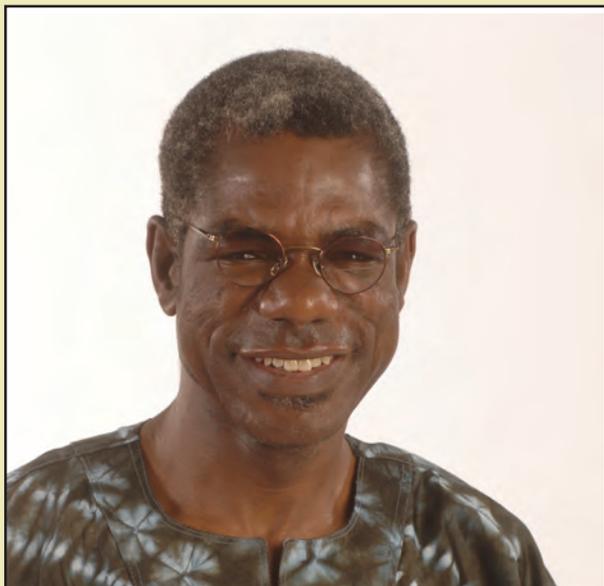


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For Four Ph.D. Students, Hartford Seminary Provides a Bond



For Four Ph.D. Students, Hartford Seminary Provides a Bond

In September 2006, a Methodist priest from Ghana, an Episcopalian minister from Maine, a Muslim from Turkey and a Dominican friar from Burkina Faso started on a shared academic journey at Hartford Seminary.

Francis Acquah (upper left on front cover), Molly James (lower left on front cover), Suendam Birinci (upper right on front cover) and Minlib Dallh (lower right on front cover) are students in the Seminary's International Ph.D. Program.

They studied together in seminars and classes during their first two years in the program and now are working on their dissertations. Their bond remains although two of them have moved to homes away from Connecticut.

That bond is forged around their commitment to interfaith dialogue and understanding.

As Suendam said, "Every class, along with our casual meetings or conversations, easily became an interfaith encounter. There has been much respect, care, and a warm relationship among us."

Added Molly, "The rich discussions we have shared, particularly in our seminar, provided me with an opportunity to gain knowledge about other traditions, while also refining my understanding and ability to articulate my own tradition and my own beliefs."

Francis agreed: "Our PhD class was very engaging and interesting, consisting of people from different faith, denominational, cultural and racial backgrounds and these came to bear on our discussions. We experienced differences as well as commonalities in views and other areas of interaction; through these we were challenged as well as enriched. The relationship built during the period has established a special bond among us."

Suendam, Molly, Francis and Minlib comprise the second class in the Seminary's International Ph.D. Program.

Recognizing the importance of international diversity and the need for higher education to engage with international perspectives, the Seminary and The University of Exeter began the program in 2005. It serves students in the

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Christy Lohr First to Graduate from International Ph.D. Program

When Christy Lohr came to Hartford Seminary in the fall of 2005 to study for a Ph.D., she sought a school firmly rooted in Christian tradition but also supportive of interfaith engagement. And it should have a reputation for religious scholarship. *full story page 6*

CORRECTIONS

Please note these corrections for the 2008-2009 Annual Report. Praxis regrets the errors.

The donation of the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline L. White should have been listed under Building Abrahamic Partnerships Program.

An additional donation by Ms. Cornelia P. Ford should have been listed under Women's Leadership Institute.

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back issues if you would like more information about Praxis or about Hartford Seminary, please contact David Barrett at Hartford Seminary, 77 Sherman Street, Hartford, CT 06105. Our website, www.hartsem.edu, provides additional information and news about Hartford Seminary.

Yuskaev Named Islamic Studies Professor at Hartford Seminary



President Heidi Hadsell and the Board of Trustees have named Timur Yuskaev as director of Hartford Seminary’s Islamic Chaplaincy Program and Assistant Professor of Contemporary Islam.

Yuskaev’s appointment is effective July 1. He also will be associate editor of the *Muslim World* journal.

“I am delighted that Timur Yuskaev will be joining the faculty at Hartford Seminary,” Hadsell said. “Timur brings an understanding of Islam in the American context, which is an important addition to the

expertise of our faculty. His background in inter-faith work and community outreach will serve him well as he starts this new position. I am confident that he will keep our Islamic chaplaincy program vibrant and

attractive to students locally and nationally.”

Yuskaev has been an instructor and teaching assistant at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Colorado at Boulder as well as an adjunct faculty at St. Francis College, New York City.

From 1999 to 2005, Yuskaev served as coordinator of educational programs at the Interfaith Center of New York. He directed the Muslims in New York Civic Life Project, funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York

He is completing his Ph.D. degree at the University of North Carolina, with the dissertation topic “The Qur’an Comes to America: Pedagogies of Muslim Collective Memory.” He has an M.A. in Religious Studies from the University of Colorado and a B.A. from Bard College.

Yuskaev’s areas of specialization include Qur’anic Studies, Anthropology of the Qur’an, Qur’anic Hermeneutics, Islamic homiletics, Muslim Modernities, Islam in North America, and American and African-American religious history. His teaching experience includes courses on the Qur’an, Islamic History, Western Religious Traditions, World Religions, and African-American Religions.

Ingrid Mattson, director of the Seminary’s Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, chaired the search committee,

which included trustees, faculty and students, that recommended Yuskaev. During his visit, Mattson said, Yuskaev “demonstrated intelligence, wit, compassion and humility.”

“We were impressed with Timur’s interfaith work in New York, which demonstrates his commitment to this engagement. During his years with the Interfaith Center of New York, Timur gained experience in doing field work in the Muslim community, which will be an asset to the Islamic Chaplaincy Program and other Muslim leadership education in which the seminary will be engaged,” Mattson said.

Commenting on his new position, Yuskaev said, “Along with the *Muslim World* journal, the Macdonald Center has a legendary reputation among Islamic Studies specialists. What appealed to me most was the chance to teach at Hartford while administering

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PODCASTS

Now available: A Podcast of the February 23 lecture “Islamic and Canon Law: Their Interaction with Today’s Society.”

Lecturers were Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, and Monsignor John McCarthy, Chancellor of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford.



Ph.D. Students (continued)

fields of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and Theology and Ethics.

Francis, a Methodist minister, came to Hartford Seminary from Ghana originally to study Christian-Muslim Relations in the International Peacemaking Program. He decided to seek the Ph.D. “because I wanted to build my capacity through knowledge for leadership. My desire is to teach and raise future leaders for both the church and the nation.”

Suendam came from Turkey to earn a Master of Arts at Hartford Seminary before starting on her Ph.D. She said she is studying for the Ph.D. “to learn more and be able to contribute to academia and faith communities.”

