

p r a x i s

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National Experts Speak on Dialogue



On February 5, Hartford Seminary presented "Peacemaking on the Ground: Abrahamic Initiatives in the United States" to an audience of more than 100 people. Details on Page 16



Before Congress

Hartford Seminary briefed Congressional staff in Washington, D.C., in March on "Interreligious Relations in a Diverse World." In top photo are Heidi Hadsell, President; Herbert Brockman, Rabbi of Congregation Mishkan Israel in Hamden, CT, and member of the Seminary Board of Trustees; and Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations. Below, among those in the audience was U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak, D-MI. Story on Page 9

Remembering When, Imagining Ahead: Celebrating 175 Years

It is a year away, but we are already looking back in appreciation and thinking ahead with joy. 2008 will mark the 175th anniversary of Hartford Seminary. A group of faithful Connecticut clergy gathered on East Windsor Hill in 1833 to organize the Pastoral Union. The Theological Institute of Connecticut, an interdenominational school from the start, opened the next year. The history of Hartford Seminary since has been that of an institution of remarkable firsts. In the same spirit of those first few forward-thinking clergy, Hartford Seminary is still innovating and adjusting to respond to the needs of our multi-faith world. As we look back and look forward, planning celebrations in the coming year, we are interested in hearing your stories and memories of Hartford Seminary and its predecessor institutions. Please drop us a line at alum@hartsem.edu or contact the Development Office at 860-509-9556. How would you celebrate a 175th?

Special “Great Awakening” Tour in June

Join us on Monday, June 25, for a half-day “Great Awakening” tour of sites related to one of America’s greatest theologians, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758).

The tour is sponsored by Hartford Seminary and Yale Divinity School in conjunction with the United Church of Christ’s General Synod, which is being held in Hartford from June 22 through June 26.

Ken Minkema, director of the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale Divinity School, will guide the tour. It will start at Edwards’ birthplace in East Windsor Hill, where participants will view his home church, the family cemetery dating back to the late seventeenth century, and the president’s house of the East Windsor Hill Seminary, founded in 1834.

From there, the tour will drive up the historic highway through Enfield, where in 1741, at the height of the Great Awakening, Edwards preached his famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” The next stop is Northampton, MA, where Edwards ministered for nearly a quarter of a century. Here participants will see the First Churches of Northampton, the Edwards Church, and the Bridge Street Cemetery, where the famous missionary David Brainerd is buried.

The tour will conclude with a stop at Hartford Seminary, the institutional descendant of the East Windsor Seminary.

The tour will start at the Hartford Civic Center, where the General Synod is meeting, and end with lunch at Hartford Seminary.

Space is limited. To reserve a seat, please contact Kelton Cobb, Professor of Theology and Ethics at Hartford Seminary and one of the tour planners, at (860) 509-9513 or kcobb@hartsem.edu.

A modest fee will be charged for lunch and to defray costs.



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Online Registration and Purchases

Hartford Seminary is now accepting payment online for purchases of the Faith Communities Today resources such as its *FACTs on Growth* or *Insights into Financial Giving* publications.

The products are located at <http://fact.hartsem.edu/products/index.html>.

Also available online is registration for Seminary public lectures and workshops, at <http://www.hartsem.edu/events/events.htm>.

FAITH MATTERS

Hartford Seminary is sponsoring “Faith Matters,” a new talk show about religion on Connecticut Public Radio.

Two shows have aired so far. In the first, the split between Sunnis and Shias in the Islamic faith was discussed. In the second, the show focused on religious fundamentalism.

A grant from the Francis Asbury Palmer Fund has made the sponsorship possible.

Corrections

The Rev. David C. Williams graduated from Springfield College with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1961 and graduated from Hartford Seminary in 1964 with a Master of Divinity degree. His degrees were incorrectly reported in the Annual Report in the December 2006 issue of *Praxis*.

Fisher’s Island Union Chapel, which has generously donated to Hartford Seminary, is located in Fisher’s Island, NY. An incorrect address was published in the Annual Report in the December 2006 issue of *Praxis*.

Heckman Named Chief Development Officer



The Rev. Donald E. "Bud" Heckman, an experienced director of interfaith programs and ordained United Methodist minister, is Hartford Seminary's new Chief Development Officer, effective January 22.

President Heidi Hadsell announced the appointment. Heckman had been executive director of Religions for Peace-USA since May 2003.

"I am so pleased that Bud will join Hartford Seminary to help us raise funds to fulfill our commitment to interfaith dialogue," Hadsell said. "Bud understands our mission to prepare peacemakers and promote vital faith communities. He will fit seamlessly into our leadership team."

At Religions for Peace, Heckman developed a diversified funding portfolio to enable the organization to sponsor collaborations of religious leaders, civic society actors, academics, and government officials.

