

# Praxis

News from Hartford Seminary • April 2003 • Vol. XV • No. 1



## FROM THE STREETS TO THE SEMINARY A Second Chance for Jackie Williams

By David S. Barrett

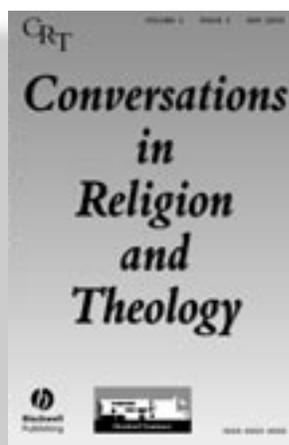
Director of Public and Institutional Affairs

**J**ackie Williams was a 17-year-old gang member who had just five minutes. Convince “Colombo” that it was a case of mistaken identity and he had not killed a member of Colombo’s rival gang or die.

“It was the most scared I’ve been,” Williams said. “The gun pointing at me didn’t make it easier.”

Stuttering, shaking, Williams survived. He talked his way out of an execution, although he did not leave the room without a beating. He felt that was a small price to pay for his life. *Continued on page 4*

NEW BOOK BY FACULTY



## Lively Dialogue

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## Visiting Scholars

*DIVIDED BY GEOGRAPHY,  
UNITED BY PRAYERS  
FOR PEACE*

By Christine Palm

They’ve come from all over the globe, united by an intellectual thirst and a humanitarian passion – mixed in equal measure. Six visiting scholars at Hartford Seminary are currently studying, researching, debating and enlightening round-table participants with their knowledge of Islam and Christianity, and their fierce desire to create a more peaceful world.



“It is so important that we work in Indonesia – and throughout the globe – for peace,” says Rev. Tony Tampake, an Indonesian studying at the Seminary, who has particular expertise in Society and Religion. “We must overcome communal violence and human rights violations, and I hope, through my work at



Hartford Seminary, to analyze the history of Islam, so that as Muslims and Christians, we can work together to solve our problems.”



Tampake, a pastor and graduate student at Satya Wacana University in the city of Salatada, received scholarship aid for his nine-month course of study at Hartford Seminary through a grant by the H.A. Vance Foundation.

A second Vance student from Indonesia is Rev. Ferry Nahusona. While studying at the Seminary, Tampake and Nahusona will work with Christian congregations to help them understand the dynamics of Muslim-Christian relations abroad and here in the United States.



Tampake and Nahusona join

*Continued on page 8*

Pictured from top:  
Muhammad Sirozi; Abdur-Rasaq Adesina; Tahir Uluc and the Rev. Ferry Nahusona

# Get Acquainted with Hartford Seminary

Thursday, May 8th • 5:30-7:30 p.m.

**T**he doors of Hartford Seminary will open wide on May 8th to welcome members of the community for an informal evening of information and fellowship.

This program is being sponsored by the Alumni/ae Council to broaden the institution's visibility and promote greater understanding of the offerings and mission of Hartford Seminary.

"We invite members of the faith, business and academic communities, and all interested seekers, to attend this event. It is a wonderful opportunity to get acquainted with others who recognize the importance of theology, faith in practice and dialogue among those from various faith traditions", states planning committee chairperson Frank O'Gorman '99. Other members of the planning committee include Janet Bristow '97, Vicky Cole-Galo '97, Fidelia Lane '52, Alan McLean '71 and Joseph Wei '92.

President Heidi Hadsell, Dean Ian Markham, faculty, visiting international scholars, administration, alumni/ae and members of various faith communities will be present to greet guests and answer questions. The evening's program will include a reception, college fair for educational events and certificate and degree programs, and informal discussions on interfaith understanding, ethics, spirituality and sociology of religion.

Attendance is free, and advance registration is requested. If you know of person(s) who would like to learn more about Hartford Seminary, please encourage them to attend this special evening. For further information, or to register, contact Robin Johnson in the Institutional Advancement office at (860) 509-9518 or email inquiries/registrations to [rjohnson@hartsem.edu](mailto:rjohnson@hartsem.edu). Please include name, address and telephone/email.

## News Briefs

### Bissell Grant

For the third consecutive year the J. Walton Bissell Foundation has awarded Hartford Seminary \$8,000 for scholarships for students in the Black Ministries Program and Programa de Ministerios Hispanos.

Hartford Seminary received the award in December for use by September 2003.

A long time supporter of Hartford Seminary, the J. Walton Bissell Foundation has contributed to Seminary events such as the Festival of Latino Christians and the Alumni/ae Series Seminar as well as scholarship funds for the Black Ministries Program, Programa de Ministerios Hispanos, and Women's Leadership Institute.

### Agreement with Amazon

Hartford Seminary has established an affiliate agreement with Amazon.com, which entitles the Seminary to receive five percent of every purchase made through its "door" into the Amazon web site.

If you are going to use Amazon to buy CD's, cameras, toys, other gifts, or books - visit them through the "door," located at: <http://www.hartsem.edu/bookstore/online.htm>

Of course, the bookstore prefers that you order books directly from them (phone number 860-509-9527).

If you enter the Amazon site through this "search box door," five percent of your total purchases during that visit to Amazon will automatically be credited to Hartford Seminary's account. Any type of Amazon purchase, Seminary related or not, that you make from any computer will benefit the school.

Editor: Christine Palm • Designer: James Baker

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# Seminary Bids Farewell to Nancy Ammerman



In the eight years Nancy T. Ammerman worked at Hartford Seminary, she contributed greatly to her field of sociology of religion and to the institution itself.

Ammerman recently resigned, as of June 30, to accept a position as professor of sociology of religion at Boston University's School of Theology and

Department of Sociology. She also will be associated with the university's Institute for Religion and World Affairs.

In a recent interview, Ammerman talked about the professional and personal impact Hartford Seminary has had on her. Ammerman arrived in July 1995 as professor of sociology of religion; she is on the faculty at the Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research.

"The research work that I have done is a highlight of being here," Ammerman said. "It is the reason I came." She has had an opportunity "to spend time and energy to develop a real understanding about how American religious organizations work."

Ammerman has explored the question of how secular American society is or isn't and, relatedly, how we understand what it means to talk about secularization.

At the research institute, "I brought a very intentional bridging of academic and practical communities," Ammerman said, contributing both to the field, providing an understanding of religion in American society, and to the public, interpreting findings for audiences of religious leaders.

Personally, Ammerman said, "Being a part of this interfaith institution has been challenging and exciting for me. Having Muslim colleagues and students, Jewish colleagues and students, has stretched my thinking and my faith."

Ammerman cited other highlights:

- "There have been some remarkably good Doctor of Ministry students here. The process of teaching gifted ministers who work in a variety of settings who are actively engaged in thinking about their ministry has been a wonderful challenge."

- "I have enjoyed the administrative work. Working on the institutional renewal grant was just a delight — bringing people to engage with the faculty to understand who we are. It helped the institution survive during uncertain leadership, building a foundation that sustains us."

Ammerman also talked about her appreciation of the atmosphere at Hartford Seminary. "It has been great fun to work in such an innovative and entrepreneurial environment where people have a can-do attitude and you can get things done. People who have not worked elsewhere do not appreciate this. It is so relatively easy to plan and to accomplish things here. It is a delightful organizational environment," Ammerman said.

"The people here believe in what an amazing place this is," she said, "the inclusion Hartford Seminary stands for, the hospitality Hartford Seminary stands for. People come from all over the world to study here. Boy, that's fun."

While at the Seminary, Ammerman led a major study, titled "Organizing Religious Work," that was funded by the Lilly Endowment. She is nearing completion of a book resulting from the study,

*Pillars of Faith: American Congregations and Their Partners, Serving God and Serving the World.* This book surveys the panorama of American religion.

*"People come from all over the world to study here. Boy, that's fun."*

Ammerman published several other books during her time in Hartford. Her most recent book,

*Congregation and Community*, tells the stories of 23 congregations that encountered various forms of neighborhood change in communities around the country. She also co-edited a new edition of *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*.