Minlib, a member of the Southern Dominican Province of the U.S.A., learned of the Seminary’s Ph.D. program through a professor at Yale University. He came to the Seminary to pursue a doctorate in Islamic studies “and the rest is history.”

Molly is an Episcopal priest in Connecticut. “Prior to coming to the Seminary, I worked as a hospital chaplain, and in the course of that work I realized that many people struggled a great deal with suffering and death,” Molly said. “Witnessing this led me to want to learn more and hopefully to be able to help people to better cope with the realities of suffering and death.” She chose the Seminary’s program because of its uniqueness in allowing more independent and in-depth work and the international aspect.

Recently Praxis asked each of the four students to reflect on their studies and their time at Hartford Seminary.

Why did you choose Hartford Seminary?

Francis: I chose Hartford due to my area of interest – Christian-Muslim Relations. I got to know Hartford Seminary when I was studying for my M. A. at the University of Geneva/Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland. I met the President, Heidi Hadsell, who was then the Director at the Institute, preparing to come over to Hartford. It was through her support that I came to the Seminary

Suendam: Hartford Seminary is where I completed my MA degree. The Seminary’s dedication to interfaith dialogue and its diverse and calm environment were among my main motivations. Also, I thought that an international program offered through the collaboration of two distinguished institutes in the U.S. and U.K. would be a beneficial experience.

Minlib: The International PhD program at the Seminary offers the advantage of combining both continental (Western Europe) and North America scholarships. The requirement to travel to the U.K. and spend at least one term at Exeter University is a valuable experience.

Molly: I had previously been to the Seminary for a lecture, and I knew it offered Master’s and D.Min. degrees. I considered getting a D.Min. degree, and so was poking around the Seminary’s website when I discovered they offered a PhD! I was intrigued particularly by the uniqueness of the program and the international aspect. Because the program follows the British system it seems to allow for much more independent and in depth work than would usually be found in an American program. The opportunity to study at the University of Exeter is also a

very enriching experience! I was aware of the interfaith aspect of the seminary, but the tremendous value of that only became evident to me once I was in the program and experienced it for myself.

What did you find are the strengths of the Hartford Seminary International Ph.D. program?

Suendam: The most significant strength of the program is its interfaith quality. Another is that the program is very clear and concise. The opportunity to experience a different academic setting and British culture is also beneficial.

Minlib: In terms of Islamic Studies with a focus on Christian-Muslim dialogue, the Seminary offers a wealth of experience almost un-matched in North America. The Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations brings a historical expertise worthy of consideration. Very few places offer such opportunity.

Molly: They are many: the smallness of the program; the interfaith aspect; the international aspect (the opportunity to study at the University of Exeter); the sense of community within the program and the Seminary as a whole; the sense of teamwork and collaboration (and complete lack of competition) among colleagues; and the high expectations of academic work coupled with support and guidance from faculty and staff.

Francis: The strength of the Hartford Ph.D. lies in both the depth and diversity it offers in terms of academic formation as well as spiritual experience. The diverse faith and cultural environment provided by the Seminary serves as the ‘laboratory’ for the academic engagements in class and this enhances growth.

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Do you feel the program has prepared you well for your career going forward?

Minlib: The PhD program has prepared me academically and pastorally to navigate the complex and complicated world of interfaith dialogue.

Molly: My learning has already enriched my work as a priest - particularly my teaching. And I know the intellectual preparation and the experiences I have gained through the program will serve me well

Francis: The program has prepared me to go forward in my academic career, though I admit that there is still a lot to be learnt. As a religious person, I think the program has equipped me with both academic and spiritual insights to go back to Ghana to work in enhancing interreligious relations and advocate for peace and justice.

Suendam: Yes, by providing the skills and opportunity to teach courses at the graduate level.

How do you intend to use your Ph.D. degree?

Molly: At present, I plan to continue my parish work, and hope I will also be able to add some adjunct teaching work as well. I hope that in the future my career will be a balance of church work and teaching.

Francis: I intend to use the Ph.D. in teaching and also be involved at the grassroots in educating people on the need for peaceful co-existence in the midst of religious and cultural diversities.

Suendam: My hope is to actively continue my involvement in academia, through

teaching, research and writing.

Minlib: I will teach courses on Islamic mysticism but also participate in the Dominican Order's long tradition of the study of Islam and its civilization.

After studying at Hartford Seminary, please describe your impressions of the Seminary as an academic institution.

Francis: Hartford Seminary offers a unique environment for academic pursuit and religious experience. This has to be built upon and much of that depends on people who work here. There is the need for striking a balance in terms of professors, irrespective of one's religious background, encouraging a balanced, objective academic critique on aspects of all religious traditions; that is the only way for us all to be positively transformed, and not to go back with our assumptions and biases. I think the objective of the Seminary is to train people who will go back to their various communities as agents of change. This in turn requires a balance in the composition of faculty members.

Minlib: As an academic institution, the Seminary offers a sound curriculum, encourages academic discipline and fosters an environment where hospitality and a genuine relationship between students and teachers.

Suendam: As historical as it is, the Seminary is a constantly developing institution. It brings many surprises. Both its faculty and student body are vibrant reflecting a range of different perspectives and it is an amazing example of coexistence of differences. The Seminary's centers and journals, each with a focused dedication, are also significant, particularly for the opportunities they provide for student involvement.

The experience the Seminary provides its students is enriching on many levels. I appreciate the opportunity for academic growth, meeting and working with notable academicians and forging friendships with colleagues from various parts of the globe.

Molly: I am impressed by how much it packs into a small community - and what a global reach it has! I have certainly been held to high academic standards in my work. I particularly value that that is done in combination with support and with an awareness that the Seminary is educating us to be global citizens and leaders in a complex world. I do believe the Seminary provides excellent tools to help us do just that!

I have been happy to discover how much is shared among the Abrahamic faiths. It has been a wonderful counter to the evening news and the headlines to sit in the same room with Muslim women from Syria or with a professor who is Jewish and realize the fundamentals of faith are true across our traditions. Even with in my own Anglican Tradition, most of the headlines of late have been about how much disagreement there is, so it was also great to participate in discussion with a fellow Anglican from another part of our Communion and realize that those headlines are not entirely accurate.

When I went to seminary I was surrounded almost entirely by Christians, particularly fellow Episcopalians, and that was wonderful and important formation for me as a priest. I am also tremendously grateful to have the opportunity to study at Hartford Seminary with people from different faiths and cultures. It is an enriching gift that has broadened my understanding of the world. ✿

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN IMAM EDUCATION

Hartford Seminary, in cooperation with the International Institute of Islamic Thought and its Fairfax Institute in Herndon, VA, has begun a Graduate Certificate in Imam Education.

