Unity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), contains my presentations as well as the workshop papers of Joe Bessler-Northcutt and Ray Owens from Ministers’ Week—Homecoming.

The second event, held in September, featured Paul Knitter of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, speaking on interfaith engagement.

I want to endorse his fine presentations and to list seven of my own points here which I shared at the President’s Dinner. They illustrate what PTS offers to our students as they become Christian pastors or lay leaders in a multifaith context.

1. Christian ministry must not be isolated from active engagement with other faiths. We believe Christian ministers and lay leaders cannot be triumphalistically isolationists in today’s world. We all have been created by the same God, whom we try to serve and worship the best we can, according to the light each faith tradition brings. We must honor the sincerity of each other’s beliefs.

2. Active engagement with and between living faiths is essential for the sake of the world and all humanity. Interfaith dialogue is not a luxury for those who can afford it. Nor is it merely a vehicle for sharing ideas. We need each other to meet the common challenges of justice, equity, and peace. Without active engagement and positive cooperation, those things which still need to be done for the sake of humanity will not be done or not done well.

3. Engagement, not tolerance, is what is called for. The language of “tolerance” or “toleration” is no longer helpful, if it ever was. Engagement, on the other hand, connotes equality, partnership, learning from one another, and being enriched by the insights which each faith tradition brings to the table.

4. Christians must be Christians without being Supersessionists. “Supersessionism” wrongly argues that Christianity has superseded Judaism and is superior to Judaism. We need to reject this erroneous argument and recognize instead that God continues to have a covenantal relationship with Jews which has not been replaced by God’s relationship with Christians.

5. Differences are not to be feared. To be open and in dialogue with people of other faiths does not mean we must compromise our own faith. It need not result in a “syncretism” of all faiths. We can engage those of different faiths and hold on to what is important in our own faith. We can disagree and still be open to new insight that we may receive through such exchanges.

6. Proselytization is inappropriate and inexcusable. While people of different faiths will continue to hold strong and long-cherished convictions, interfaith engagement and/or dialogue is not an opportunity for “evangelization,” or for “converting” one another. This, of course, does not mean that Christians, in other contexts, should not be involved in Christian mission or evangelism—but it does mean that in interfaith dialogue/engagement we owe one another respect and “safe space.”

7. As people of various faith traditions, we have more in common than what divides us. This is especially true of the so-called Abrahamic faiths, but it is also true of other faiths. We not only share a common humanity but common theological convictions about God, religious values, attitudes about the value and dignity of life, ethical standards, and a desire to see justice and equality prevail.

William Tabbernee
President
Founded in 1911, Red Rock Christian Church in north central Oklahoma has been “home” to many PTS students who served as pastor while attending seminary. Because of dwindling membership, the church decided to hold a final worship service August 28, 2005, and close its doors. Led by pastor Mary Lou Bryan, the members of Red Rock and dozens of friends celebrated their rich history and their relationship with PTS. Dawn and John Stemple represented the seminary in the service.

Noting that written records of all their student ministers were not complete, the congregation still rejoiced over the ministries of Roy Bullock ('58), John Novikoff ('63), Donald Parsons ('66), John Clark ('69), Mike McVay (Phillips University '71), George Richardson ('73), Mike Clifton ('75), Ed Varnum ('79), Ken Bellinger ('81), Mike Clifton ('86), Margaret McCullum ('87), Barbara Pierce ('89), Tim Johnson ('92), Bob Parsons ('93), Amy Booker-Hirsch ('97), and Mary Lou Bryan ('98).

Other PTS students who have served the Red Rock congregation include Cindy Robertson ('98), Robert Shaffer ('01), and Darin Corder ('05).

As responsible stewards, the Red Rock congregation liquidated its assets, giving most of the proceeds to the Oklahoma Disciples Foundation and distributing other items to various other churches.

PTS students will likely tell you they have many teachers during their years in seminary. Some of those teachers are respected professors with impressive scholarly credentials while other teachers are laypeople in the congregations the students serve while in seminary. Several PTS alumni/ae are remembering now the lessons they learned at Red Rock.

