

## Faculty Activities and Upcoming Events

Members of the PTS faculty traveled to Chicago for the American Academy of Religion (AAR) conference November 1-3 and will attend the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) conference in Boston November 21-25.

### **Joseph Bessler, Robert Travis Peake Associate Professor of Theology and Associate Dean for Assessment and Faculty Development**

Joe's essay "Seminaries as Endangered Habitats in a Fragile Ecosystem: A New Ecology Model," will soon appear in *Revitalizing Practice: Collaborative Models for Theological Faculties* (Peter Lang Press, 2008). Joe and colleague Brandon Scott were the inaugural speakers for the annual Robert Myers Lecture Series at University Congregational Church held recently in Wichita, Kansas.

### **Duane R. Bidwell, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, Care, and Counseling and Director of Presbyterian Ministerial Formation**

This summer (2008), Duane conducted research on childhood hope at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, OH. He and his collaborator, physician Donald L. Batsky, interviewed children with end-stage renal disease about caring practices that nurture hope in the midst of chronic illness. The research will improve psychosocial and spiritual care for children at the hospital. Duane will present papers related to this research at the AAR.

In the spring (2008), Duane was certified as a Fellow of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. In June he presented "Christic Heart: Toward a Spiritual Theology of the Philippians Hymn" at the annual meeting of the College Theology Society in Newport, RI. He was also named Managing Editor of *The Journal of Pastoral Theology*. His article "The Embedded Psychology of Contemporary Spiritual Direction" will be published later this year in the *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 11(3).

### **Ellen Blue, Mouzon Biggs, Jr. Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and United Methodist Studies**

This summer Ellen presented a paper related to her sabbatical research project at "The United Methodist Church at 40 Consultation" at Emory University. Ellen also wrote a chapter entitled "Should Theological Education Be Different for Clergywomen?" which appears in the book *Women and Ordination in the Christian Churches: International Perspectives*, Ian Jones, Janet Wootton and Kirsty Thorpe, eds. (London: Continuum, 2008).

### **John M. Imbler, Executive Vice President and Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and Disciples Studies**

John served as keynoter at the Nebraska Disciples Men's Retreat, held in August 2008 at Kamp Kaleo in Burwell, Nebraska. The theme was "In Communion and Covenant: Pursuing a Disciples Identity." In November he will be the preacher at the Ozark Lakes Area Assembly of the Christian Church in Mid-America on the topic "Call and Response: Learning the Voice of God."

### **Anne Joh, Assistant Professor of Theology**

Anne served as one of four faculty members mentoring 14 doctoral students at the Asian Theological Seminary Institute. The conference was funded by the Luce Foundation and held at The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia (June 2008). She also presented a paper, "The State of Theological Studies" at the 10th Anniversary conference of The Asian Pacific Religion Research Initiative at the Pacific School of Religion.

Joh's response to Mary Engel Potters *No Self and the Calling Given to Anyone* will appear in the Fall 2008 issue of the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*.

She was appointed to the Mentoring Board for the Women of Color Doctoral

Scholars Program for The United Methodist Church. She also was appointed, by the President of the American Academy of Religion, to become a member of the Executive Board of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession.

At AAR, Joh participated in the following committees/meetings: Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession; the Steering Committee for Asian North American Religion, Culture and Society Group; Bible, Theology and Postmodernity (Co-Chair); and Women of Color Scholars (United Methodist Church) mentoring meeting. Anne served as a panelist in the following sessions: "Women of Color and the Study of Religion and Theology;" and "Korean American Theology." She was also a respondent to four presentations for a session titled: "Negotiating Inclusion and Exclusion."

### **Belva Brown Jordan, Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Services and Instructor in Ministry Studies**

Belva was named board chair of The Disciples Benevolent Services (DBS) Board of Trustees for 2008-2009.

### **Sandra Costen Kunz, Assistant Professor of Educational Ministries**

Sandra moderated an AAR session entitled "Cognitive Science, Religious Practices, and Human Development: Buddhist and Christian Perspectives" for the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies.

### **Kay Lynn Northcutt, Fred B. Craddock Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship**

Kay's book *Kindling Desire for God: Preaching as Spiritual Direction* is currently being printed by Fortress Press. It will be available at bookstores in January 2009. She will present a paper, "Preaching Non-Violence in a Violent World: The Community of Hope," at the Academy of Homiletics in November. Kay also serves as the liturgist and pianist for worship at the Academy of Homiletics.