Ammerman's husband, Jack W. Ammerman, recently resigned as librarian and director of educational technology at Hartford Seminary and now is head of the library at Boston University's School of Theology.

## Jackie Williams *Continued from page 1*



“After five years of part-time teaching at Hartford Seminary following 40 years of parish ministry, it has been my experience that this *Praxis* profile is not only a tribute to a remarkable student. It is also a testimony to the mission of Hartford Seminary that contributes to – and benefits from – students like Jackie Williams.”

*The Rev. J. Alan McLean*

Soon he graduated from high school and joined the Army. Twenty-four years later, he is a student at Hartford Seminary, studying for a Master of Arts degree. Jackie Williams is a survivor, and his tale is one of courage and commitment.

With a goal of becoming a pastor and working with young people who have run into trouble, Williams says, “I want to be a living example that life doesn’t have to end in the street and that God is the God of second chances.”

The Rev. J. Alan McLean, who teaches the Seminary’s Ministry Seminar, said of Williams, “He exemplifies the distinctive ministry of theological education that is Hartford Seminary. What a privilege it was to learn with – and from – Jackie as he provided the context of his faith, and the context of his life.”

“After five years of part-time teaching at Hartford Seminary following 40 years of parish ministry, it has been my experience that this *Praxis* profile is not only a tribute to a remarkable student. It is also a testimony to the mission of Hartford Seminary that contributes to – and benefits from – students like Jackie Williams,” McLean said.

Today Williams is married and has a 16-year-old son. He lives in New Haven, CT and works as a health care technician in the wound care clinic at the Veterans Administration hospital in West Haven. He is praise and worship leader at Shiloh Baptist Church in New London, CT, where he also directs the young children’s choir and is the pianist for the youth choir.

This is Williams’ story.

Born in 1961, Williams grew up in Newark, N.J., the son of a preacher who was pastor at Holiness Church. His father’s philosophy was, “God first, family second,” and he was often absent from home, traveling across the country to lead revival meetings.

Williams, left to himself, soon found his neighborhood a tough place to grow up in. Gangs were prevalent, and he decided he had to join a gang

for survival. “You would get jumped every day until you joined a gang for protection,” he said.

While continuing to go to school at Weequahic High School, Williams joined “The Wild Bunch.” But joining wasn’t a simple process of signing up. You had to be tested. You had to fight one person, then two if you won, then three, until eventually you could not hold your ground and you were beaten up. The gang wanted to determine if you were a “runner” or someone who stood his ground. At 13 years old, Williams passed his test.

He remained a member for five years, until he joined the Army.

The gang became his family. Williams suffered from low self-esteem, and the gang, showering him with affection, made him feel appreciated. His father was very strict, and he felt pressure from his family and his school, so the gang was a haven.

Things got so bad, Williams said, that if the gang had told him to harm his blood family, he would have.

During this period, Williams continued going to school. This didn’t restrict his gang affiliation because gang activity was prevalent at the school. Then came real trouble in 1979.

Because of the case of mistaken identity, Williams stayed away from school for four months during his senior year in high school. In the morning, he would leave home and hide in the park until his parents went to work. Then he would sneak back home and stay out of sight.

Eventually, an acquaintance, who belonged to the gang that had put out a contract on him, arranged the meeting with Colombo, which actually was a trial. Williams knew that, if he survived, he would endure a beating because “it’s all about image” and Colombo had to save some face.

Once he was “acquitted,” he ran a gauntlet of gang members wielding baseball bats. He ran through the line and out the door, suffering blackened eyes, a busted lip and bruises.

Despite his four-month absence from school, Williams had enough credits to graduate. He had earned extra credits, thankfully, in his first three years.

But now he had to decide what to do to earn a living. One day he watched a member, whom Williams considered a sociopath, shoot a woman in the street “in cold blood.” This led to the subsequent revenge execution of the gang member. These deaths made Williams realize “that I had to get out or I would die in the street.”

In the fall of 1979, he joined the Army Reserve. He was sent to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, for eight weeks of basic training and to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for 12 weeks of training as a psychiatric technician.

Then he went home to Newark where “I was right back in the street.”

Williams took a job as a store security guard. But tensions with the city’s gangs increased as he caught one member who had tried to rob the store.

So in 1980 Williams decided to join the Army full-time. This was his first step toward a different, more faithful, future.

He was assigned to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., where he worked for a year in the psychiatric unit. His faith, and trust in the Lord, grew at this time. Williams grew close to “12 to 15 brothers, who were more mature than me.” They took the bus to church together and kept an eye on each other. “How are you doing today? Are you clean?” they asked each other. Here was a peer group that was a positive substitute for the Wild Bunch.

Then in 1981 Williams was told that he would be transferred to a unit in Germany. Serendipity was about to strike.

Williams decided to visit his grandfather in North Carolina before he shipped out. His grandfather was more than 100 years old, a man of wisdom and faith. He was fond of giving advice: “Be careful what you plant when you are young

*Continued on next page*

## Jackie Williams *Continued from page 4*

because it is going to come up when you are old. If you plant bad seeds, you will reap what you sow.”

Williams had last seen his grandfather when he was 15 and his parents had sent him to North Carolina because he was out of control. At that time, his grandfather did not speak to him during the three weeks he was there, instead praying for him. “He knew I wasn’t in a position to hear,” Williams said.

In 1981, as Williams was getting ready to return to his Army unit, his cousin, who was taking him to the train station, stopped at a store and told Williams that he should meet this girl who was sitting in a car in front of the store. The cousin knew her and introduced them.

The girl was a missionary for her church and asked Williams to attend a revival meeting. Williams decided to stay and went to the revival with the girl.

“Three days later I asked her to marry me. I knew she was the one.” Karen said “yes” and now they have been married 21 years. Williams described the scene:

“We hadn’t been out. I had never kissed her. I said I had something to say. She said, ‘I know what you are going to say. The good Lord told me.’”

Williams said he would not counsel anyone to decide on marriage this way, “but I was in love.”

Williams left for Germany in January 1982 without his wife because as a private he could not bring his family with him for six months. Karen came over in the summer of that year.

Williams spent nine years in Germany, working as a medic in various units.

Almost immediately, Williams became involved with the Church of God in Christ jurisdiction. He started playing the piano and then started working with the young people of his local church. Within a year, at the recommendation of his pas-

tor, he became head of the youth programming for all 45 churches of God in Christ in Germany. Williams would visit each church, working with their Young People Willing Worker chapter, and also organized national conferences in 1983 and 1984.

In 1985, he became pastor of a church in Bad Hersfeld. This was a church in trouble. It had gone from 100 members to 10 because of a scandal surrounding its pastor. “This was really hard. They don’t know me; I don’t know them. I had no formal training, not even as a chaplain.”

But he had an advantage — the church members were Army personnel, and they saw him at work every day, so through daily contact he could show them what kind of person he was.

Becoming a pastor with no formal training was not unusual to Williams. “In the circles I traveled in, none of the pastors had any formal training. My father had a ninth-grade education,” Williams said. You just had to be spiritual to serve.

In an irony, compared to his studies today, Williams said, “I was taught that Seminary was a killer to our spirituality. My father saw Seminary as a cemetery.”

During Williams’ five-year tenure as pastor at Bad Hersfeld, the church grew to 300 members. It also became diverse, with Germans, Ethiopians and other Africans joining.

The church was 50 miles from his Army base, and Williams always was on the go between work and church. He realized that his wife was displeased with his lack of time at home, and he decided to change.

In 1987, their son was born and Williams reflected on his relationship with his father. “I realized my father was away too much. I wasn’t there to see my son walk, and I knew that of first and foremost importance is to minister to my family.”

In spring 1991, as Operation

Desert Storm approached, Williams’ unit was transferred to Saudi Arabia. His tour of duty ended in August of that year and he had intended to re-enlist. But he decided to leave the Army in order to spend more time with his family.

On his return to Newark, Williams could not find work for six months. He and his family had to survive on the severance the Army had paid him. Finally he landed jobs at Federal Express at night and Continental Airlines by day. “I was never home; it was the same rut.”