Heckman's interest in the position of chief development officer grew out of his excitement at "the possibility of being a part of something that meets a real need in today's world. The field of religious cooperation is relatively new, and there

have not been places that adequately study it or fund it. Foundations have yet to fully support this emerging field, although individual donors are starting to share the vision."

He said he is excited to join Hartford Seminary because the Seminary "has a unique place in higher theological education in the United States in the way it has brought people of different faith traditions together. This is sorely needed in today's world." Hartford Seminary, Heckman said, "is pioneering in interfaith relations."

He sees the Seminary as a place that can make a difference by "developing leaders for the world of today and tomorrow."

Heckman is looking forward to closing the gaps between the world of philanthropy, the efforts in interreligious cooperation of the academy, and real world efforts at interfaith dialogue.

Heckman has a Master of Divinity from the University of Chicago Divinity School and a Master of Arts in religious studies from Boston University. He has additional coursework and certificates from several other institutions. He has served as assistant pastor at the

First United Methodist Church of Chicago and associate minister at Westwood United Methodist Church in Cincinnati. Heckman also has been program administrator at the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy in Boston and executive for volunteer placement at the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church in New York City.

At Religions for Peace, Heckman directed campaigns on social issues where religious communities bring unique assets to address real world problems. At the General Board of Global Ministries, Heckman administered the Global Justice Volunteers program, which educated young adults on social justice issues, and designed the Primitimers program, a religious version of Elderhostel.

A member of Phi Beta Kappa, Heckman has served as board representative of the North American Interfaith Network, chair of the membership committee of the National Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Staff, and treasurer of the Committee of Religious NGO's.

At the Seminary, Heckman said he will work with Hadsell "to continue to secure Hartford Seminary at the forefront of interfaith dialogue."

Heckman currently lives in New York with his wife Laura and their children, Annah and Noah. They plan to move to the Hartford area at the end of the current school year.

Some of his leisurely pursuits include sports activities, among them running, kayaking, skiing, hiking, soccer and camping. Heckman enjoys reading, photography and exploring the application of new computer technologies.

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For our records, please inform us if you plan to reprint or photocopy any part of *Praxis*. Letters to the editor are welcomed. If you would like additional copies of this issue of *Praxis* or back issues or 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.

Two Faculty Receive Grants

Two Hartford Seminary faculty have received prestigious awards for research work on upcoming publications.

The Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion has named Uriah Kim, Professor of Hebrew Bible, a 2007 Wabash Center Summer Fellow. The \$7,000 fellowship will assist Kim in his research for a book titled "Uriah the Hittite and Conflicts

of Identity and Loyalty in the David Story."

In a letter, The Rev. Dr. Paul O. Myhre, associate director of the center, wrote, "We are encouraged by the caliber of

his academic project and hope that it will stimulate additional scholarship in his field of study."

The Association of Theological Schools has awarded an \$11,150 Lilly Theological Scholars grant to Ian Markham, Professor of Theology and Ethics and Dean of Hartford Seminary, for a project titled "Resources for Interfaith Dialogue."

The funding, effective May 1, will pay an adjunct faculty stipend, allow Markham to hire a research assistant, and underwrite a two-day consultation with four religiously diverse specialists in religious studies. It is intended to provide Markham the time and peer expertise to complete two books he is working on.

One is a revised edition of his "World Religions Reader;" the other is a book on "Expanding the Dialogue Circle: Bringing Conservatives in."

Woolever Resigns from Faculty



Cynthia Woolever, Professor of Sociology of Religious Organizations, has announced her resignation from the Hartford Seminary faculty, effective August 15.

Woolever has been a member of the Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research. She joined the Seminary in August 2003.

"While my reason for leaving is a happy one (marriage), I'm also saddened to leave the Hartford Seminary community. This is a place of unique commitments. I'm immensely grateful for the time spent with talented colleagues. I feel I've grown as a scholar and as a person of faith," Woolever said.

Woolever is director of the U.S. Congregational Life Survey. About 300,000 worshipers in more than 2,000 congregations in the United States completed a survey during worship services in 2001. Worshipers in Australia, England, and New Zealand completed similar surveys. Together, the international effort included about 2 million worshipers and 17,000 congregations across three continents.

The survey included Jewish, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Buddhist, Unitarian and Protestant denomina-

tions. The project's purpose was to develop resources to help congregations better understand themselves, identify their strengths, assess their ministries and relate more effectively with their communities.

She published "A Field Guide to U.S. Congregations," with co-author Deborah Bruce, in 2002 and "Beyond the Ordinary: Ten Strengths of US Congregations," in 2004. A completed third book with Bruce, "Places of Promise: Finding Strength in Your Congregation's Location," focuses on how location affects congregational life. This book is scheduled for release in January 2008.