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## Alumni News

### Association Meeting

The Phillips Theological Seminary Alumni Association will meet during Ministers' Week 2009 (January 13-15, 2009) to vote on changes to the constitution and bylaws. Please look for further information on this meeting in your mailbox, email inbox, and in the Ministers' Week brochure. Members of the Alumni Association include graduates, honorary degree recipients, and those who enrolled in and received course credit from Phillips Theological Seminary or its legal predecessors. For more information please visit the alumni section of the PTS web site [www.ptstulsa.edu](http://www.ptstulsa.edu).

### New Website

PTS has a new website with a new and improved "Alums and Friends" area. Please check it out at [www.ptstulsa.edu](http://www.ptstulsa.edu) and let us know if there are other web pages we can design to meet your needs.

### The Frank H. Marshall Award for Ministerial Excellence

The Distinguished Alumni/ae award has a new name, a name of distinction at PTS.

The Frank H. Marshall Award recognizes graduates of Phillips Theological Seminary, Phillips Graduate Seminary, The Graduate Seminary of Phillips University, or the College of the Bible whose service to God, the church, and the human community has been faithful and exemplary. A nominee might be someone who has rendered outstanding service as a congregational minister, in a ministry beyond the local congregation, as a missionary, chaplain, campus minister, or directing unique ministries.

The Marshall Award is the highest honor given by the PTS Alumni Association. It is presented to one or two individuals each year. The selection is made by the Award Committee of the Alumni Association.

The application process has been updated and information is now available year-round on the PTS website, [www.ptstulsa.edu/alumsandfriends](http://www.ptstulsa.edu/alumsandfriends).

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### Brandon Scott, Darbeth Distinguished Professor of New Testament

Brandon spent part of the summer on a speaking tour of Australia which included stops in Busselton, Perth, Darwin, Brisbane, and Melbourne. Presentations focused on the "Parables of Jesus, Maybe Paul Wasn't so Bad?" and "Reclaiming the Resurrection."

Additionally, he edited three books in the past year: *Finding the Historical Jesus*, *Jesus Reconsidered*, and *Listening to the Parables of Jesus*.

### Dennis E. Smith, LaDonna Kramer Meinders Professor of New Testament

In October Dennis attended the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee and presented a paper "Rethinking the Eucharist in History and Liturgy" at the Association of Disciples for Theological Discussion in Indianapolis. He served as chair of the Acts Seminar at the Westar Institute Seminars in Santa Rosa, California, also in October. In November, Dennis will present "Ephesus Up Close and Personal: Why Being There Matters" at the SBL Annual Meeting and will preside at meetings of the Seminar on Meals in the Greco-Roman World.

### Alum Updates

**Greg Bunton (2005)** - Greg spent part of this summer's sabbatical traveling more than 10,000 miles within the United States. Along with his family, he was sharing the music of his new worship CD, *Keep it Simple*, and promoting the Week of Compassion.

**Paul Krueger (1977)** - Paul and his wife, Becky, enjoyed a trip to Alaska, the western U.S. and a family reunion during Paul's sabbatical this summer. Paul was one of two Disciples of Christ ministers in Oklahoma to be awarded a sabbatical grant funded by the Lilly Endowment.

### Susanna Weslie Southard, Instructor in Hebrew Bible

Susanna plans to attend SBL. She has taught church school classes in the Tulsa area frequently this fall, most notably at Boston Avenue UMC. She has already been engaged for several more sessions in the spring.

### William Tabbernee, President and Stephen J. England Distinguished Professor of the History of Christianity

Recent publications by Dr. Tabbernee include a chapter on "Epigraphy" in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (2008), an article, "Interpreting the Scripture Together: Seeking the Visible Unity of the Church," in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (2008), and a book (with Peter Lampe), *Pepouza and Tymion: The Discovery and Archaeological Exploration of a Lost Ancient City and an Imperial Estate* (de Gruyter, 2008).

### PTS Faculty Essays Published

Several PTS faculty had essays published in *Chalice Introduction to Disciples Theology* (Chalice Press, 2008)

- "Theology and Tradition" - William Tabbernee
- "The Lord's Supper" - Belva Brown Jordan and Stephanie A. Paulsell
- "Operative Theologies of Disciples Preaching" - Kay Lynn Northcutt
- "Toward a Disciples Theology of Religions" - Don A. Pittman

**Fuxia Wang (2004)** - Fuxia was selected as one of four interpreters in the world to interpret Mandarin for The United Methodist Church.