A year went by, and Williams was invited to preach at a youth rally at the Temple of Faith in New Haven. This was his first trip to Connecticut, and an aunt of his wife, knowing of his medical background in the Army, suggested he apply for a position as medical technician at the nearby V.A. hospital.

Williams was disappointed, when he went to the hospital, to learn that the job already had been filled. But three days later he received a call asking if he would be willing to start at the bottom. He said “yes” and signed on as a housekeeper.

He worked his way up, to his position today as a health care technician. Williams was helped by his honesty. One day, when he was emptying the trash in the Nursing Department, he found \$500 in the trash. He took the money back to the head of the department. Later, when he applied for jobs, she would help by recommending him.

Meanwhile, he became the musician for a choir at the hospital — “they needed someone for free” — and then met the Rev. Dr. Benjamin K. Watts, senior pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church in New London, through Watts’ sister, who worked at the V.A. hospital. Watts asked him to assist as musician for the youth choir at Shiloh Baptist and Williams never left.

Watts, who is director of the Seminary’s Black Ministries Program and adjunct faculty



“I... think it is very significant that Pastor (Ben Watts) is the first black educated preacher that I have ever known personally. It was his living and preaching that destroyed the myth that Seminary was a killer to one’s spirituality.”

*Jackie Williams*

*Continued on page 6*

at the Seminary, influenced Williams not only in terms of religion but also in his attitude toward education.

"I also think it is very significant that Pastor is the first black educated preacher that I have ever known personally," Williams said. "It was his living and preaching that destroyed the myth that Seminary was a killer to one's spirituality."

In fact, Watts is fond of saying that the Seminary is a cemetery – "a cemetery to ignorance."

Today Williams goes to Shiloh Baptist four days a week for rehearsals, worship and Sunday services. His son accompanies him, as chaplain of the youth choir.

After he left the Army to spend time with his family, Williams followed through by taking up martial arts with his son. He has not forgotten his vow to himself not to repeat the mistakes of his father.

Williams brings his personal experience to his work with today's youth.

He talked about how his high school guidance counselor stigmatized him by telling him that he was not college material. The counselor said this because Williams was friends with a student who had robbed the counselor and the counselor saw them as the same dead-end students.

"I don't care how bad a person looks; you've got to talk positively to them," Williams says.

Williams knew he needed to continue his education and he attended Gateway Community College and then completed his B.A. at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven.

Watts encouraged him to go to Seminary, and he tried to get into Yale Divinity School but was not accepted. Now that he has begun studying at Hartford Seminary, he has no plans to leave.

He finds its interfaith environment challenging and enriching. The Ministry Seminar, he said, "exposed me

to a lot of stuff about myself."

His goal of becoming a pastor may come sooner than he thinks. Watts said Williams is a candidate to lead a church now, but he wants to make sure Williams continues his education too.

Williams sees purpose in all the aspects of his life.

When he was a pastor in Germany, he knew it was not time for him to become a pastor, but God needed him there to hold the church together.

As for his gang membership, "God can take some of the bad decisions we've made and use them for a purpose. It was wrong to join a gang. But you should keep the principles of the gang and use them in service of God: You don't give up. You don't run from anybody. You fight to the end."

Williams has had to fight, especially internally. His lack of self-esteem has made it hard for him to face his challenges and not give up. But he keeps fighting – and winning.

## New Library Staff

The Hartford Seminary Library recently made three part-time staff appointments which will improve the Library's service to its users.



**Catherine Bayer** has been named Reference Librarian, and is covering for interim Librarian Steve Blackburn on those days when he is teaching.

Bayer's tasks run the gamut from fielding questions about recent acquisitions to steaming apart the personal letters of Walter Pitkin, who was at Hartford Seminary in the late 1800s.

"It was certainly the first time I ever had to steam letters open over a pot of boiling water — a first for me," Bayer laughs. "But I couldn't make copies otherwise because they were stuck together. And we had a patron very eager to use the letters in her research. I figured, if she isn't going to read this material, who is?"

Prior to coming to the Seminary, Bayer worked as law librarian for the firm Sorokin, Gross & Hyde in downtown Hartford. She holds a Master's in Library Science (MLS) from State University of New York at Geneseo, and a B.A. from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto, where she did Biblical studies work, with a concentration in New Testament.

Bayer, who also worked in Washington, D.C. in governmental documentation, is "surprised by how many pastors use the Library. The range of clientele is enormous – and gratifying. Everything from grief counseling for children to research on sacred space."

Bayer lives in West Hartford.



**Dorothy Kimble**, former interim minister at First Parish of Kingston, Massachusetts, has been named library aide. She is an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister, and received her degree from Andover Newton Theological School in 1981.

Kimble also holds a nursing degree from Beth Israel School of Nursing in Boston, and served as an R.N. for 18 years in Boston. Her other pastoring experience includes serving parishes in Maine and Massachusetts full time.

In addition to her work at the Seminary, Kimble is passionate about poetry, and frequently participates in writing seminars.

Kimble recently moved to West Hartford.



**Gale Brancato**, who has served as Cataloguer in the Library for just under 20 years under a cooperative arrangement among the Seminary,

Rensselaer at Hartford and the Hartford Consortium of Higher Education, has recently renegotiated her contract so that she now works directly with the Hartford Seminary Library, rather than through the previous contractual arrangement.

In this part-time position, Brancato, who holds a Master's in Library Science (MLS) from Rutgers University, is responsible for the inventory, identification and cataloguing of the Library's holdings.

Brancato lives in Hebron.

# Lively Dialogue

## Faculty Launch New Journal

By David S. Barrett

Director of Public and Institutional Affairs

Two faculty members at Hartford Seminary have begun a new journal, *Conversations in Religion and Theology*, to shape the discourse in the fields of theology and ethics.

Ian Markham, dean of the Seminary and professor of theology and ethics, is the editor of the twice-yearly publication. Kelton Cobb, professor of theology and ethics, is co-editor.

"The idea for *Conversations*," Markham said, "is that we take the finest writing in theology and religion; we then invite a review article on that book and give the book's author the chance to reply. The net result is a substantial review with the author's response."

Markham and Cobb see *Conversations* as in line with the Seminary's mission to promote dialogue. "Dialogue is conversation; it is a sharing of points of view," Markham said. "We are persuaded that this new journal will encourage dialogue both among scholars and among those interested in exploring their ethical beliefs."

The journal, published by Blackwell Publishing, is an enhancement to the long-standing *Conversations in Religion and Theology*.

As Markham and Cobb explained in the introduction to the first issue: "Even in our Internet age, books remain the main vehicle for quality research. The monograph that develops an argument, which hopefully will shape the subsequent discourse in a field, is the main medium of scholarship. These

monographs deserve attention. With the sheer quantity of books published, it is easy to lose sight of even good books."

The editors plan to give prominence to progressive theology and religious studies. "In other words, we acknowledge the importance of challenging the contours of the dominant canon in the west and therefore feel that feminist theology and other identity theologies need particular attention."

The first issue includes reviews and responses on, among other books and monographs, "Reading the Bible from the Margins," "The Christian Theology of Religion's Need to Go Global," "A Comparative Sociology of World Religions," and "Saving the Roman Catholic Church?" It also includes a dialogue on messianic Judaism.

Reviewers will be sought for their expertise and ability to engage with the text as scholar with scholar. But the journal also will include a section where prominent religious leaders are asked to comment on a text.

Two other features will be a section that reflects on the latest books published in an area to indicate the likely directions that a certain subject is taking and Book Notes at the end of each issue. Occasionally, *Conversations* will invite position statements on contemporary controversies from groups and individuals. "The theme that links these features is a commitment to engage with contemporary writing and do so committed to conversation," Markham and Cobb said.

They added, "We have high expectations of the journal because we have high expectations of quality academic conversation. The circle is not simply reviewer and author, but also you, the reader. We hope to carry a lively letters page in which you the reader can join the conversation. We want to encourage a range of perspectives; we want many voices to be heard; and we want to create a journal where each of us can learn from the other."



### Adriane Bennett Named Executive Assistant

Adriane Bennett, the former assistant to the president of the Consumer Credit Counseling Services of East Hartford, has been named Executive Assistant to Hartford Seminary President Heidi Hadsell.