Woolever's research has focused on three areas – voluntary organizations, sociology of religion and congregational studies – and has been multi-faith.

In announcing Woolever's resignation, President Heidi Hadsell said, "We greatly appreciate all that Cynthia has done while on the faculty, and will miss her as a constructive, helpful presence and wonderful colleague."

Woolever plans to continue her writing, research, and work with congregations as a consultant. She is moving to the Albany, NY, area.

Students Win Scholarships

Four Hartford Seminary students have won 2006-07 Merit Scholarships.

Tom Verde, a Master of Arts student, will receive a scholarship from the William Thompson Fund, as a degree program student who "has demonstrated

notable proficiency or interest in the field of biblical studies." He won the award for his papers, "Not by Bread Alone (Nor Wine for that Matter): Food Variety at the Last Supper," and "Early Christian Worship from the Pentecost to Constantine."

Joseph Flynn and Tubanur Yesilhark, Master of Arts students, will receive scholarships from the Hartranft Scholarship Fund for demonstrating "excellence in written expression."

Flynn won for his paper, "The Jewish Perspective on the Morning-After Pill," and Yesilhark won for a paper titled "Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Understanding of Grace vs. Law."

Matthew Braddock, a Doctor of Ministry student, will receive a scholarship from the Bennett Tyler Scholarship Fund for excellence in written expression. His award is for his paper, "A Call to Fresh Apostolicity."

Studying in the Congregational Relations Program

The Rt. Rev. John Danbinta, a Congregational Relations Program student at Hartford Seminary, recently was profiled in *Good News*, the newspaper of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut.

The Congregational Relations Program brings Christian leaders from countries with large Muslim and Christian populations to the Seminary to learn the art of interfaith dialogue and to engage in Christian-Muslim dialogue. The goal of the program is to prepare Christian leaders for peacemaking.

These students leave the Seminary with the skills and knowledge to engage in productive interfaith dialogue at home. Students in the Congregational Relations Program spend an academic year studying interfaith dialogue with an emphasis on Christian-Muslim relations.

In addition to their formal studies, students are embedded in a local congregation where they experience American Christianity first hand.

Upon completion of the required 18 credits these students receive a Graduate Certificate in either *Interfaith Dialogue* or in *Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations*.

The Rev. Francis Acquah, a student at Hartford Seminary in the Congregational Relations Program, said the program “will enable me to join hands with other religious leaders in seeking ways of building and advocating for justice in Ghana.”

Below are two excerpts from the story, written by Karin Hamilton, editor of Good News.



The Rt. Rev. John Danbinta, left, bishop of the Diocese of Gusau, Province of Kaduna, Church of Nigeria, with the Rev Canon Tom Furrer, rector of Trinity Church, Tariffville, CT. Bishop John is attending a year-long course on Christian-Muslim relations at Hartford Seminary.

A Calling

Never underestimate the power of music to change a life — or the power of God, working through music — to change many lives.

And it doesn't have to be a Beethoven Mass.

Over 20 years ago, a young Hausa man in his village in northern Nigeria passed by a home where Christians were singing at a baby-naming ceremony. The Christians were Anglicans.

The young man, who had never been to school and was from a traditionalist family, was intrigued by the sound. He went to the house.

“I want to learn how to sing,” the young man said to the new father. Of course, came the reply. So the elders of the church taught him to read and

write, and then to sing the songs that had quickened his spirit.

Today, that man is the Rt. Rev. John Garba Danbinta, now 48, and bishop of the Missionary Diocese of Gusau, in the Province of Kaduna, Church of Nigeria. He's here in Connecticut to take courses in Muslim-Christian relations at Hartford Seminary, at the request of his Archbishop, the Most Rev. Josiah Fearon, a Seminary graduate.

“Bishop John,” as he's known, spends his weeks in Hartford and his weekends at Trinity Church, Tariffville. He stays with the Rev. Tom Furrer, rector, and his family and assists and preaches upon occasion at the church.

Hartford Seminary

Fifteen years ago, Trinity Church in Tariffville welcomed the Rev. Josiah Fearon into their midst while he attended Hartford Seminary. Over the years they have kept the friendship alive with visits and exchanges and mission work.

Fearon is now archbishop of the Province of Kaduna, in Nigeria. He's well-known and well-respected for his work to improve Christian-Muslim relations. He asked Bishop John to take the course at Hartford Seminary with the hope that Danbinta will assist him in his work in this field.

The year-long course at Hartford Seminary includes international Christian and Muslim leaders. They read the Bible and the Qur'an and other books, write

and present papers, and dialogue.

Danbinta is enrolled in the Congregational Relations Program, and will graduate in June 2007 with a Graduate Certificate in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations. Seminary funding, provided by a generous donor, covers airfare, scholarships, room and board, and the students are linked with a local congregation. (The seminary is currently seeking host congregations for next year.)