**George Young (1998)** - George was a special guest invited by the Oklahoma Democratic Party to the Democratic National Convention in August. Although there were many things that made the convention exciting for him, George felt he experienced a real sense of change and hope that went beyond the presidential campaign.

## Looking for Timothys and Priscillas

As alumni/ae and friends of PTS, you provide an important link to prospective students.

One of the most important ways you can support PTS and its mission is to watch for those whom God is calling and encourage them to respond to that call.

The admissions and recruitment staff want to serve as a resource to you as you identify candidates for Christian ministry. There are three things you can do to help provide a bridge between prospective students and the seminary:

- ◆ Encourage prospective students to visit the Phillips campus.
- ◆ Point them to information about our programs on the PTS website- [www.ptstulsa.edu](http://www.ptstulsa.edu).
- ◆ Email or call me, the director of student recruitment, and provide me with contact information for any prospective students.

Linda Ford, 918.270.6463 or [linda.ford@ptstulsa.edu](mailto:linda.ford@ptstulsa.edu).

## Monday Night Public Lecture Series

Attendance at “Faith Matters,” a free lecture series designed for church leaders and the general public, averaged over 100 persons on each of six Monday nights this fall.

- On September 15, President Tabbernee taught “Digging the Faith: Archaeology and the Bible.” His presentation focused on the discovery and excavation of ancient places important for the history of Christianity.
- On September 22, New Testament Professor Dennis Smith examined how “Faith Matters at the Table: Dinner with Jesus and Paul.” In this illustrated lecture, Dennis explained banquet traditions in the Greco-Roman world and how both Jesus and Paul utilized those traditions in their teachings.
- “Learning God: Living Our Faith” on September 29 was led by Preaching and Worship Professor Kay Lynn Northcutt. Kay explored Christian wisdom through the writings and thought of great spiritual leaders such as Benedict of Nursia, Meister Eckhardt, Teresa of Avila, and Julian of Norwich.
- The October 6 presentation featured Theology Professor Joseph Bessler. In “Political Faith: How Candidates Use Religion,” Bessler discussed why and how religious themes and structures are inevitably intertwined in American political discourse. He focused on the recent convention addresses of Barak Obama and John McCain.
- “Walking the Faith: Ruth’s Adventure” was the topic for October 13. “The biblical story of Ruth is charming, disarming, and occasionally alarming when we read the text closely and contextually,” said Susanna Southard, Hebrew Bible Instructor. “In ‘Ruth’s Adventure,’ we explored just such a reading with a focus on the most provocative and perhaps least preached chapter in her amazing journey.”
- The fall series ended on October 20 with Theology Professor Anne Joh’s presentation on “Practices of Faith: Call to Discipleship and Decolonialization.” Joh explored various ways our practices of faith and discipleship have been shaped by Christianity’s connection with Western imperialism and colonialism. Understanding this legacy, she argued, is vital if we are to achieve greater openness to one another.

A second round of “Faith Matters” will begin in February 2009.

## Faculty, Staff, and Alumni/ae Passings

The seminary has been notified of the deaths of the following members of our community after the spring 2008 *Seminary News* was published in April:

Gary Damrose, Raymond Ewing, Emmett Haas, Forrest Haggard, Walter Hargraves, Lois Hawkins, Charles Johnson, Fred Jordan, Sam Langley, Robert Peake, James R. Reed (Indianapolis), N.E. Riedl, and R.C. Worden.

We grieve the loss of each of these persons and give thanks for the many years of faithful ministry to which they gave themselves.

## Help PTS to Go Green: Email

Does PTS have your email address? If you are unsure, would you please send a note to [melanie.tipton@ptstulsa.edu](mailto:melanie.tipton@ptstulsa.edu). We are trying to communicate electronically more frequently with alums and friends. Help us to use our resources well!



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## *IRA Rollover Opportunity Reinstated*

If you are at least 70 1/2, own an IRA, and would like to make a gift to PTS, Congress has passed a law that might help you.

*The IRA Rollover Extension, which expired at the end of 2007, has been re-instated and will apply to gifts made from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009.* The seminary would gratefully receive gifts either for the Annual Fund or for the Bridges of Faith Campaign. To explore whether or not this might be right for you, or to talk about a gift you would like to give, please contact Ginny Walker: [virginia.walker@ptstulsa.edu](mailto:virginia.walker@ptstulsa.edu) or 918.270.6417.



*Afton Travis, pictured right with Virginia Walker, director of planned giving at PTS, recently hosted a Generation to Generation luncheon honoring those who have made provisions for PTS through deferred or estate gifts.*