Before her administrative work, Bennett served for many years as a travel agent, experience she says "is really coming in handy, given how much the President travels as part of her job here."

Bennett, who is proficient in advanced computer skills, also teaches an adult education computer course at East Hartford High School through which students who are teachers may earn continuing education credits (CEUs). While at Hartford Seminary, she plans to continue her education in computer and communications related fields.

Bennett lives in Bolton, where she holds an officer's position in her local Elk's Lodge.

# Scholars *Continued from page 1*

Indonesian colleague Muhammad Sirozi, a Fulbright scholar; Dr. Neyazi Beki, and Ph.D. candidate Tahir Uluc, both from Turkey, and Abdur-Rasaq Adesina, a Nigerian, also here on a Fulbright scholarship. The six men, imbued with a reverence for one another despite religious differences, are a microcosm of what is good and right about interfaith relations. The men work and study hard, live reflective lives, and express gratification to Hartford Seminary for the opportunities they are being given.



**Dr. Neyazi Beki**

“This is a rare kind of center,” says Sirozi. “There are many centers for the study of Islam or of Christianity, but the Seminary is unusual in combining the two. This is very important in our world. We come from many different places, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to meet with (others); it’s a good chance for us to learn from the Western Academy about how they plan research, and manage scholarly debate.”

Sirozi chose to pursue his scholarship at Hartford Seminary after he became familiar with some of the professors at a conference and through Alwi Shihab, a fellow Indonesian who taught at the Seminary in the mid 1990’s before returning to Indonesia. (Shihab will deliver the 2003 Willem Biljefeld lecture on June 10 and teach a course on Islamic mysticism the week of June 9.)

Although he is from the other side of the globe from Tampake, Adesina echoes his Indonesian colleague’s sentiments.

“Nigeria suffers from many atrocities committed in the name of God, and the government has not solved these problems,” Adesina says. “I’m finding my time here a very helpful experience because I can synthesize what I am learning and what I am observing.”

Adesina says he has found tremendous scholarly support from the Seminary president, dean, professors and staff – in particular those in the Library.

Adesina and Sirozi are studying under the Fulbright Program, which aims to increase mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and other countries, through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills.

Nahusona finds it “useful to hear a new perspective in Christian-Muslim relations and to meet with people who have patience with the interfaith dialogue (process).” Nahusona comes from the Ambon region of Indonesia and was a victim of religious rioting there. Like his colleagues, he approaches the peace process from a scholarly, and deeply felt, conviction.



**The Rev. Tony Tampake**

affords him the chance to talk with people of many different religions. “There is just one Christian church in my city of Konya, and I tried to communicate with the people there but not very successfully, I’m afraid.”

At this comment, Uluc’s colleagues at a recent Seminary-sponsored roundtable laugh sympathetically; they have all experienced the misunderstanding bred of ignorance and fear. Uluc’s biggest frustration in his experience here so far is that he has not had enough opportunity to tell the American people more about his country as a way of dispelling common misconceptions.

“I want them to know that Turkey is a secular state, not a fundamentalist one — we want to join the European Union — and that we badly want peace, too.”

Like his Turkish colleague, Beki hopes to help deepen cross-cultural understanding. Beki, one of Turkey’s leading scholars, is known for having produced the definitive Turkish edition of the Hadith.

It is to bring to light the works and hopes of scholars such as Beki that makes the Visiting Scholars Program so special to members of the Seminary community, including Dean Ian Markham.

“We’re concerned with the dichotomy of text vs. context in Islamic studies,” Markham says. “Hartford Seminary is very committed to bringing these two things together, and the Visiting Scholars Program helps us do that. One of the services the Seminary can provide is to be a resource for Christian and Muslim scholars to facilitate their growth as scholars and to help shape and mold their writing in the English-speaking world. It’s a way of doing our bit to correct the cultural imbalance in the Academy.”

From time to time, the scholars do admit to feeling a bit isolated and, naturally enough, lonesome for their families. After the recent Wednesday round-table discussion, Uluc, the youngest member of the visiting scholars group, looked out a window of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research building and across a field of snow. He wondered aloud what might lie beneath the snowy blanket and, when he learned it was a soccer field, his face brightened.

“Oh, I love soccer,” he said. “Maybe, when the spring arrives, I’ll take some time off from my books to kick a ball around.” Suddenly, the cultural gulf didn’t seem so wide after all.

Uluc, a Ph.D. student in Islamic philosophy and mysticism, is doing his dissertation on mystical symbolic language with particular emphasis on Jewish and Christian Biblical references. He says that the experience of working at the Seminary

## Building Scholarship and Community

Hartford Seminary has started a weekly series of lunches for its international scholars to provide a stimulating, dialogical environment for them.

A second goal of the series is to cultivate the scholars’ ability to write and publish in English in internationally renowned journals, creating international reputations.

Often the Seminary has not had any formal programming for visiting scholars, whose first language may not be English. They spend time on research and in informal conversation with faculty, but have not had many group collaborations or conversation.

This new series is an attempt to foster community among the scholars and faculty at the Seminary.

Ian Markham, dean of the Seminary, and Ibrahim Abu-Rabi’, professor of Islamic studies and co-director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, manage the series.

The series is a first step in an ambitious vision of Markham that the scholars will return to their countries with enhanced understanding of Islam and interfaith relations and become authorities in their fields.

Today, he said, many of the best-known experts on Islam are western scholars.

“Hartford Seminary is endeavoring to change the culture of the academy so that in fifty years time there will be a better balance between Western and non-Western academics. It is our aim that, for instance, the world experts on Islam in Indonesia will not only be privileged Americans with an interest in Indonesia, but include the Indonesian scholars whose work will also be widely read,” Markham said.

Currently the Seminary has six visiting international scholars and students. They are invited to get together each Wednesday at noon.

As the Seminary attracts more international academics, it is seeking outside funds to hire a director and to create a workspace for the scholars. Having these scholars at Hartford Seminary, Markham said, “provides the opportunity for Hartford Seminary faculty to shape the next generation of scholars in Christian-Muslim relations.”

# Humility, Courage and Hope

*Heidi Hadsell, President of Hartford Seminary, delivered this reflection on January 27 at the Seminary's Monday morning Chapel service.*

Today is the day that Hans Blix delivers a progress report on weapons inspections in Iraq to the United Nations. Tomorrow night President Bush gives his State of the Union Address. One hundred fifty thousand troops are on their way to the gulf. Frankly, it's hard to think of anything else to talk about. It's hard to stop thinking of kids going to war, of Iraqis being bombed, of unanticipated and unpredictable consequences in the Middle East and elsewhere, of hatred against the United States for its power and its hegemony, of everything that should and won't get done – programs for the poor, for the environment, for the arts; of how much of all of this the next generation is going to have to pay for. Lula, the new president of Brazil, said at Davos yesterday the same thing he said in Porto Alegre two days ago: Why don't we just feed everyone who is hungry, instead of using all these resources for war. A simple question, but yet a good one.

In preparation for this morning, in an attempt to think about something else, I did what I usually do. I went to the lectionary. But my concerns about the war kept interfering and the readings didn't seem very helpful. Or at least initially they didn't seem very helpful. But one of the readings was Psalm 62, and as often happens the more I thought about it the more helpful it seemed to be. Helpful in the sense that it helps focus on several attributes of faith we could use right about now.

## HUMILITY.

Human hubris is a big problem in times of war, and in fact I think it's probably a major cause of war. Leaders who feel strong and mighty, who are impatient with those who disagree, who are eager to impose their will, are often leaders who are blinded by hubris. They know what to do, they are sure that they are right; they have the arms and the personnel to impose what they know to be right. And of course what they think is right often comes to seem like destiny to themselves and their followers, very much in fact like the will of God. For their part, the led, the followers also like to feel powerful and in charge and they often feel better following leaders who are so sure of themselves and their causes, rather than those who seem to hesitate or who seem weak. If God is in charge, God surely is with us.