“I want to be knowledgeable in this area, so that I'll be able to work in Nigeria with peace as my focus,” Danbinta said.

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Faculty Notes



During his sabbatical in the winter/spring semester, **Efrain Agosto** will be completing a Spanish-language lay commentary on the Apostle Paul's Corinthian Letters for a series to be published by Fortress Press entitled "Conosca Su Biblia" (Know Your Bible). He is also the research director for the Latino component of a major study on the use of the Bible in ethnic communities sponsored by the Institute for Signifying Scriptures of Claremont University in California. In January, Agosto hosted colleagues in the project for two meetings in Hartford, where several Latino churches and communities will be studied, and traveled to Claremont in mid-February to meet with the Los Angeles-based research team. Scott Thumma and Adair Lummis are consultants on the project. Also in February, Agosto traveled to Corpus Christi, Texas, for the second of three meetings of a Wabash Center for Teaching & Learning in Theology and Religion colloquy on diversity in theological education. In March, he attended the annual meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, held in Cleveland, Tennessee. At this meeting, his book, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul*, was reviewed and discussed in one of the biblical studies sessions of the meeting.

Steven Blackburn visited the offices of Kazi Publications in Chicago over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. Next year Kazi will publish Blackburn's *Introduction from the Protestant Perspective and Comment* based on the English translation of *The Sublime Qur'an* by Laleh Bakhtiar, with other scholars providing Catholic and Jewish introductions and commentaries.

Kelton Cobb joined Yehezkel Landau and Abdullah Antepli in March in leading an "Abrahamic Study Day" of interfaith participants at South United Methodist Church in Manchester, CT. He was at Saint Patrick/St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church in Hartford to give a presentation on "Protestant Christianity" at a Lenten study series that is being offered there. And he has recently completed a contribution to the *Lectionary Guide for Preachers* on the Gospel of John that is coming out from Westminster/John Knox Press.

In January, **Heidi Hadsell** taught "Dialogue in a World of Difference: Method & Philosophy of Dialogue" in Singapore. The course was one of three offered by Seminary faculty in an interfaith training program on dialogue organized by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore in cooperation with the Seminary. In February, she was on a

panel on theological education for the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, held in Orlando. Also in February, Hadsell was on a panel on globalization at New York Theological Seminary. The occasion was the inauguration of the Rev. Dr. Dale Irwin as president of NYTS. In March, Hadsell participated with Professor Ingrid Mattson and Trustee Herbert Brockman in two briefings on interreligious understanding for Congressional staff in Washington, D.C. She wrote an article on "Cosmopolitan Christianity" for *The Progressive Christian* magazine.

Uriah Kim participated in the Wabash Center's workshop on teaching and learning in January.

In December, **Yehezkel Landau** was Scholar-in-Residence at the Bet Torah Synagogue in Mt. Kisco, NY, delivering three presentations on the theme, "Sharing the Abrahamic Legacy and Blessing Among Jews, Christians, and Muslims." In January he traveled to Israel to maintain contacts with the Open House Center for Jewish-Arab Coexistence, establish contacts with the Aravah Institute for regional environmental studies, and address an American Lutheran group on Jewish spirituality and peacebuilding. With Ingrid Mattson, he addressed a group of Christian and Jewish clergy at Temple Emanuel in New London, CT, on the topic "Islam, Judaism, and Us." In February, Landau delivered a lecture on "Jewish Spirituality" at Holy Apostles Catholic Seminary in Cromwell, CT; participated in a consultation, held at the Seminary under a Wabash grant, aimed at producing a volume of case studies for teaching interreligious dialogue in American seminaries; and spoke at a luncheon at Beth Hillel Synagogue in Bloomfield, CT, on "Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations Today." In March, Landau lectured at Manchester Community College on "Healing the Holy Land: Interreligious Peacebuilding in Israel/Palestine." He also joined a Seminary delegation to Washington, D.C., to meet with Congressional staff people and delivered a presentation on "Conflict Prevention Initiatives in Israel/Palestine" under the auspices of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy, and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University in Arlington, VA. Also in March, Landau joined Seminary colleagues Kelton Cobb and Abdullah Antepli on an interfaith panel at South United Methodist Church in Manchester, CT; delivered a presentation entitled "A Jew's Perspective on Jesus: Rabbi, Prophet, Messiah?" at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, West Hartford, CT; participated in an interfaith panel following a presentation by an Israeli and a Palestinian, representing the Bereaved Families Forum, at the West Hartford Town Hall; and took part in an interfaith workshop on the Abrahamic Family Reunion at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, CA. His

interview-article, "Kristen Stendahl on Leadership" appeared in the Winter 2007 issue of the Harvard Divinity Bulletin and his essay, "Heschel on Israel: Part Prophet, Part Polemicist," was submitted to the journal *Shofar* for publication in an issue commemorating the 100th birthday of Abraham Joshua Heschel.