This pilot program in Imam theological education will serve to prepare a cohort of Imams and other Muslim religious leaders from the Greater

Washington, D.C., area in the basic skills of religious leadership in the United States.

By the end of this program, students will be better prepared to encounter the theological, pastoral and organizational challenges of providing excellent religious leadership to the growing Muslim community in this region of the U.S.

The Imams will receive education and training so they can provide the quality of leadership expected of Imams.

The first course was offered in March at the Fairfax Institute. The class of 11 Imams will study at Hartford Seminary in June during Summer Session. Future courses will be taught in Herndon and in Hartford.

The program includes a field education component.

Hartford Seminary is seeking formal approval from its accrediting and licensing agencies for this new program, which is the first of its kind in the U.S. 🌸

Lohr, PhD.

Continued from page 2

Now she has graduated, and she says her studies have prepared her well for a career as a professor at a theological school or small liberal arts college. “Hartford Seminary has a very specific focus [interfaith dialogue], but it is internationally renowned and attracts luminaries in its fields of expertise. It is exactly where I needed to be,” Christy says.

Hartford Seminary offers an International Doctor of Philosophy in partnership with the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. Exeter awarded a Doctor of Philosophy in Theology and Ethics to Christy at ceremonies in January. She also will be recognized at Hartford Seminary’s graduation in June.

Christy is the first person to graduate from the International Ph.D. Program, which began in 2004. A second student in the

program, Kemal Argon, also is set to graduate with a degree in Islam.

Currently Christy is Associate Dean for Religious Life at Duke Chapel. Previously she was the director of the Intersections Institute of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries.

Christy received a Master of Arts in religious studies from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy and religion from Appalachian State University. At both schools, she has been named an outstanding alumna.

Her commitment to interfaith understanding is a lifelong passion. She has served on the board of the North American Interfaith Network and coordinator of the Multifaith Ministries Education Consortium and its annual

“Institute for Ministry in a Multifaith World.”

She coordinated the Interfaith Education Project, a cooperative initiative of the World Council of Churches and Hartford Seminary. Also, while at Hartford Seminary, Christy served as a teaching assistant and adjunct faculty and has helped manage a program to provide fellowships to young scholars in the field of congregational studies.

In the fall, she co-taught “Interfaith Dialogue at Home and Abroad: Parliament of World Religions,” with Seminary President Heidi Hadsell and attended the Parliament meeting in Melbourne, Australia, in December, 2009.

Christy co-edited the third edition of the World Religions Reader with Ian Markham, former dean at Hartford Seminary.

The textbook provides an introduction to selected world religions and was published by Wiley-Blackwell in Jan. 2009. She researched and drafted three new chapters for the Reader.

Christy also contributed two articles to the Blackwell Companion to Theologians that was published in 2009. She wrote a chapter for *Pedagogies for Interfaith Dialogue: Changing the Way Seminaries Teach*, a Hartford Seminary publication which is the product of a two-year working group that reflected on best practices for teaching interfaith dialogue in theological schools.

Christy’s Ph.D. dissertation is titled, “Finding a Lutheran Theology of Religions: Ecclesial Traditions and Interfaith Dialogue.” In it, she argues that this Lutheran theology recognizes a

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connection between all people and calls Lutherans to live in kinship with the religious other.

In her own words, Christy comments on her experience in the International Ph.D. Program:

Why did you decide to seek a Ph.D.?

I decided to seek a Ph.D. in order to expand my professional options. I had been working in the non-profit world for a decade, was ready to take on advanced positions, and hoped that the Ph.D. would help to facilitate that.

Why did you choose Hartford Seminary?

Hartford Seminary was one of the few schools that met most of my “criteria” for an advanced degree – most notably, I wanted to get a Ph.D. (not a Ed.D. or Th.D.) and I wanted to be in a seminary setting. I also recognized that Hartford Seminary would allow me to expand my network of contacts with others in the interfaith world in a really unique and helpful way.

What did you find are the strengths of the Hartford Seminary International Ph.D. program?

The Hartford Seminary Ph.D. is innovative and manageable. Because it operates on the British model, it is designed to move students through it at a reasonable pace. This is appealing for people like me who do not want to spend 5 to 10 years working on a Ph.D. as can often happen in the American system.

Do you feel the program has prepared you well for your career going forward?

Hartford Seminary provided me with several really great opportunities that will help me in my career and that opened up possibilities for new vocational

avenues. For example, I served as the associate editor for *Reviews in Religion and Theology* – a quarterly book review journal. In addition to widening my network of acquaintances in the fields of theology and religious studies, this position also introduced me to the publishing world in a way I had not previously experienced. Before coming to Hartford Seminary, I had never considered publishing, but now I see it as another field in which I could find meaningful work. ✿

Yuskaev

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the Islamic Chaplaincy Program. Being a part of Hartford Seminary is an extraordinary privilege for anyone concerned with the practical impact of scholarship. For me, it is also a unique opportunity to continue my engagement with American Muslim communities in ways that really matter.”

Among Yuskaev’s publications are several entries for the *Encyclopedia of Muslim-American History* and a chapter titled “Training Teachers in American Religious Diversity,” in *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement*.

Some of his public addresses include presentations on “The Real Work of Interfaith Organizations,” “Religious Communities, Peace and Civil Liberties,” “Islam in America,” “Covering Muslims in America,” “Muslim Communities in New York,” and “Addressing Stereotypes of Islam.”

He said another reason the position at Hartford Seminary is particularly appealing is that he admires its approach. “It is rigorously academic, with a clear purpose of training religious leaders and assisting congregations. It is a bridge-building institution

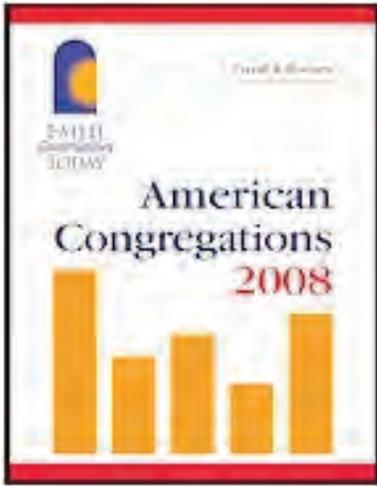
that facilitates research, intellectual exchange and practical work between academics and religious communities. A distinct draw for me was the chance to work with the colleagues at the Hartford Institute for Religion Research and the Center for Faith in Practice,” Yuskaev said.