That such hubris very often confuses God's will with its own will, is of course why people are often afraid of the religious imagination and strong religious feelings, and hope religious people stay as far away from politics as is humanly possible. Indeed religious people, convinced that they are right, that God is with them, people whose hubris is amplified by their faith in God, can and have done untold damage to human communities and nations. This is the case for Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and others.

But the affirmation that God is in charge does not have to and indeed should not exaggerate, but rather check human hubris. That is, if God is God, and God is in charge, then humans are not. Our pride and our convictions about our own power and the absolute rightness of our own causes are examples of human folly, instances of the attempt to usurp God's place. The affirmation that God is God should be an affirmation that

humans are not God and thus even the best of us by whatever measure – military power, holiness, brilliance – is fragile, limited, and often wrong.

The tendency of the powerful and the mighty to fall into the traps set by their own hubris means that those who are powerful and mighty should be the first to understand their own limitations and the first to comprehend that even when they suspect otherwise, they are not God. One of the aspects of this looming war that I find most troubling is precisely that the United States has adopted the attitude of the high and mighty and seems bent on going it alone, so that it won't listen to even many of its closest allies and oldest friends. One can almost hear the voice of the prophets warning "woe to you, who take the place of God."

The affirmation of God as God is an affirmation that we are God's, and so is everyone else, every thing else. This is God's creation. The Iraqi people, now 12 years into enduring the suffering imposed by sanctions, are also God's. Each life is precious and of equal worth. Thus care for the well being, for the life, of the Iraqi people is a religious obligation. As people of faith it's something we have to think about. We care for the troops being sent, we care for the people against whom war will be waged, we care for the earth upon which it will be waged.

## COURAGE.

I confess that one of the emotions that this pending war evokes in me is anxiety. I don't know what will happen, I don't know how many will die, I don't know, we don't know, what ramifications big or small, this war will have either in the short or the long run. It's an anxious time and it seems wise to admit it. When one is anxious there are lots of ways to lessen the anxiety, most of them not all that healthy or honest. One can deaden the pain through alcohol and drugs, one can refuse to think about the source of one's anxiety, one can pretend that one is more invulnerable than one feels, one can hand over decision making to leaders who help one feel more powerful and less anxious. To affirm God as refuge rather than taking refuge in all these other ways helps perhaps give one the courage to realize how anxious one really is, and thus enables one to resist the temptation to hide behind the delusions of power, the strength of the crowd, or self-serving justifications.

And to affirm God as refuge is not a substitute for action or involvement. It doesn't mean God is in charge and therefore I need do nothing. Rather, it is to realize that, at the end of the day, when one has done all that one can do – in preemptive acts of peace for example – one is, we are, accompanied; we are not alone, however alone and scared we may feel. With God as refuge, we may gather courage to do what we can, to act in the world. To try to be, as Leonardo Boff puts it, the hands of God.

## HOPE.

Finally, just as recognition that all of life is of infinite worth is one obligation of faith, so too is hope. We hope because we believe, we hope even when things look hopeless. Our hope is grounded in faith. It is hope that enables us to trust in the ultimate meaningfulness of life. This hope persists despite the fact that we know how broken human beings are and how stupid we can be. Sometimes hope is the hardest attribute of faith. At these times it helps to have others around who may hope when one does not.

It is clear where I stand on this war that looms against Iraq. But it is also clear that in a diverse community like Hartford Seminary we won't all agree on this issue, and it is highly appropriate that we have varieties of opinions. As we discuss together and agree and disagree, part of what we're talking about is what is required of us, as people of faith, in this most urgent of moments. I've named three things suggested by the passage this morning – humility, courage and hope. There are others. But this is at least a start.



## Faculty Notes

**Ibrahim Abu-Rabi'** published *Modernlik ve Çağdar İslam Düşüncesi* (Istanbul: Yonelish, 2003) in Turkish. *Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* will be published by SUNY Press this month and *Islamism, Arabism, Socialism, and Globalization: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History* has been accepted by PLUTO Press in London and will appear by the end of the year.

In December, **Efrain Agosto** attended the semi-annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the Association of Theological Schools in Pittsburgh. During the Winter/Spring semester, Agosto has been on sabbatical working on two projects - the completion of his first book, *Leadership in the New Testament*, and the beginning of a second, *Leadership and Commendation in Paul: A Postcolonial and Latino Perspective*. As part of the research for this second project, Efrain visited Cuba in March with a Hartford Seminary/Plowshares Institute travel seminar.

**Nancy Ammerman** presented "American Fundamentalists Abroad" to the Religions, the Academy, and the International Society faculty seminar at Yale University on December 5. From January 28 to January 30, she delivered the opening and closing lectures for the annual Earl Lectures at Pacific School of Religion. She delivered the Scott Lectures at Brite Divinity School in Texas from February 4 to February 6 and the Harwick Workshop and Lecture at Lancaster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania March 25. The Harwick Lecture is on "Doing God's Work in the World." In January, she spoke at a Hartford Seminary workshop on recovery and forgiveness following child sexual abuse and in February, she was interviewed on the moral authority of American religious leaders for the Morning Edition broadcast on National Public Radio. Ammerman also participated in a variety of events connected with the Louisville Institute, where she serves as a board member, including a December 9-10 consultation on "Vital Liberal Congregations" and the annual Winter Seminar in January.

Continuing a decade-long ministry of speaking to churches, schools, and community groups about Islam, **Steven Blackburn** has led book discussions for the Connecticut Humanities Council and the "Time for Ideas in Libraries" program in Essex (December 4), East Haven (January 22), Beacon Falls (January 29),

and New London (March 5). Closer to home, the Seminary Library hosted a meeting of the Capital Region Library Council (February 6) focusing on the Patriot Act of 2001 and its implications for Connecticut libraries and their patrons. Denominationally, Steve's article 'Who Is My Neighbor,' a reflection on the first anniversary of September 11, was published in a recent issue of "The Congregationalist." He continues tutoring Arabic at the Hebrew High School of New England (West Hartford), and has been asked to offer two courses on Islam by the Department of Religion at Trinity College this coming academic year.

**Kelton Cobb** attended the Louisville Institute which met in January in Louisville, Kentucky, and spoke on the topic of "Christianity and Abraham" at First Lutheran Church of the Reformation in New Britain in February.

**Heidi Hadsell** participated in a Plowshares Institute seminar on "Peace and Reconciliation" at the Ecumenical Theological Institute of Bahia in Salvador, Brazil, in December. In January, she helped facilitate a Global Partnership Consultation in collaboration with the United Church of Christ in Cleveland. Hadsell delivered four lectures on Christian-Muslim understanding at the Glen Avon Presbyterian Church in Duluth, Minnesota, in January, as the speaker at an endowed lectureship. In February, she delivered the keynote address, speaking about ecumenical education, at the Christian Conference of Connecticut annual meeting, and participated in a research group on Globalization and Ethics sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches. Hadsell was a member of an accreditation team at Columbia Theological Institute in Georgia and co-led a Plowshares Institute study trip to Cuba in March. Her book review of "One World: The Ethics of Globalization" appeared in the February 22 issue of *Christian Century*.

**Ian Markham** completed the British edition of *The Funeral Handbook*, which he co-wrote with Giles Legood. He now is working on the American edition. He continued to teach his monthly course, "Being Christian in the Modern World," at Trinity Episcopal Church in Hartford. In March, Ian spoke on "Spirituality of Children" at St. James Episcopal Church in West Hartford and lectured on three evenings at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City on "Being Christian in the Modern World."

In January, **Ingrid Mattson** taught an intensive "Introduction to Islamic Law" at Osgoode Law School in Toronto, Ontario, where she also gave the 2003 "Or Emet" lecture on the topic, "The Risks and Benefits of Resorting to 'Necessity' in Islamic Jurisprudence." This was a good warm up for Mattson's "Introduction to Islamic Law" class she

is teaching this spring at Hartford Seminary. In February, Mattson gave lectures at Tufts University and the Taft School (Watertown, Connecticut). In March, Mattson addressed audiences at Cleveland State University and Smith College on the role of women in Islamic scholarship and leadership. On March 10, Mattson was at Harvard University delivering a lecture on "Modernizing Islamic Tradition: the Role of Western Muslims." Later that month, Mattson delivered the keynote address in Chicago at the Catholic Theological Union's third annual Catholic-Muslim Studies conference on the theme, "Sisters: Women, Religion and Leadership in Christianity and Islam." On Sunday, March 30, Mattson gave the Sarah Porter Memorial Lecture at First Church in Farmington, CT. In March, Mattson also spoke in Washington, D.C. at the annual meeting of the National Council of International Visitors of the U.S. Department of State.