Ian Markham was the Robertson Fellow at the University of Glasgow in Scotland in December, speaking on "Conservatives and Dialogue: Why it is essential to get Conservatives excited about the Dialogue Project." In January, he made a presentation on "Christianity and Other Religions" at deacon training for the Episcopal Church in Connecticut. Markham also delivered the Lebel Lectures on Christian Ethics, given at the University of Calgary. He spoke on "Open Orthodoxy and Same-Sex Marriage: Where Should Christians Stand?" and "Neither Conservative or Liberal: A Theology of Christian Engagement with Non-Christian Traditions." Markham was the keynote speaker in February at Leeds Metropolitan University in England, in a conference on "Islam and the West." His topic was Pope Benedict XVI's Regensburg Lecture. In March, Markham preached at Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford, and was retreat leader on "Daily Space with God," at the Episcopal South Carolina Retreat Facility, in South Carolina.

In December, **Ingrid Mattson** spoke on "Muslim Women: Myths and Realities" at Westfield State College in Massachusetts and delivered a lecture entitled, "Knowing and Unknowing: the Psycho-Spiritual State of the Muslim Ethicist" at Pennsylvania State University. In January, Mattson visited Presbyterian College in South Carolina, where she lectured on Muslim women's spirituality. Mattson spoke on a panel about human rights at Northwestern University on Martin Luther King Day. At the end of January, she attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, where she spoke on a panel entitled "The Procreation Choice" and in the closing session on "Dignity." In February, Mattson spoke with Yehezkel Landau to an interfaith clergy group in Waterford, CT, gave a presentation to the Women's Forum in Litchfield, CT, spoke at the Interfaith Clergy Symposium in New York City and gave a lecture at Fairfield University in Connecticut. In March, Mattson participated with Seminary President Heidi Hadsell and Trustee Herbert Brockman in two briefings on interreligious understanding for Congressional staff in Washington, D.C. She also gave a lecture at the Naval College in Annapolis. Mattson lectured in the January Building Abrahamic Partnerships program and this spring is teaching "Maidservants of Allah: the Spirituality of Muslim Women." *Continued on next page*

Continued from previous page

David A. Roozen spent three days in early January in Phoenix with the Interdenominational Executives Group in his ongoing role as participant observer with this support and learning community. Two weeks later he chaired the Winter meeting of the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership's Steering Committee, at which the committee committed itself to publish three more issues of its new congregational leader resource series, "Insights Into ..." The three foci include Congregational Growth, Conflict, and Youth. The committee also reaffirmed the full membership's recommendations to conduct a 2008 national survey of congregations, and to begin planning for 2010 replication of the original FACT survey conducted in 2000. In February, Roozen provided the leadership for a retreat of the Indiana Partnership for Christian Unity and Mission. He returned to Hartford to host, with President Heidi Hadsell, the first meeting of the writing team for the Seminary's study of pedagogies for teaching interfaith dialogue in theological education.

Jane Smith spoke on "Islam and Pluralism" at a conference sponsored by Harvard University's Center for European Studies in December. In February, she spoke at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Lakeville, CT, and at Ashlar Village, Wallingford, CT, on the topic "Thinking about Islam." In March, Smith presented a workshop on Christian-Muslim relations for the deacons of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

In early December **Scott Thumma** gathered with the leading researchers of megachurches to talk about strategies and future directions for new research on the topic with several new projects in the works. During this quarter he consulted with Efrain Agosto on a national research project. He also completed an article for an edited volume on religion in America. Thumma was subpoenaed and deposed as an expert witness in two court cases having to do with megachurches that will come to trial this year. He has contin-

ued to produce the quarterly newsletter "InSites into American Religion" and guide the group of Lilly Endowment supported website managers as they plan the year's events and program in Richmond, Virginia. Throughout this period he has given many press interviews for print and video media related to his megachurch work, which continues to be featured in many news articles throughout the globe. Additionally, he is program chair for this year's annual meeting of the Religious Research Association.

In December, as in the past sixteen years, **Miriam Therese Winter** completed a successful Christmas toy drive for the children of women incarcerated in York Correctional Institution in Niantic, CT, and for children associated with the Yale-New Haven Pediatrics AIDS Clinic in New Haven, CT. She was principal speaker at a brunch sponsored by Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church in Lakeville, CT, which was held at the Interlaken Inn. In January she joined Heidi Hadsell and Ibrahim Abu-Rabi' in Singapore to present a course in spirituality for an interfaith initiative sponsored by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore. In February she gave the annual Aquinas Lecture for the Newman Club at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City and a weekend retreat for women at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona. In March she facilitated a day on spirituality for women sponsored by the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Cynthia Woolever led a strategic planning process at Trinity Episcopal Church in Hartford, culminating in a presentation to the congregation in January and a written report. In February, she traveled to Louisville to prepare a final grant report to the Lilly Endowment for the U.S. Congregational Life Survey project and prepared congregational resource material on local religious geography.