“My first priority,” he said, “will be to serve my students, to prepare them to be effective leaders in the increasingly diverse religious and public landscape. Thankfully, my research interests correspond with their practical concerns. Like them, I am interested in contemporary

religious discourses. I study how religious leaders communicate within and across communities. My particular emphasis will be on contributing to Hartford’s impressive record of working with Muslim congregations and organizations, in the local area and beyond.”

Outside work, Yuskaev enjoys spending time with his family, traveling and fishing. ✿

New Study of Congregations Released



The better the financial health of a congregation in America, the better its spiritual vitality. The worse the financial health of a congregation, the greater the chance for conflict.

Thus, money matters in congregational vitality and such matters were getting worse for American congregations even before the recession hit.

This is just one of the findings of a new survey, titled American

Congregations 2008 that was released last month. Produced by Faith Communities Today, the survey is based on responses from more than 2,500 Oldline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Catholic & Orthodox and World Religions congregations.

The Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership (CCSP) conducted the survey. It updates results from surveys taken in 2000 and 2005, and is the latest in CCSP's series of trend-tracking national surveys of U.S. congregations.

Several of the key findings of the survey were reported earlier:

- American congregations, as a group, continue to struggle, facing declining attendance at worship, eroding financial health, waning spiritual vitality

- and increasing uncertainty about their mission and purpose.
- At the same time, some congregations have shifted to a contemporary style of worship that has catalyzed growth, and other congregations have benefitted from focused leadership.

David A. Roozen, Director of the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership and Professor of Religion and Society at Hartford Seminary, said that, "There is a tendency to believe that congregations are captive to their demographic and cultural contexts. To the extent this is true the broad based erosion of vitality in America's congregations over the past eight years evidenced in the FACT 2008 survey suggests an erosion of religious receptivity in the broader American social-cultural milieu.

"But this is only a part of the

story because the belief in contextual captivity is only partly true and, in fact, research suggests that it has become less true over the past quarter century. As the FACT 2008 findings clearly demonstrate there remain pockets of vitality among American congregations, and many of the distinguishing characteristics of today's vital congregations appear to be well within a congregation's control – such as openness to change, clarity of purpose, attentiveness to new members, and appreciation of volunteers. We also are gaining a much more refined sense, as evidenced in FACT 2008, about the distinct predispositions of clergy leadership in vital congregations."

The report being released this week provides a more in-depth look at 11 topics: worship; identity; program; youth, attracting and

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New Staff



Mary Coleman, who is close to completing her Ph.D. degree with the University of Exeter and Hartford Seminary, has been appointed Administrator of the Ph.D. Program.

Coleman has served as assistant editor with the Reviews in Religion and Theology journal, and adjunct instructor at the Seminary in American religious history.

She first came to Hartford Seminary as a student in the Ph.D. program after a 30 plus year career in Information Technology. Coleman has a B.A in history from Clark University, and an M.A in history from Trinity College. She lives in West Hartford with her husband and two sons and attends Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford, CT.

Coleman will work with Professor Yahya Michot, who is director of the Ph.D. Program.

Michot also announced the appointment of Nicholas Mumejian as Managing Editor of *The Muslim World* journal, which Michot edits. ❁

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tracking new members; assimilating new members and deepening lay leadership; conflict; fiscal health and conflict; budget profiles; clergy education and congregational health; and clergy time usage.

Among the new findings:

- Oldline Protestant congregations spend close to half their budgets on salaries and benefits compared to 31 percent spent on salaries and budgets by Evangelical Protestant congregations. Oldline congregations' pay premium is even more striking when one recalls that Oldline congregations are, on average, considerably smaller than other Christian congregations.
- American congregations have gone electronic. Web access is

more the norm than the exception.

- A newly emergent trend is satellite congregations in which sermons are beamed in from the primary congregation.
- Congregations that changed to contemporary worship in the past five years show elevated levels of spiritual vitality and growth in worship attendance.
- Conservative congregations place more emphasis on the quality of their internal relationships than do liberal congregations; liberal congregations place more emphasis on ministry to the world outside their doors.
- As in 2000, money, worship and leadership lead the way as the areas of congregational life most riled with conflict.

Conflict about leadership is the most likely to produce serious negative consequences.

- Creating strong interpersonal bonds and purposefulness decrease the likelihood of conflict
- In clergy time usage, worship and teaching about the faith are the top task priorities for both Protestant families. The Oldline congregations put higher priority on worship and the Evangelical congregations put higher priority on teaching. Catholic/Orthodox leaders spent more time and attention on administration than any other task.

The American Congregations 2008 report was written by Roozen, director of the Seminary's Hartford Institute

for Religion Research.

A link to view the report is available at: <http://fact.hartsem.edu/products/index.html>.

Faith Communities Today surveys and publications are products of the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership, a collaborative, multifaith coalition of American faith communities affiliated with Hartford Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research. Researchers, consultants and program staff representing 39 denominations and faith groups contributed to the American Congregations survey. ✿

Seminary Receives Two Grants

At a time when such gifts are especially welcome, Hartford Seminary has been the recipient of two recent grants.

The first was from the William and Alice Mortensen Foundation, a family foundation with commitment to providing funds primarily for Connecticut-based non-profits, particularly those in Hartford. Their generous grant will provide for the purchase of new video technology for the Meeting Room, enabling more effective presentations to the diverse groups from within and beyond the Seminary which make use of that space.

The second grant was from the Board of Christian Missions of the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, United Church of Christ, for support of the Programa de Ministerios Hispanos (Hispanic Ministries Program). The Board's calling is "to identify, evaluate and distribute money to programs that are in alignment with the church's overall mission and that ultimately make a positive difference in the lives of the recipients," and so has been consistently supportive of PMH's Christian outreach to local communities. ✿



In February, Hartford Seminary celebrated Shrove Tuesday with a pancake supper for students, faculty and staff. Shown here are Dean Efrain Agosto (left) with student Robert Ayer.

The Hartford Seminary community has lost the following beloved members. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their friends and families.

When he was studying at Hartford Seminary in the 1940s, **Art Clokey** intended to become an Episcopal priest. Instead, his creation of Gumby, an iconic figure of American culture, rerouted his career plans from ministry to animation, including the popular religious series, “Davey and Goliath.” Mr. Clokey died on January 8, 2010 in Los Osos, California at the age of 88. One of the tributes occasioned by his death explained, “Asparagus green and fashioned from clay, Gumby made his television debut in 1956 on “The Howdy Doody Show.” The next year, he became the star of “The Gumby Show,” in which he embarked on a string of gently quixotic adventures with his supple steed, Pokey. The series was one of the first extended uses of stop-motion animation on television.”