**Jane Smith** participated on December 19 in a digital video conference arranged by the U.S. State Department in Washington D.C. and the Public Affairs Section of the American Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. She spoke with members of the Pakistani press about the launching of the Urdu translation of *Muslim Communities in North America* (co-edited with Yvonne Haddad). During the last week in January, Jane lectured at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, delivering the Shannon Weatherly Lecture, "Vying for Righteousness: American Christians and the Challenge of Islam," and participating in the Women's Interfaith Forum, at which her address was, "Women Pursuing Peace: An Interfaith Conversation." On February 8, she was the U.S. speaker for a telephone conference with the Public Affairs Section of the American Embassy in Madrid, sponsored by the Spanish Coalition Against Racism, Xenophobia and Related Discrimination. In March, Smith made a presentation on family and Islam in the American context for "American Religions and the Family: How Faith Traditions Cope with Modernity and Democracy" consultation, Emory University, Atlanta. Publications included: "Patterns of Muslim Immigration," in *Muslim Life in America* (U.S. State Department: Office of International Information Programs, 2002, 14-19), "Balancing Divergence and Convergence, or 'Is God the Author of Confusion?' an Essay on Kenneth Cragg" in *A Faithful Presence: Essays for Kenneth Cragg* (ed. David Thomas. Lambeth: Melisende, 2003) and "Adjusting the Tie that Binds: Challenges Facing Muslim Women in America," with Yvonne Haddad, in *Muslim Women in the United Kingdom and Beyond* (eds. Haifaa Jawad and Tansin Benn. Leiden: Brill, 2003, 39-64).

*Continued on next page*

Continued from page 10

**Scott Thumma** continues as publicity chair for the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association (RRA) and as webmaster for RRA and the religion section of the American Sociological Association. In December Thumma taught a four-week long non-credit event online. The class, titled "Spiritual Surfing," was co-sponsored with Beliefnet.com and drew 45 participants. Three newspapers including the New York Times included information about the course in stories. Beginning in December, the administration of the seminary's technological infrastructure was added to Thumma's position as Web and Distance Education Director. He has begun offering bi-weekly "Tech Talks" for faculty, staff, students and alumni/ae. He was the keynote speaker for the 2003 Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders' Consultation at the Louisville Institute, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Feb. 25 and 26. Recently he was asked to evaluate three religion research web sites.

December found **Miriam Therese Winter** knee-deep in toys in the lobby of Hartford Seminary as she helped Laurie Etter, senior chaplain at York Correctional Institution for women in Niantic, and a network of volunteers collect, wrap, and send Christmas gifts to about 1,800 children of incarcerated women, a project that has continued for two decades. January's highlight was a trip to Japan, where Winter was keynote speaker and preacher at a weekend conference for women held at the Amagi Sanso Baptist Center south of Tokyo. In February she led a weekend retreat on the Spirit in our lives at the San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville, California and spoke on Ludmila Javorova, Roman Catholic woman priest, at a nearby parish church; led a day-long event on eucharistia, the subject of her next book, in Philadelphia; and was the major speaker at a parish conference on celebrating women witnesses in Solon, Ohio. In March she led a weekend workshop at Five Oaks Conference Center in Paris, Ontario in Canada and gave a keynote address on the church in our times to the regional gathering of Call to Action members in Pittsburgh.

## In Memoriam

*The Hartford Seminary community extends its thoughts and prayers to the families and friends of these Seminary alumni/ae, who died recently.*

**Frances Webster Blumenfeld**, '53 and '55, died on January 26 in Springdale, Arizona. She served many churches during her career as a pastor since being ordained in the United Church of Christ in 1956. Dr. Blumenfeld created a unique collection of services for special occasions entitled "Celebrations." Remembered fondly as a "doer," when she wasn't working in paid ministry, she was volunteering for the church, Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels and various children's ministries.

**Lewis Wendell Hoskins**, '47, died on August 5, 2001 at the age of 90. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth (Betsey) Auger, '46. Hoskins was appointed for 15 years to service on the Board of Peace and Social Concerns of the Five Years Meeting. He also served on the Central Committee of Friends' General Conference for 18 years. After his retirement from work with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, he resumed writing short essays on Quakerism and Quaker concerns.

The Seminary recently learned that **David Martin Smith**, '65, died on December 9, 2000 in Tucson, Arizona. Dr. Smith completed a master's degree in Linguistics at Hartford Seminary and worked as both a missionary linguist and a Fulbright-Hayes Scholar in West Africa. He then received a doctorate with distinction in 1969 in Anthropological Linguistics from Michigan State. In the year prior to his death, Dr. Smith was Professor Emeritus in Anthropology and Linguistics at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. His wife, Perry Gilmore, writes that "David often spoke of Hartford and of the powerful and life-transforming influence having 'lived the Hartford Seminary experience' had in his life."

The Seminary recently learned that **Nicholas Titus**, '61-'62, who served as a member of the Seminary's President's Council, died on September 20, 2001. Dr. Titus served as executive minister for the American Baptist Churches of Connecticut from 1959 to 1969. He also served pas-

torates in New York and Connecticut and directed church-related camps in New York and Wisconsin. He held degrees from Denison University and Colgate Rochester Divinity School. A memorial service was held at First Baptist Church in West Hartford on September 29, 2001. Dr. Titus' wife, Rachel Ingalls Titus, died on November 24, 2002, following a brief illness. Dr. and Mrs. Titus were residents of the Seabury Retirement Community in Bloomfield.

**Irene Hoskins Van Wagner**, '47, died on January 4, 2002, shortly after the death of her husband, Alson. Van Wagner's ancestors had come to America with William Penn. She served as a missionary to the Seneca Indians in Oklahoma and Sioux in South Dakota before joining the Government Indian Service. Feeling frustrated by her inexperience in tribal languages, Van Wagner decided to go first to Hartford Seminary to study linguistics and literacy techniques, at the same time that her brother, Louis Wendell Hoskins '47, was attending. After graduating and marrying her husband, Alson, Van Wagner raised three children, opened a repair shop and wrote poetry.

**Eugene P. Wratchford**, '77, died on November 25, 2002 at his home in West Virginia. Dr. Wratchford retired in 1999 after 40 years in the Christian ministry. He was active in various civic and religious community, state and national organizations, and taught on the college level at various institutions. He published several articles and is the author of several books. Dr. Wratchford was a private pilot who loved the tranquility of flying and earned the nickname, "the flying pastor."

*In addition, the Seminary mourns the deaths of the following alumni/ae, about whom no other details are known at this time.*

**Roger N. Cheney**, '56, died on December 30, 2002, at the Rutland Regional Medical Center in Vermont.

**Elizabeth McKinney Chmiel**, '34, died on September 27, 2002.

**E. Cathleen White McVety**, '38, died in Tallahassee, Florida, in October, 2002.

**Wayne N. Opel**, '66, died on October 2, 2002.

**Lila Sykes**, '88, died recently. She was a minister at Varick A.M.E. Zion Church in New Haven.

# Zion's Herald and Hartford Seminary

*As world events continue to prompt well-informed people to turn to Hartford Seminary for religious interpretation and analysis, the Seminary's presence in print and electronic media continues to increase. While even the secular media rely on the Seminary's resources, one religious magazine is making good use of the Seminary community's expertise on theological matters.*

By Christine Palm

Zion's Herald, a Christian magazine of opinion, news and reflection, has entered into a steady relationship with Hartford Seminary. The magazine is calling on several members of the Hartford Seminary community for commentary on current religious events, and the Herald and the Seminary are discussing cross-links between their websites in order to provide their constituents easy access to additional resources and ideas on religion.