In Memory

The seminary community mourns the deaths of three women who have graced our life in past decades:

Sylvia Gantz, whose husband Hallie Gantz was president of Phillips University and pastor of First Christian Church, Tulsa, died at her home in Edmond, Oklahoma, in May.

Rosemary Huff, widow of former PTS professor Howard Huff, died in Tulsa in August. The Huffs served as missionaries to Japan for several years before coming to our campus in Enid, Oklahoma. They subsequently moved to Tulsa.

Sarah Margaret Miller, of Tulsa, died October 11, 2005. She was Elder Emeritus of First Christian Church, Tulsa, a former member of the seminary’s board of trustees, and a generous supporter of PTS. A memorial service is being planned in April 2006.
John Imbler has been elected chair of the Religious Understanding Committee for Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry. John Thomas and PTS student Darell Christopher have been elected to the TMM Board. Christopher is also chair of the TMM Committee Against Racism.

Rick Lowery spoke at a forum titled “The Role of Religion in Public Education,” in September. The event was sponsored by the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance.

Ellen Blue has an essay, “Countering Katrina,” which will appear in the November-December issue of the journal Zion’s Herald. She also recently hosted in Tulsa a meeting of the Women’s Leadership Team in the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.

Dennis Smith, Brandon Scott, and Joe Bessler-Northcutt presented papers in October at the Westar Institute in Santa Rosa, California.

Kay Bessler Northcutt was guest preacher at Rockefeller Chapel at The University of Chicago in October. She spoke as part of a weekend celebration of the 75th anniversary of The Disciples Divinity House.

John L. Thomas, Jr., was the featured speaker in October for the annual Clergy Appreciation Seminar at Tulsa’s Hillcrest Medical Center. The theme was “Cultivating Cultural and Ethnic Diversity in Congregations.”

Janet Parachin presented a paper on nonviolent activists in Oklahoma at the annual meeting of the Religious Education Association/Association of Professors, Practitioners, and Researchers in Religious Education, held in Toronto in early November. She was also elected a member at large of the REA/APPRRE Board.

Ann Jordan, PTS alumna class of 2004, has returned to campus to be Director of Student Financial Aid.

Myrna Ranney has moved from the student aid office to be the administrative assistant for the Office of Admissions, working with Myrna Jones.

Greta Lee and Nancy Killough are sharing responsibilities at the reception desk.

Clair Powers has joined the library staff and is working closely with Sandy Shadley, who is in charge of the library until a permanent director of the library is hired.

Anne Joh became assistant professor of Theology in July.

Nancy Pittman is now assistant professor of the practice of ministry and director of the Doctor of Ministry program.

Karen Tankersley, the wife of PTS alumnus Bill Tankersley, is our director of business and finance.

Diana Grigg is a part-time accountant in the business and finance office.

Janet Parachin has become a full-time member of the faculty as assistant professor of education and spirituality.

Rhonda Layman is the administrative assistant in the Office of Stewardship.

Roy Griggs, after a 9-month battle with cancer, has returned as director of church relations.

Lottie Henry has taken the position of part-time facilities assistant.
Meet a Trustee

Growing gardens is something that Fran Gasche-Cain truly loves. When I first met Fran she told me about her garden in Victoria, Texas, and she described the landscaping at her home there. I could see in her face such enthusiasm and love for planning and growing things. A beautiful garden just doesn’t happen without planning, nurturing, and using the right tools. I was now looking at the landscaping at her lovely, modest, new home in Bartlesville where she had come to live near her sister after selling the oil-rig manufacturing business that she and her first husband owned in Victoria for many years. Fran was tending a garden again.

Planning and tending gardens provide fruit and vegetables, shade and shelter, and beauty of flowers and leaf tones. Gift planning such as Fran has done provides for her and her family now and provides for the needed resources to grow a called, character-sound, and competent ministry for the future of our churches at Phillips Theological Seminary.