The Rev. Dr. Robert H. DeValve, Ph.D. ’73, received his degree from Hartford Seminary in Islamic Studies, and was ordained by the Evangelical Covenant Church. At the time of his death in January of 2010, he was serving as Pastor of Missions at Trinity Covenant Church in Manchester, CT. Dr. DeValve was 79 years old.

The Rev. James T. Scherer, B.D. ’56, died on December 11, 2009 in Richmond, IN, where he operated the Garden Center, Inc., with his wife, Barbara. Jim was recorded as a Friends Minister by Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1954. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Deer Creek Friends Meeting in Darlington, MD, and was active at First Presbyterian Church in Richmond.

As described by her son-in-law at her memorial service, **Hazel Schoonmaker**, M.Div. ’48, “was a trailblazer, a woman ahead of her time. Long before it was in vogue, Hazel launched a

professional career and was a scholar, teacher and a writer. She was also deeply in her time – present, aware, and attentive to the well-being of those she cared for.” Hazel worked as Minister of Christian Education for the Ohio Conference of the Congregational-Christian Churches, was a public school teacher in Weymouth, MA, and was Christian Education Director at the Avon Congregational UCC, where her husband, Ted, was pastor. She also taught the Associates in Christian Education program for the Connecticut Conference and Hartford Seminary. Hazel died on November 11, 2009 at the age of 86.

The Rev. Constantin A. Solomonides, B.D. ’50, M.A. ’51, died in West Hartford on January 5, 2010 at the age of 90. “Alex” was born in Egypt, and taught and served the St. George Monastery Seminary in Cairo before coming to the United States and Hartford Seminary in 1948. Among many and varied accomplishments, he was Super-

intendent of Parochial Schools in Connecticut, Supervisor of Welfare Intake and Human Services for 31 years, and authored two illustrated volumes on Christian archeology. After his retirement in 1989, he continued to volunteer at the UConn Health Center.

After a decades-long career as a pastoral counselor and psychotherapist, **the Rev. Dr. Virginia L. Wheeler**, M.A. ’84, died on January 3, 2010 at the age of 90. Dr. Wheeler served as Associate Pastor of the First Congregational Church UCC in West Hartford (the first woman to be called to a settled pastoral position there) and Executive Director of the West Hartford Pastoral Counseling Center. Connecticut Conference Minister Davida Foy Crabtree wrote, “Ginny was a deeply caring, tender-hearted woman whose presence as a pastoral counselor touched people deeply and helped them reflect on their lives.” ✿

An International Conference

Hartford Seminary had a strong presence at the first-ever conference in Italy dedicated to the study of how different Christian communities dialogue with Islam.

Professor Davide Tacchini of Milan Catholic University, who

was a Visiting Professor at Hartford Seminary, was a key organizer of the conference.

Among the speakers were Nicholas Mumejian, a Ph.D. student at the Seminary who is Managing Editor of the Muslim World journal, and

Radko Popov, who studied for a year at the Seminary in the International Peacemaking Program and is the most prominent Bulgarian Orthodox theologian engaged in interfaith dialogue with Islam.

Titled “Ecumenical Perspectives of the Dialogue with Islam,” the conference was held April 10 in Piacenza. It included two sessions, one on Europe and one on the United States. ✿

75-PERCENT-OFF SALE AT HARTFORD SEMINARY BOOKSTORE

All books and merchandise 75 percent off

Bookstore Hours in June:

Monday through Friday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Special hours: June 8-11, 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Please note: The bookstore will close at noon on Thursdays to allow time to process online and phone orders.

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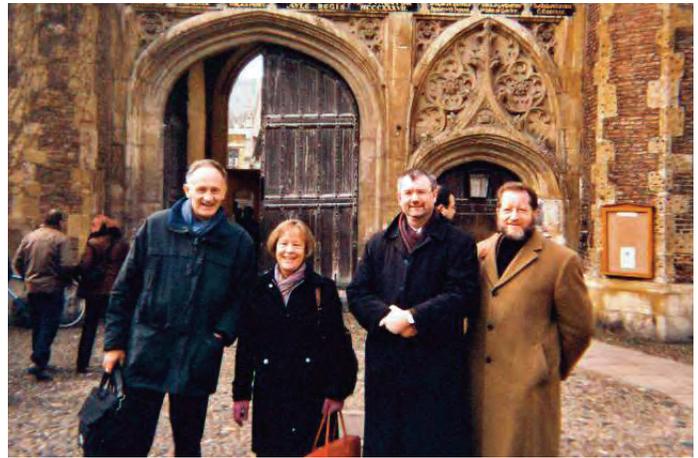


Efrain Agosto served on an Association of Theological Schools accreditation team visit to Alliance Seminary in Nyack, NY, on February 22 to 25. He also visited Alliance's extension seminary in Puerto Rico on behalf of the team on March 4 and 5. At the end of March, Efrain visited the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in Herndon, Virginia, to help launch the first course (taught by Professor Mahmoud Ayoub) of the Seminary's pilot graduate certificate program in Imam Education. Also in March, Efrain's essay, "Latino/a Hermeneutics" was published in *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*.

Steven Blackburn met with Corporator Winthrop Adkins in January to facilitate the donation of the private library of his late father, the Rev. Dr. Leslie John Adkins (Hartford Seminary Class of 1924). Dr. Adkins' library numbers some 2000 volumes. In Seminary Chapel, Steven sang Bass as part of a vocal quartet assembled by Jonathan Lee for the December 14 service, and was keyboard accompanist for Chapel on March 24. Outside the Seminary, Steven met three times with a local Congregational church as a resource in a matter of resolving church conflict. Closer to home, Steven's term as Senior Deacon at the Second Congregational Church, West Hartland, where he has been a

member for close to two decades, ended in February; he continues as a Deacon there.

In December, a book edited by **Heidi Hadsell** and David Roozen was published, "Changing the Way Seminaries Teach: Pedagogies for Interfaith Dialogue." During this month, her travels brought her to Melbourne, Australia, where she attended the Parliament of the World Religions in Melbourne, Australia, with students from her course "Interfaith Dialogue at Home and Abroad: Parliament of World Religions." Following this meeting, Hadsell went to Geneva to take part in a conference organized by the World Council of Churches "Women as Peacemakers through Religion: Methodologies Preached by Women in Interreligious Dialogue." In January, Hadsell spoke at the Stony Point Center at the conference, "Confessing When Empire Trembles: Belhar and Accra Confessions in Conversation: A Colloquium on North American & Caribbean Reformed Justice Theology." Later in the month she traveled to Indonesia to be part of a conference sponsored by the U. S. Department of State on Indonesia-US Interfaith Cooperation. The title of the conference, which was facilitated by Religions for Peace, was "Building Collaborative Communities: Enhancing Cooperation among People of Different Faiths." In March Hadsell, along with Yehezkel Landau and Ingrid



President Heidi Hadsell and Professor Yehezkel Landau traveled in March to the United Kingdom to meet with the leaders of the Cambridge University Inter-Faith Programme. Shown here are, left to right, Professor David Ford of the Inter-Faith Programme, Hadsell, Professor Nick Adams of the Inter-Faith Programme, and Landau.