In addition, a collaborative effort among Zion's Herald, the Seminary and the Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life at Trinity College may result in a national conference in the spring of 2004. Conference participants would present papers on the impact of religion in society today, particularly in terms of religious conflict. Papers will later be published in Zion's Herald and in booklet form.

Zion's Herald, a self-avowedly liberal publication "for 21st Century Christians," has Methodist roots, but is ecumenical in nature. The magazine was founded by the Boston Wesleyan Association, a group of Methodist lay leaders interested in publishing, in 1832, and has published steadily as an independent journal since then, with a hiatus from 1979 to 1998. The four-color glossy has been published in its present form since September, 2000.

Zion's Herald is known in both religious and publishing circles as a magazine of integrity. It

has won recognition from the Associated Church Press and the United Methodist Association of Communicators, who deemed it "Best Magazine of 2002." Its current circulation of about 6,000 is spread throughout the nation, but owing to its New England heritage, about half of the circulation is in New England. According to the publishers, "the other half is quite widely distributed across the country with about a quarter west of the Mississippi." The magazine enjoys an arrangement with The Christian Science Monitor that permits Zion's Herald to use some of the Monitor's material.

Shortly after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, Zion's Herald ran an interview with Hartford Seminary Professor Ibrahim Abu-Rabi'. After that, Herald Vice President and Publisher M. Philip Susag, a longtime Seminary supporter whose wife, Joanne, has been a corporator of the Seminary for many years and served as president of the Women's Auxiliary, met with Seminary President Heidi Hadsell.

"We have always maintained our interest in the Seminary," Susag says. And so "the relationship with Zion's Herald grew from there. As conversations progressed, the idea of Hartford Seminary's becoming a regular contributor to our 'Perspectives' column developed and that is where we are at this time. The first appearance will be in the May/June issue with a column by Heidi. We, on both sides, believe that there is much commonality in our missions."

In addition to the "perspectives" column, the magazine has featured an article by Seminary Trustee Rabbi Stephen Fuchs and an interview with Michael Rion, a former Hartford Seminary President who is a business ethicist. Susag's personal history with the institution continues to bear editorial fruit. "When the Enron thing hit the news, we looked for a way to enter those discussions and my awareness of Mike Rion and his work and reputation and relationship to Hartford Seminary led to the interview," he says.

It's not surprising that the magazine's editorial profile is such a close fit with the Seminary's institutional mission.

"Historically, the magazine has been an advocate for social reform and has been a vehicle for discussion of issues of concern to persons of faith," says Zion's Herald Editor Stephen Swecker. "We've always been open to publishing quality material on any side of a relevant issue while continually maintaining our editorial independence."

Swecker and Susag agree that while "a theological education has never been a prerequisite for understanding material published in Zion's Herald," it is natural that anyone concerned with issues of faith, ethics and interfaith understanding would be a likely reader. And just as Hartford Seminary is a non-denominational theological institution, Zion's Herald has always been a "freestanding independent journal," Susag explains.

Maintaining editorial independence is paramount to the staff of Zion's Herald. "During a brief interlude, from 1979 to 1998, it was part of a joint publication with the newsletter of the New England Conference of the UMC as an insert," he explains. "That relationship finally threatened the traditional Zion's Herald editorial independence and the joint venture was terminated. Publication was suspended temporarily in order to reestablish the independent structure and publication was resumed in the current independent format in 2000...Philosophically, Zion's Herald is really a liberal publication in the true meaning of the word 'liberal.'"

A glance at a recent issue bears out the publication's independent, if not iconoclastic, nature. There's a report about African churches' efforts to heal war-torn nations there. It's followed by an interview with Scott Adams, the artist who created the "Dilbert" comic strip. Christian social ethicist Stephen Oldham wrote an elegiac tribute to Philip Berrigan. And there's a "Then and Now" entry which offers food for thought from the January 7, 1903 edition: "A physician who has been making a special study of appendicitis attributes the increasing frequency of that disease to the widespread use of white bread..."

From time to time, Susag and Swecker are queried about the publication's name.

"The name Zion's Herald has raised a question or two because of the corruption of the meaning of the name Zion by various political factions," Susag admits. "However, since we aim to be a forum for interfaith—particularly Abrahamic faiths—discussion, and since we have been a recognized quality publication for all these years, we believe the name and heritage are assets worth preserving."

For subscription information, email [zh@maine.rr.com](mailto:zh@maine.rr.com), or call toll-free, 888/785-1050.

# Drumming Circle

Hand drumming is an ancient art that has been used in many cultures. The music of drums creates a conduit to the Divine. At Hartford Seminary, Jan Gregory, executive director of the Renaissance Center: A Conservatory of Music in Southbury, has led a drumming circle to practice this ancient art. This spring, more than 30 people signed up to participate in the drumming circle. In photo on top, Gregory gives instructions. In second photo, drummers work on their rhythms.



## Alumni/ae Notes



Compiled by Robin Johnson, Alumni/ae Relations Coordinator

On September 18, 2002, **Robbins W. Barstow, Jr.**, '42, and Margaret V. Barstow celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Congratulations, Dr. and Mrs. Barstow!

**Eleanor S. Ebersole**, '51 and '53, and **Jay F. Ebersole**, '53 recently wrote of their third career after clergy pastoral years and higher education. Both are studying music at The University of North Carolina, Wilmington and Greensboro. While Eleanor does church cantata compositions, Jay is busy with musicology, chord and music theory graduate seminars. Jay fondly remembers his close friends, Bill Inderstrod, Bob Lane, Ralph Marsden and Roy Colby, who recently passed away. Eleanor and Jay rejoice in their 50th anniversary of graduation from Hartford Theological Seminary in 1953.

**Hazel Key Schoonmaker**, '48, recently wrote, "Wish I could have been there for Reunion 2002. Excellent coverage in *Praxis*."

**Carl Schultz**, '86, retired in June as Senior Pastor of First Church Glastonbury and has been called to serve as interim Senior Minister of Old South Church in Boston.

**Richard L. Waddell**, '86, has retired to Farmington, Maine, following two years of interim ministry at Holladay United Church of Christ, Salt Lake City, Utah.

**Virginia Webber**, '47 writes that she is glad to hear reports of Hartford Seminary's contributions to better understanding and relations with Muslims.

**Judith B. Welles**, '42 and '44, wrote in November that "plans to go back to Turkey for a two-week visit are being finalized - April is the month! Thumbs up for safe travel."

In June 2002, **Joanne White**, '97, was accepted into a two year internship program for certification as a Spiritual Director at the Spiritual Life Center in Bloomfield, Connecticut.

**C. Umhau Wolf**, '42, will have his memoirs housed in the recently-opened Chaplain Museum at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, as well as in the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library. Wolf was asked by the Museum of the First Infantry Division in Fort Riley, Kansas to write his memoirs. Wolf authored several articles about his war experiences which were published in Johns Hopkins Alumni Magazine and *The Lutheran Standard*. He also wrote the book *African Asides*, which went unpublished, owing to U.S. Army censorship.



Hartford Seminary's 2003 summer session begins on Monday, June 9 and ends Friday, June 27, with the exception of an evening course that begins on Tuesday, June 3. Courses generally meet for one week, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a break for lunch. Seminary courses are open to

members of the public on a space-available basis. Students may take courses for credit or audit. A special discounted audit fee for those age 62 and older also is available. Many classes fill up quickly, so students are urged to register early to ensure a place in their courses of choice. To register or for more information, please contact the Registrar's Office at (860) 509-9511 or [registrar@hartsem.edu](mailto:registrar@hartsem.edu).