When Fran began planning the stewardship garden for the future of her resources, she gathered the appropriate tools to grow her garden. A friend of hers had given her some information produced by the Christian Church Foundation about tools that could benefit her family and ultimately benefit the charities that were the closest to her philanthropic heart. Fran’s husband, John Henry Cain, called me on the phone and asked me if I could arrange a meeting with someone from the Christian Church Foundation to come with me to visit with Fran. With the help of Bobby Hawley, Fran set up charitable remainder trusts to both benefit her siblings and children for life, and ultimately, benefit her beloved churches in Victoria and Bartlesville, and PTS.

By the way, John Henry called me in July of 2004, and asked me if there was still an opportunity to name a garden at PTS. He had named a faculty office in memory of his first wife and he wanted to do something to honor Fran. About once a month now, I take a stroll from my office to the named Fran Gasche-Cain Garden to get close to the earth and enjoy the sunshine. We are grateful to all the gardeners such as Fran who include PTS in their plans.

Fran was honored at the PTS Eastern Oklahoma Donor Appreciation Dinner at the home of Charles and Mary Ann Hargrove in Tulsa on October 10, 2005.

Virginia Walker
Stewardship Director and
Director of Planned Giving
Alumni/ae Notes

Anita Phillips (96), is now the academic dean of Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. She is also serving as the emergency services coordinator for the Oklahoma Conference of The United Methodist Church. She has been heavily involved in hurricane relief.

Mary McAnally (91) has been honored by Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry with its Ronald McDaniel Recognition award “for her decades-long commitment to interfaith collaboration and for her witness for justice and peace.” Her third book of poetry, Cosmic Rainbow, is scheduled to be published by Partisan Press in 2006.

Marty Barnes (00) was commissioned this past summer as Air Force Reserve Chaplain with the rank of First Lieutenant. He is currently pastor of First United Methodist Church in Tuttle, Oklahoma.

Robert Everett Smith (65) and his wife, Rena, have retired to the Kansas Christian Home in Newton, Kansas.

Updating Alumni/ae Information

If you have changed your mailing address, phone number, or e-mail address in the last six months, let us know as soon as possible. Send your update to judy.krase@ptstulsa.edu, or by surface mail to her at Phillips Theological Seminary, 901 North Mingo Road, Tulsa, OK 74116.

An Extra Parsonage

What do you do with an extra parsonage?

A question like that doesn’t come up very often, and it probably wouldn’t now except for Hurricane Katrina.

PTS alumni Michael Fletcher-Taylor (89) and his wife, Sharon Fletcher-Taylor (92) recently moved to Tulsa where he serves St. Matthews United Methodist Church and she is pastor of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church. As they watched the televised reports of thousands left homeless by the hurricane in New Orleans recently, they wondered, “What can we do?”

Sharon told a newspaper reporter, “We saw the pain and it just became obvious. God reminded us that we had a home we could make available.”

They quickly called meetings of both churches, which agreed immediately to offer the spare parsonage to a displaced clergy family from New Orleans. They contacted Jim Wilson, a retired UMC minister helping with emergency hurricane relief in Tulsa, and the husband of Ellen Blue, on the PTS faculty. Wilson and Blue located Victor McCullough, the pastor of Mount Zion United Methodist Church in New Orleans. The building of the 135-year old congregation had been heavily damaged and the members scattered.

Reports indicate that more than 80 UMC ministers in New Orleans have been displaced. Church buildings have been destroyed and members of the congregations are relocated throughout the nation.

The Fletcher-Taylors moved out of their home and into the smaller parsonage, so the McCullough family with four children, ages 7 to 18 years, could have rooms of their own.

Victor McCullough said he definitely felt the hand of God on him and his family. He was quoted as saying, “We believe our coming to Tulsa was an answer to prayer.”