Mattson, were the featured panelists in a program co-sponsored by several religious organizations, "How Religious People of Peace Can Transform Differences and Build Bridges of Understanding."

Uriah Kim wrote a response to Robert Coote's review of his book in *Conversations in Religion and Theology* and a book review of Anthony C. Thiselton's *Hermeneutics: An Introduction for Reviews in Religion and Theology*. He finished and submitted "Reading David from an Asian American Context" to be published in *Reading the Bible and Doing Theology in Asian American Context: Essays in Honor of Sang Hyun Lee* (forthcoming in 2011). Kim gave a talk at South Congregational Church in Granby on homosexuality and the Bible in March.

In December, **Yehezkel Landau** was a guest teacher for four high school religion classes, focusing on interfaith relations, at the Salisbury School in Salisbury, CT. In January, he taught a January intensive course on "Religion, Conflict, and Peacemaking" Among Landau's February speaking engagements were a workshop on how to address difficult issues in interfaith relations for student leaders at Union College, Schenectady, NY; a day-long seminar on "Biblical Resources for Peacemaking" for clergy and religious educators at the Capital Region Theological Center, Schenectady, NY; and a conference on "Interfaith Dialogue in Higher Education" at Clark University, Worcester, MA. He attended the annual conference of the National Association of College and University Chaplains in Durham, NC, helping to facilitate a session on Scriptural

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Reasoning and giving a presentation, along with Imam Abdullah Antepli, on the *Building Abrahamic Partnerships* and Islamic Chaplaincy Programs at Hartford Seminary. In March, Landau spoke as part of a panel with Heidi Hadsell and Ingrid Mattson on the challenges of interfaith dialogue at the Farmington Valley Jewish Congregation in Simsbury, CT; accompanied President Heidi Hadsell on a trip to the United Kingdom to meet with the leaders of the Cambridge University Inter-Faith Programme; led a discussion on Sandy Tolan's book *The Lemon Tree* and the situation in the Middle East with members of three Hartford-area book groups; co-led a workshop on "Sensitivities and Skills for Interfaith Dialogue" for spiritual directors and educators under the auspices of the Spiritual Life Center in Bloomfield, CT; spoke on "The Challenge of Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations" to the Rotary Club of Springfield, MA; and gave a presentation on the *Open House* Center for Jewish- Arab Coexistence and Reconciliation in Ramle, Israel, to a group of Jews and Quakers in Cambridge, MA.

From the end of October 2009 to February 2010, **Yahya Michot** gave various lectures and seminars in the US and abroad. Among them: In Houston, he took part in the Dialog of Civilizations Platform *Social Challenges of the 21st*

Century organized by the Gülen Institute and gave a panel presentation on *An Islamic Approach to Social Conflicts & Peaceful Coexistence*. During a weekend in Fresno, CA, he spoke on *Muslims' Challenges Today* at the Islamic Cultural Center, gave two lectures at the Temple Beth Israel – the first on *Islamic Theology, Past and Present*, the second on *Monotheism and Prophethood: the Meaning of a Creed*, gave a sermon at the Unitarian Universalist Church on *The Way (Shari'a): Ethics, Love, and Mystical Praxis*, and recorded two 1/2 hour programs for the Catholic Diocese TV. In Wayland, MA, during the 25th Islamic Circle of New England Anniversary & Benefactors' Dinner, he gave the keynote speech on *Challenges of Islamic Leadership in the West*. Michot's book on *Against Smoking. An Ottoman Manifesto*, was published. Twelve photographs by Michot were offered to the Muslim Coalition of Connecticut for its *2010 Calendar: Images From the Muslim World*. Three more texts were added to the new series of French translations of Ibn Taymiyya's spiritual writings on www.muslimphilosophy.com: (4) *Obedying authorities*; (5) *God has set a measure for all things*; (6) *Being a Muslim among the unbelievers*.

In December **David A. Roozen** and Heidi Hadsell's edited collection of case studies of seminary courses on interfaith

dialogue was self-published by the Seminary. *Changing the Way Seminaries Teach: Volume II Pedagogies for Interfaith Dialogue* can be reviewed or purchased online through a link on the Hartford Seminary homepage: <http://www.hartsem.edu> Roozen led a continuing education workshop at the Seminary in mid-February titled: Interfaith Dialogue in Congregations. Battling snow once again in late February in Louisville, KY, the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership Steering Committee, which Roozen chairs, announced the launch of its new online newsletter about congregational development. Readers can sign up for the FACT eletter by emailing fact@hartsem.edu. In early March, Roozen published *American Congregations 2008*, the primary report of the 2008 Faith Communities Today national survey of American congregations. Among many other things the 2008 survey tracks trends since 2000 in several indicators of congregational vitality. It can be reviewed or purchased online through a link on the Faith Communities Today homepage: <http://fact.hartsem.edu>. Finally, in a farewell to March Roozen used the *American Congregations 2008* findings in a two part Lenten series presentation at The First Church in Windsor -- "Four Mega-Trends Changing America's Religious Landscape (and working against Oldline Protestantism)", and "Pockets of Vitality in

Oldline Congregations".

Scott Thumma continued to appear in numerous media, including USA Today, Forbes, First Things, Christian Post, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, the Newark Star Ledger, the San Francisco Chronicle and the Arizona Daily Star. He spoke on radio shows airing in Arizona and Australia and provided research for websites and blogs.