### **Pathways to Renewal: The Role and Purpose of the Retreat**

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. (June 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26) and Saturday, June 28 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Retreat is a profound and popular way to nourish the inner spiritual life of individuals and the communal spirituality of congregations. Ideally, it offers a way for discovering and living a holistic harmony of body, mind, psyche and spirit. The Retreat creates open, welcoming sacred space in which individuals and communities may explore their deepest values, center their lives, and cultivate disciplines for sustaining themselves in the midst of a rapidly changing world. This course is intended for lay or ordained persons or persons in related fields, who are interested in developing/facilitating or have an interest in/responsibility for the organization of retreats. The course will locate the concept of retreat in the mystical/monastic heritage of the world's great religious traditions and provide a variety of styles and strategies for the effective delivery and appreciation of the Retreat experience. The course culminates in a six-hour retreat together. *Joseph Baxer, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry*

**JUNE 9 – 13**

**9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

### **Eternal Questions: Teaching Adults Basic Christian Beliefs**

This is a course for religious educators, pastors, and seekers interested in learning about methods for teaching theology to small groups. The course is arranged around a cluster of "eternal questions": What is the nature of God? Why are we here? Who is Jesus

Christ and what has he done? What is evil and why does it exist? What happens when we die? Time in the course will be divided between exploring the range of responses offered in the history of Christian theology to these questions and exercises in how to present them as seeds for discussion among adult learners.

*Joseph Callahan, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry and Senior Pastor of Broad Brook Congregational Church, and James Robertson, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry and former Managing Partner, Carmody and Torrance Law Firm, Waterbury*

### **Islamic Mysticism and Muslim Devotional Life and Practice**

Sufism, which refers to the mystical tradition within Islam, is concerned with the inner or esoteric understanding and practice of Islam. This course will examine Sufi interpretations of the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet Muhammad, and follow the development of Sufi spiritual practice and religious/philosophical thought with attention given to selected Sufi writers. The revival of Sufism in contemporary Islam will be studied with examples from around the world, including the United States. *Alwi Shihab, Senior Research Associate in Islamic Studies and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia*

### **Urgent Longings: A Course in Spiritual Theology**

What is it that puts us into motion as men and women? What is the source of our most urgent longings? Many have suggested that at bottom it is a desire for happiness. This course will examine how the desire for happiness has been viewed in several religious traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism), and how these traditions have construed our inner fragmentation and recommended, through human effort or divine grace, how to put us back together. *William Newell, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics*

**JUNE 16 – 20**

**9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

### **Effective Church Management**

This course is an intensive seminar on church management for clergy and other church professionals. The focus is on skill development in leading and working in voluntary church systems. Major topics include influence skills, long- and short-range planning, recruiting and motivating volunteers, organizational evaluation, and decision-making in large and small groups. *Speed Leas, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry and Senior Consultant at the Alban Institute*

*Continued on next page*

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### **Improving the Worship Experience:**

#### **Theology and Music**

Music is a vitally important part of Christian worship. This course will explore the different forms of Christian music within their contrasting theological and worship settings. From Handel's *Messiah* to *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, the course looks at the craft of 'singing' and 'playing' these musical pieces effectively along with an understanding of the contextual history and social location. Each day of the course will start with a Christian worship service, which will apply some of the insights developed in the course. This course is particularly suited to lay musicians and those who love singing. *Ian Markham, Professor of Theology and Ethics and Dean of Hartford Seminary, and Eric Tebbett, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry and Principal of the Cambridge Academy of Worship and Music*

#### **The Qur'an and Its Place in Muslim Life and Society**

As the sacred scripture of Islam, the Qur'an has primary authority in the way Muslims understand their faith. This course will examine Islamic concepts of the Qur'an as divine revelation and guidance. Major Qur'anic themes will be studied in English translation, with reference to classical and contemporary Muslim commentaries. Attention will be paid to ways in which the Qur'an functions as sacred scripture in Muslim history and contemporary life, examples of which will include Muslim communities in the United States. *Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations*

**JUNE 23 – 27**

**9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

#### **Building Spiritual Gift Ministry Teams**

New Testament Scripture reveals that the church functions as the body of Christ when all of God's people use their spiritual gifts. Ministry in many churches operates as a top-down institution rather than a people-focused organism. Employing powerful biblical and theological images, this course will explore key principles in developing strategies to empower and release ministry to all of God's people. The following areas will be covered: (1) biblical values needed in the ministry setting; (2) the structural and systematic issues that must be addressed to transform the community; (3) transforming the identity of all believers into ministers; (4) the process of helping all of God's people

discover their spiritual gifts through a profile of gifts, passions and leadership style; and (5) building spiritual gift-based teams. *Brett Snowden, Adjunct Professor of the Arts of Ministry and Pastor of The Progressive Community Chapel, Springfield, Massachusetts*

#### **Feminist Theological Ethics**

This course is a survey of Christian feminist ethics, beginning in the early 1970's and moving to the present. A central contribution of feminist ethics has been the recognition that moral theory is inseparable from practice. This contribution itself is a theoretical claim that will be examined in this course. The course will trace this development from white middle-class feminist ethics through the struggle to shape an ethic that is inclusive of the Womanist and liberationist perspectives. *Heidi Hadsell, Professor of Social Ethics and President of Hartford Seminary*

#### **The Parables of Jesus and the Imaginative Dimension of Scripture**

This course offers an in-depth study of the parables of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels and early non-canonical literature from a literary and historical-critical perspective, with special attention to the role of imagination and symbol in Scripture, theology and life. *Wayne Rollins, Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies*

#### **Christian Diversity: Curse or Promise**

This course will explain the key issues and developments in the emergence of Christian diversity, and will pose two significant questions. First, is such diversity the manifestation of inherent weaknesses in Christianity, weaknesses that the other great monotheistic faiths do not experience? Second, is such diversity actually a sign of Christianity's inclusivity, so that all are called to God by many different means? By the end of the course, we will have worked out, together, some surprising and challenging answers to these questions. *Gareth Jones, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics and Professor of Theology, Christ Church University College, Cambridge, England*

*From the Alumni/ae Council*

# Update

We thought this would be a good time to catch you up on what is happening with and through your Alumni/ae Council. Our president, Heidi Hadsell, and Hartford Seminary trustees, faculty and staff have been considering anew the

Seminary's mission, vision, and goals since last spring.

Your Alumni/ae Council decided that it was also a good time for us to re-think our role and goals as part of the Seminary family. We want to become a more effective bridge between Hartford Seminary and its graduates. As you know, there have been many changes in our world and society since many of us graduated. Our distinguished institution has responded to these challenging changes with new certificate programs and degrees for lay ministries and new doctoral degrees for ordained ministers. Special programs are offered that reach out to help the wider community gain new understanding of what's happening in our world and congregations.

This is what your Alumni/ae Council is working on and planning now:

- On May 8th, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., the Alumni/ae Council will host "Get Acquainted with Hartford Seminary," an open house, attended by administration, faculty and recent graduates, to increase awareness of the uniqueness of what this seminary offers to the various communities it can serve: faith, academic, and questing spirits who are eager to learn. Council members have found there are fuzzy and false perceptions of Hartford Seminary out there that need changing. (So come and see for yourself!)
- Plans for Reunion 2004 are underway. We think you know that we have changed the pattern of reunions from every year in the fall to every other year in the spring, so that it can be a more significant event worth attending for new stimulation as well as to re-connect with old friends.
- We will soon be sending you new proposed Bylaws that will change our election process and make Association elections of Council members congruent with biennial reunions. These will be sent to you along with a newsletter.
- Our Council wants to help with the important task of finding Lost Alums. We are aware that some Seminary records are still incomplete. Some lost addresses have been found through the Seminary web page — <http://www.hartsem.edu>. If you know of any Hartford Seminary graduate who has lost touch with the Seminary, - but not with you - and you have his/her address, please email it to [alum@hartsem.edu](mailto:alum@hartsem.edu). You also can use that address to email any questions or suggestions. (Robin Johnson is our very able alumni/ae relations staff person.) Of course you can also mail addresses to Alumni/ae Relations, Hartford Seminary 77 Sherman St. Hartford, CT 06105.

Although the Alumni/ae Council meets formally five times a year, we do have sub-committees. For example, some of our members deserve hearty thanks for their outstanding creativity and hard work prior to our two recent reunions in 2000 and 2002. They make being on the Council both challenging and fun. Why not volunteer yourself?

Grace and Peace,  
*Fidelia Lane, President, B.D. '52*

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