Alumni Notes

David Powell (M.A.'02) reports: "In 2007 I will be hosting the International Institute on Addiction Studies, to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal; Thimpu, Bhutan; Beijing, Shanghai and Kunming, China; and Singapore. These training institutes will credential the first alcohol and drug abuse professionals in these countries. The Institute will also initiate the first program for children of alcoholic families, hosted by Beijing Medical University. Research will begin with the China Center for Disease Control, the National Institute on Drug Dependence, China, and the Pacific Institute on Research and Evaluation, all coordinated by my organization, the International Center for Health Concerns, Inc. For further information, or financial contributions to these pro bono efforts, contact me at djpowell2@yahoo.com."

The Rev. David C. Williams (M.Div.'64) writes, "I am a retired United Church of Christ pastor, having served churches in Massachusetts for 34 years, and then the MACUCC [Massachusetts Conference of the UCC] for two years (1998 - 2000) as the Interim Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Financial Development. Since September 2000 I have been serving (part-time) as the NHCUCC Stewardship and Planned Giving Associate and doing independent consulting with UCC and UMC congregations in MA, ME, and NH with their Capital Campaign leadership teams. In March I was team leader of a NHCUCC-sponsored Adult Mission Team for the second year in a row, spending a week with the UCC Back Bay Mission, helping folks in Biloxi, MS, get their homes put back together after Hurricane Katrina did its damage in August 2004. I live in Alton, NH, with my wife Patricia and we will be celebrating our 4th anniversary this coming June. I have 2 children and 3 grandchildren, all living in MA and Pat has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, in CT and NH. Pat and I are active members of the Laconia (NH) Congregational Church UCC. My life and ministry has been good, and I am grateful to the place that Hartford Seminary had in making it so!"

A Sermon on the Responsibilities of Faith and Reason



By Heidi Hadsell

Our text this morning comes from the New Testament: Hebrews.

This is a fitting text for us to reflect on together at Hartford Seminary. Here we are, people of faith, anchored in three different traditions, reflecting on the faith of Abraham, the one who symbolically brings us together as his children.

In the United States in recent years, and in many other parts of the globe, we have witnessed the resurgence of the presence of faith in many areas of life. In the market place, on the football field, in academia and in the public political arena, with all of it exaggerated in the media, the presence of religion has expanded and become more overt. Consequently, the boundaries and balance between the religious and the secular world have shifted somewhat.

Not surprisingly, the shifting boundaries provoke debate on all sides. Books have proliferated bemoaning the rise of the religious right in politics, often insisting that it has taken over our political system, or is taking over, or will take over if the conditions are right. These are books that are fond of insisting that virtually all that is violent is to be blamed exclusively on the faith of those perpetrating the violence; and attributing to religious belief everything that is small, cramped, bigoted and prejudiced in the ways people think and act.

Similarly, a not inconsiderable number

of people on the religious right have written a whole other set of books both popular and academic, proposing and arguing for religious theories like that of intelligent design, taking on the scientific and humanistic world view on issues such as stem cell debate, and insisting that as religious people they have communications with God that the rest of us do not and that they should thus never leave others alone to make the important decisions of the day.

The prevailing assumption in this debate on both sides is that faith and reason are basically incompatible and antithetical to each other. Simplified like this, each “side” becomes the scapegoat for the other, and is blamed for what are actually often failings and limitations of all human beings, and inherent to the human condition itself. The secular world is sure that if there weren’t religious people in the world, or if religious people would just keep their faith to themselves, reason would reign and all would be well. In the book *The God Delusion*, written by the scientist Richard Dawkins, one can find a long list of such sentiments expressed by people such as Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Adams. Alternatively, the religious person thinks if only the scientists and intellectuals and politicians were people of faith, and by that they invariably mean their own faith, their decisions would be correct and wise, and all would be well. In this way each side can heap the blame on the other, and therefore conveniently never have to look at its own shortcomings, responsibilities and failures, nurturing instead the conviction that if the other side didn’t exist one’s own side would bring into being the kind of values and the peaceful world ardently longed for.

In this “dialogue” if one can call it that, each side commits the errors we here at Hartford Seminary teach ourselves and our students to avoid in dialogue: they compare the best of themselves with the worst of the other, they mis-characterize the other, so that the other is not even recognizable to itself, they hurl accusations about the other without waiting for response, wanting to make their own points and not wanting to truly listen to and engage the other.