After 30 years in what was once known as "the new Richard Meier building," **Miriam Therese Winter** moved her office out of 77 Sherman Street and into the newly acquired interfaith building at 60 Lorraine Street. She is currently in the midst of preparing a permanent space for the Women's Leadership Institute in the former Macdonald Center. She spent two weeks in London in January doing research for her next book and gave a series of talks on quantum spirituality in Bonita Springs, FL, Saint Mary's, GA, and West Hartford, CT in February and March. A new course, "Ministry in a Multicultural World," which she team-taught this semester with Ben Watts, will definitely be taught again. 🌸



The Rev. John Olson, B.D. '61, is currently providing transitional worship leadership for the Bridgeport United Church of Christ on Laurel Avenue. He served for 18 years as the Minister of the United Church of Christ on Park Avenue in Bridgeport, as well as congregations in Hartford, Middle Haddam, Haddam Neck and North Greenwich, CT. A longtime resident of Bridgeport, John founded the city's chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

For much of his working life, the **Rev. Gordon Bates**, S.T.M. '64, worked with the Connecticut Prison Association, eventually serving as its Executive Director before retiring to work as the Associate Conference Minister for Justice Ministries with the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ. Gordon is currently working on a history of the Connecticut Prison Association, and has discovered that two Hartford Seminary faculty members had connections with the organization: William Barnes, professor in the "Practical Department" in the 1920s and 30s, and Charles Chakerian, the Graham Taylor Professor of Social Ethics and Director of the Seminary's Institute of Church Social Service in the 1930s and 40s.

The Rev. Dr. David Koppel, D.Min. '91, has relocated from Georgia, and is now the Senior Pastor of Palm Valley Lutheran Church, Round Rock, TX.

The Rev. Andrew Terwilleger, M.Div. '70, writes that he can "relate to the excitement of 3 John 4 ("I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.>"). On September 5, 2009, the Rev. Michelle Terwilleger, daughter of Andy and Priscilla, was ordained as Priest in the Anglican Church. She earned her M.Div. at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, KY. She serves a church in Lexington, KY, and is a Chaplain for Hospice.

Voices, a local newspaper in Woodbury, CT, wrote a story about the **Rev. Bonnie Bardot**, D.Min. '07, who, in October 2009, was beginning her 18th interim ministry position in Connecticut at the Oxford United Church of Christ. Bonnie said she feels she is cut out to be an interim minister - one who serves a parish for 18-24 months while it searches for a permanent leader. 'It suits my personality,' she said. 'I like going into a church where they are experiencing transition.'

After studying at Hartford Seminary in the 1960s, **Dr. Keith Kershner** received a Master's degree in Educational Research from Bucknell University, and a Ph.D. in behavioral sciences from the university. He now serves as Executive Director of Research for Better Schools in Philadelphia, and contacted the Seminary looking for a classmate, Donald Anderson.

The Rev. Tom Leamon, B.D. '53 was trained and worked as an illustrator before and during his pastoral career, in which he served churches in Amherst, MA, Cincinnati, OH, Danielson, CT and Williamstown, MA. Recently one of Tom's paintings was accepted by the Smithsonian Institute as part of its permanent collection.

After serving Covenant Churches in Middletown and Middle Haddam, CT, and Cleveland, OH, the **Rev. John Dahlman**, B.S. '41, led United Church of Christ congregations in Chester, NH, and Norton, MA, before retiring to Northfield, where he lives in (and maintains) a home built in 1776.

A native of Nova Scotia, the **Rev. Aubrey Murphy**, M.A. '49, remembers hitching a ride on the mail wagon to his first student ministry posting, as the rural Canadian town had no train or bus service. Deeply committed to a ministry of Christian Education, Aubrey was pastor in numerous churches in Connecticut, serving at the Bristol Congregational UCC just prior to his retirement in 1986. Since then he has worked with Elon Homes for Children and as an interim minister in New Britain and Old Saybrook. He now lives in East Granby, CT.

The Rev. John Webster, S.T.M. '59, served First Church of Christ, Congregational in West

Hartford for 23 years before becoming the founder of pastoral counseling centers in Northampton and Greenfield, MA. While in West Hartford, John selected books for a church library funded by a member, who wanted to create "the best church library in New England." Today, the John P. Webster Library - named in his honor by the estate of the donor - is known throughout the region as just that.

After completing her studies at Hartford Seminary, **Judith Welles**, M.A. '42, B.D. '44, went to the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, where she wrote her doctoral dissertation on John Cotton. She then taught at the American School in Izmir, Turkey, before returning to Vernon, CT, where she still lives. At 93, Judith still walks two miles a day, including to the Talcottville Congregational UCC, where she is a member and occasional accompanist for worship services.

Hartford Seminary prepared the **Rev. Mary Hawkes**, M.A. '58 for a varied career in church leadership including local church, regional and denominational work in sacred music, Christian Education, interim and settled ministry and youth work. Mary is the seventh in her family to graduate from Hartford Seminary, and recalls that among her favorite professors was Ruth Conant of the History Department, of whom it was said, "If you dropped your pencil, you missed a century." ❁

Mina Mina & The Mosquitoes

By *The Rev. Daniel K. Martin, '59*

Fresh out of Hartford Seminary I was flattered to receive an invitation to candidate at the Congregational Church in Aitkin, Minnesota. O boy, my chance to bring true religion to the north woods. God had other plans and sent them in the form of clouds of mosquitoes. When the church issued a call I declined. I wanted to keep my blood.

Back at Hartford Seminary, God really got down to work. We

had, at that time, what was a first. A classmate by the name of Mina Mina was from Egypt. And Mina Mina had married a girl from China. It was the first known union of this type. My wife used to baby-sit the children whom we called "Egyptneese."

Mina was not a U.S. Citizen. A war over the Suez Canal was about to break out between Egypt and Israel. Mina's government was about to call him home. Things did not look good

for Mina and his wife, Sarah. As a Chinese woman she could not go to Egypt.

Now Mina was looking for a church and I suggested he try for the Aitkin church. He did, was called, and accepted the call. Unbeknownst to Mina Mina, Sen. Hubert Humphrey was a member of the Aitkin congregation. When he heard of Mina's plight he arranged for both Mina and Sarah to be flown down to Washington.

There he had them sworn in as American citizens.

Unfortunately it was just after this we lost contact with Sarah and Mina and we do not know how they weathered the mosquitoes. But we have always been pleased by the mysterious workings of God. ✿

Alumni/ae Reunion

Friday, June 4

9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The Classes of 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, and 1962

Key Events

Lecture by Dr. Uriah Kim, Professor of Hebrew Bible
"King David and King Saul: Two Models of Leadership in a Multicultural Context"

Lecture by Dr. David Roozen, Professor of Religion and Society
"Hartford Seminary: the Last 50 Years and the FACTS Report on Congregational Trends"

Alumni/ae Luncheon

Opportunities to reflect and catch up

Commencement Exercises 2010 (at 5 p.m.)
(at which the class of 1960, celebrating their 50th anniversary of graduation, will be recognized)

To Register or for further information, contact Jonathan Lee, chief development officer and director of alumni/ae relations, at 860.509.9556 or jlee@hartsem.edu.

See you on June 4!