He makes numerous trips back to New Orleans for insurance meetings and to do some pastoral work with families still in the area. He says members of Mount Zion are worshiping elsewhere until the church property can be repaired. Victor and his wife, Nancy, hope to return to New Orleans someday, because they miss the church family there. Meanwhile, the UMC bishops of Louisiana and Oklahoma are working on details for an interim appointment for Victor to serve a congregation in Tulsa.

Ellen Blue (center left) helps Nancy McCullough try on a PTS sweatshirt during a campus visitation day recently. Jim Wilson (left) and Victor McCullough look on. Nancy and Victor were on campus as she explored the possibility of enrolling at PTS next semester.
**Schedule of Events**

**Tuesday, January 17**
- 11:00 a.m. Registration
- 12:00 noon Lunch in Student Commons
- 1:15 p.m. Opening Worship: Stephanie A. Paulsell, preacher
- 2:30 p.m. Presentation on clergy sabbaticals and funding
- 3:45 p.m. Break
- 4:00 p.m. “Clergy Renewal,” Stephanie A. Paulsell and Kay Bessler Northcutt, leaders
- 5:30 p.m. Reception followed by dinner on your own and a free evening

**Wednesday, January 18**
- 9:00 a.m. Taizé Worship
- 9:30 a.m. “Profiles of Intentional Congregations,” Diana Butler Bass, lecturer, followed by small group discussions and Q & A
- 12:00 noon Lunch in Student Commons
- 1:15 p.m. Workshops
- 2:30 p.m. Refreshment break
- 2:45 p.m. Workshops
- 4:00 p.m. Free time
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner and program at the Rennaisance Hotel

**Thursday, January 19**
- 9:00 a.m. Gathering prayers
- 9:15 a.m. “Best Practices of Intentional Congregations,” Diana Butler Bass, lecturer, followed by small group discussions and Q & A
- 11:00 a.m. Closing Worship: Stephanie A. Paulsell preacher
- 12:00 noon Dismissal

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**Ministers’ Week 2006**
**January 17-19, 2006**

Name(s) _____________________________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________ City ___________ State _______ Zip ________
Phone _______________________________ e-mail ________________________ Amount enclosed

Number of people being registered ($75 per person) _______ $ __________

**Special Requests:**
(consider those that apply to you and add what your special needs are)
- [ ] Meals
- [ ] Accessibility
- [ ] Other

Comments: _______________________________________________________

**Method of Payment:**
- [ ] Credit card (circle one) VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER
Card Number ____________________________ Expiration Date ____________
Name on card (please print) ____________________________
Signature ____________________________________________

- [ ] Personal check

(Make check payable to Phillips Theological Seminary, noting “Ministers’ Week” on the memo line. Enclose check with this registration form.)

Complete this form and mail it to:

**Ministers’ Week 2006**
**Phillips Theological Seminary**
**901 North Mingo Road**
**Tulsa, OK 74116-5612**

For more information or inquiries contact Connie Inglish at
Phone: 918-610-8303, FAX: 918-610-8404, or e-mail: connie.inglish@ptstulsa.edu

This form is also available in .pdf format at www.ptstulsa.edu.

Please return your completed form with payment by January 10, 2006.
Conversations with the Holy

Paul F. Knitter addressed a full house in the Tabbernee Conference Center for Ministers’ Week—Wheeler Lectures.

Father George Eber (left) brought several icons of the Antioch Orthodox Church and explained their importance during a workshop.

Jewish Cantor Kari Siegel-Eglash (left) explained aspects of her faith, while Hari Musapeta (right) shared elements of the Hindu faith during workshops.

Stephanie Saldana (right) led a workshop on Christian-Muslim dialogue.

Chebon Kernell (right) described Native American religious traditions.

Sheryl Siddiqi (left) led a workshop on the Muslim faith.

Justin Schroeder (left) led a workshop on the Unitarian-Universalist Church.

Jewish Cantor Kari Siegel-Eglash (left) explained aspects of her faith, while Hari Musapeta (right) shared elements of the Hindu faith during workshops.