Meanwhile, reality presses upon us and is, as the vast majority of us knows, much more complicated and nuanced than this debate suggests. Faith and secular reason are inextricably intertwined, if not in the books that seek bestseller status, at least in the lives and thought of ordinary people who inhabit a world that includes them both in complex interaction.

Observe Hartford Seminary: we use the best of sociological science to study religious communities both for the scientific knowledge itself, and to enable those communities to grow and change in part by virtue of the acquisition of scientific knowledge; we teach languages and well defined methods to aid our understanding of scripture; we teach ministry skills using the best knowledge science has to offer about human groups and individuals; we read history and examine the contemporary world using the social sciences as we do so; we study the history of the religious thought of our traditions, and we teach the skills of critical thinking which we demand be used in the classroom.

We are, in short, people of faith, using the best that science and reason can offer to enhance the understanding of the traditions which we inhabit; to aid us in constructing peaceful relationships between our different traditions; and to enable us to engage with and contribute meaningfully to other parts of the human social world.

Still, though intertwined, science or other forms of human reasoning and faith often do speak in their own languages and have different ways of understanding and shaping the meaning of human lives and history. The passage from the lectionary this morning describing the faith of Abraham teaches us some of the central attributes of faith, attributes I think that all three of our faiths share, each in its own way. Faith is not passive, it is active, belief in God evokes response, even if sometimes it’s a reluctant response; faith is experienced by the faithful as a promise, a path upon which one embarks often not knowing where it will take one, and offering no immediate guarantees; the reality of the faithful is two-fold – they are grounded in human social communities, but there is always a dimension of life lived beyond these communities, so that there is a sense in which they are “strangers and foreigners” in them. This two-fold nature of people of faith, along with the horizons of faith which stretch far beyond this world’s horizons, provide the faithful with *Continued on next page*

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the impetus and the vision – what Mannheim called the utopian imagination - to seek to transform many aspects of life as it is in the here and now.

None of these attributes of faith need be an argument to suggest that faith has no accountability, no way to be engaged in rational discussion, or reasoned argument with those outside its circle, or no contribution to make to the wider social world. To the contrary. It is appropriate and important for the secular world to hold religious people accountable, to notice hypocrisy when and where it occurs, and lamentable moments in history for which they hold responsibility, to question uninformed or irresponsible opinions of religious people about the issues of the day and to demand, for instance, in the U.S., that religious people like everyone else, respect the rules of reasoned debate and democracy established by our ancestors. It is important that religious people hold themselves accountable, and attend to the critiques of the secular world, and respond with change or self-critique when and where it is necessary. Heaven knows we have a lot to held accountable for.

It is also appropriate that we religious folk share what we have to contribute to the wider world. I don't have to tell you what we offer, and it's impossible and too complex to enumerate here at any rate. Suffice it to say that what we have to offer is not simply opinions and judgments shaped in the light of faith, though we always seem to have plenty of those. But we also have a lot else to offer including long histories – centuries and centuries - of reflection on many of the most profound questions of existence, and equal numbers of years of attempts big and small, successful and also dismal failures, to practice what we believe within our communities and between them and others; we have an ethic which puts the poorest and the most vulnerable among us at the center of concern, and demands that values such as justice and compassion guide the ways we treat others in all areas of life; and as we insist on the infinite worth of every human being, we also have an inherent, if often unrecognized and un-acted upon responsibility to care for all of God's creation.

What we have to offer to the wider world, as children of the faith of Abraham, is clearly I think largely shared across our traditions. Although there are bright spots, we have indeed made an often violent and tragic mess of things. We share responsibility for the mess and the violence, the embers of which are still burning and are too often fanned into fire. But as people of faith, above all perhaps, we share the future as task and responsibility, which we embrace in the light of God's future beyond human horizons. The time spent at Hartford Seminary is we hope, in a modest way, both preparation towards that future and a taste of its promise.

Heidi Hadsell preached this sermon during Chapel at Hartford Seminary on January 29. Hadsell is Seminary President and Professor of Social Ethics.

Informing Congress

Hartford Seminary, in cooperation with the offices of U.S. Sen. Christopher J. Dodd and U.S. Rep. John B. Larson, held briefings for Congress in March on "Interreligious Relations in a Diverse World."

About 40 people attended the two briefings, representing staff from California to Illinois and Wisconsin to Connecticut and Rhode Island.

The speakers were Heidi Hadsell, President of the Seminary, Herb Brockman, Rabbi of Congregation Mishkan Israel in Hamden, CT, and Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations and President of the Islamic Society of North America.

David Lightman, Washington Bureau Chief for The Hartford Courant, covered the first briefing and wrote:

"WASHINGTON — Hartford Seminary came to Washington and held the kind of event the capital rarely sees: a dialogue among religious leaders with no legislation to promote or budget proposals to seek.