Summer Course Schedule 2010

Hartford Seminary's Summer Session 2010 will run from Tuesday, June 1 through Friday, July 2. Most courses are weeklong intensives and will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the weeks of June 7-11, June 14-18, June 21-25 and June 28-July 2. The Seminary's courses are open to the public and carry three graduate level credits. Individuals who do not wish to take courses for credit may apply to take courses as an auditor. Many classes fill up quickly, so participants are urged to register early to ensure a place in their courses of choice.

For those enrolled in a three-credit course, the cost is \$1,680. The non-credit audit fee is \$575. A special audit fee of \$385 is available for: those who are age 60 and older, persons 55 and older receiving disability income, graduates of Hartford Seminary degree programs or the Certificate of Professional Ministry (cooperative M.Div.), donors of \$250 a year or more, Hartford Seminary Adjunct Faculty, and up to three specially designated members of churches that participate in the International Peacemaking Program of the Seminary. There is a limit of one course per academic year to receive the special rate except persons age 60 and older, for whom there is no limit.

To register, please contact the registrar's office at (860) 509-9511. Her email is registrar@hartsem.edu. To see specific course syllabi prior to the semester or learn more about Hartford Seminary and its faculty, visit our website, www.hartsem.edu.

You also may access a registration form at <http://www.hartsem.edu/pages/academics/courses/index.aspx>

Building Abrahamic Partnerships

Sunday, June 6 - Sunday, June 13 (intensive schedule, includes all days and some evenings)

This eight-day intensive training program offers a practical foundation for mutual understanding and cooperation among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Participants learn about the tenets and practices of the three faiths, study texts from their respective scriptures together, attend worship at a mosque, synagogue, and church, and acquire pastoral skills useful in interfaith ministry. Combining the academic and the experiential, the course includes ample time for socializing over meals and during breaks. Building on Hartford Seminary's strengths as an interfaith, dialogical school of practical theology, this team-taught program is a resource for religious leaders who are grounded in their own traditions while open to the faith orientations of other communities. Due to the interfaith nature of this course, we aim for equal representation among each of the three Abrahamic traditions in admitting students to this course. *Yehezkel Landau, Faculty Associate in Interfaith Relations and Co-founder, Open House, Ramle, Israel*

United Church of Christ History, Theology and Polity

Monday, June 21 - Friday, July 2, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The Summer Institute is designed as a two-week experience primarily for those needing basic work in United Church of Christ history, theology and polity. The Institute is also designed for those students who are graduating from seminaries where a UCC polity course is not offered, or who are pursuing an alternative route to ordination. Sponsored by Andover Newton Theological School, Bangor Theological Seminary and Hartford Seminary, this year the Institute will be held at Hartford Seminary. *Faculty to be determined*

Understanding Congregations

Wednesday, June 9 - Sunday June 13, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Your congregation is a spiritual entity, but it is also a social organization, made up of human beings, with conflicts and habits, and grounded in a particular context. The more you know about the many dimensions of the congregation, the better you can make decisions, plan ministry and envision its future. This course is designed for clergy and lay leaders who wish to better understand the dynamics of their congregations. We will use a combination of lectures, readings and practical hands-on experience through field trips to study one congregation and then each student will explore his or her own congregation as the final assignment. We will look at the congregation's identity and culture, its context, the material and human resources, the structures of power, the implicit theology and the leadership dynamics in an effort to understand this complex spiritual entity that is the congregation. *Scott Thumma, Professor of Sociology of Religion*

Muslim Life Through "Fatwas," Ancient and Modern

Monday, June 21 – Friday, June 25, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Legal opinions issued by Muslim scholars relate to all individual and collective aspects of the material and spiritual life of the believers who ask for them. When used with an appropriate methodology, they offer great avenues, sometimes even amazing ones, to explore the everyday realities and interrogations of Muslim societies, past and present. Coffee, tobacco, cannabis, opium and other drugs, music, dance, trance and sex, marginality, extremism and violence, pious practices and social conventions, relations with non-Muslims and jihād are among the topics considered in this course. Mamlūk, Ottoman and modern sources (both from books and the internet) will be read and commented on. No knowledge of Arabic is required for this course. A basic knowledge of Islam and the history of Muslim societies would be useful. *Yahya Michot, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations*

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The Gospel of John and Johannine Literature

Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 1 – July 1, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

A general introduction to the Gospel of John, I-II-III John, and the Book of Revelation from the perspective of contemporary Biblical scholarship, with special emphasis on the history, theology, Christology, and spirituality of Johannine Literature and its relevance today.

Wayne Rollins, Adjunct Professor of Scripture

Readings in Hadith

Monday, June 14 - Friday, June 18, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

In this class, we will read from a selection of prophetic Hadith in English translation with accompanying Arabic text. We will focus on the content and structure of Hadith, with a primary emphasis on the 40 Hadith of Imam al-Nawawi, supplemented by selections from other Hadith collections. Elementary Arabic reading ability (first-year Arabic or equivalent) is a prerequisite. *Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations*

The Book of Revelation in the Context of Apocalyptic Literature Yesterday and Today

Monday, June 14 – Friday June 18, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

This course, which assumes a basic understanding of the New Testament, will explore the only full New Testament apocalypse, the Book of Revelation. We will do so in the context of understanding ancient Jewish apocalyptic literature, as well as modern attempts to understand these texts in Christian theology, faith and practice. Such popular religious understandings as the “Left Behind” book series will be considered, as well as the political implications of the apocalyptic worldview, both in the ancient imperial context as well as the religious and political climate of today. *Efrain Agosto, Professor of New Testament and Academic Dean*

The New Atheism

Monday, June 28 – Friday, July 2, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Recent best sellers by Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens argue for atheism and against theism as immoral, irrational and the main impediment to a more rational and moral society.

This course will examine these authors as well as other examples of a newly aggressive rejection of religion in the name of secularism. We will also examine the historical roots of contemporary atheism since the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. *Borden Painter, Adjunct Professor of History and Professor of History, Emeritus, at Trinity College, Hartford, CT*

Renewal of Muslim Theology: “A Common Word” and the Theology of Compassion

Monday, June 7 - Friday, June 11, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The course offers a brief survey of traditional Muslim Theology (Kalam) and recent attempts at its renewal (New Kalam). Invoking often neglected resources within the Muslim tradition, and dialogically engaging contributions from Jewish, Christian, and Buddhist theological quests, a new Ash’arite Theology of Compassion is then offered for discussion and elaboration. The “A Common Word” initiative (www.acommonword.com) is invoked as a solid foundation for compassion-centered theology and preaching, and the need for personal and institutional networking towards a Compassion Architecture is then explored. *The course will be team taught by Hartford Seminary faculty members and outside experts on the topic under the leadership of Dr. Ingrid Mattson*