"The extraordinary mission of the three religious leaders? To answer questions about their communities and their beliefs. To talk and to answer questions."

The two sessions offered Congressional leaders and their staff deeper insight into Islam and its complex relationship with Christianity and Judaism to inform them when they consider policies that come before Congress.



A legislative aide takes notes during a Hartford Seminary briefing in Washington, D.C.

Teaching Interfaith Relations

The recently signed memorandum of understanding between Hartford Seminary and the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore led to three Seminary faculty traveling to Singapore in January to teach in an interfaith training program on dialogue.

Heidi Hadsell taught "Dialogue in a World of Difference: Method & Philosophy of Dialogue." Miriam Therese Winter taught "Spirit and Spirituality: On Becoming One," and Ibrahim Abu-Rabi' taught "Christian-Muslim Relations in the Modern World."

These were one-week courses, attended by people of diverse faiths.

The memorandum of understanding signed by the Seminary and the Religious Council calls for the council to promote interfaith dialogue in Singapore and the surrounding region and the Seminary to provide training in interfaith dialogue.

"In essence," Hadsell said, "we were teaching the participants in our classes how to do interfaith teaching themselves. It is our hope that the more people who teach interfaith dialogue, in more parts of the world, the more interreligious understanding will bloom."

The three Seminary faculty plan to return to teach again at a Religious Council training program in August.

In Memoriam

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

Carolyn Berkey (M.A. '58), 75, wife of the late Robert F. Berkey (Ph.D. '58), died in February while visiting family in North Carolina. Mrs. Berkey was a resident of South Hadley, MA. After attending Maryville College in Tennessee, she spent four years in Asyut, Egypt, teaching English in a girls' school connected with the Presbyterian Church. Returning to the States, she earned a master's degree at Hartford Seminary, where she met her future husband. After he completed his doctorate, they moved to South Hadley, where he taught for many years in the Religion Department at Mount Holyoke College. Over the ensuing decades, the Berkeys became active and respected members of the South Hadley community. They had deep connections to Holyoke, largely through Mrs. Berkey's work. She first served as director of Christian education at the First Congregational Church, and then as executive director of the YWCA. After leaving the YWCA to allow her family to spend a sabbatical year in Cambridge, England, she held a series of positions at Mount Holyoke College, first in the development office, and then as executive director of the Alumnae Association, from which she retired in 1988. Mrs. Berkey leaves two sons, Jonathan and Mark, and four grandchildren.

The Rev. Dr. Philip J. Cascia (D.Min. '89), 55, died in January after a brief illness. Father Cascia was a resident of Plainville, CT. He received his degree in Theology from Mount St. Mary Seminary in 1976. Father Cascia served as a prefect at St. Thomas Seminary from 1976 to 1977 and was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Hartford in 1977. He began his career as an assistant at St. Francis Xavier Church in Waterbury, CT, in 1977 and was transferred to St. Anthony's Church in Prospect, CT, where he served as an assistant from 1978 until 1985. He was chaplain of Sacred Heart High School from 1985 to 1989. Father Cascia then was named as pastor of St. Anthony's Church in Prospect, serving until 2005. His last assignment was as administrator of Our Lady of Mercy

Church in Plainville. In 1978 he founded the St. Vincent dePaul Society in Waterbury, an organization dedicated to eliminating the root causes of homelessness in the Greater Waterbury Area. While he was chaplain at Sacred Heart High School, Father Cascia coached wrestling. He arranged to take wrestlers to the Soviet Union. Due to this trip, the late President Ronald Reagan commissioned him to establish a program to develop cultural exchanges between sports teams in the U.S. and other countries around the world. This program is the Intersports USA. Father Cascia is survived by a brother, Michael P. Cascia, and several nieces and nephews.

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Alexander Edwards (S.T.M. '66 and Ph.D. '74), 85, died in December at the St. Mary Home in West Hartford, CT. Dr. Edwards received a bachelor's degree cum laude from Bryn Mawr College in 1943, and a Master of Divinity degree cum laude from Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1950. Hartford Seminary awarded her an S.T.M. degree in Systematic Theology in 1966, and a Ph.D. in 1974. Dr. Edwards was ordained by the Connecticut Conference of the Congregational Christian Churches in April, 1951. This was a pioneering event, since few women were in the ministry at that time. She served as an interim minister at several Congregational churches in northwest Connecticut. From 1959 to 1966 she was a member of the Stewardship Council of the United Church of Christ. During the 1960's she served on the Board of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, the first woman to do so. In 1968, she was a press representative of the Hartford Times at the World Council of Churches assembly in Uppsala, Sweden. Dr. Edwards was an adjunct professor of New Testament at Hartford Seminary for 25 years. She was the co-author with the late Robert Berkey of two books: *Christological Perspectives* and *Christology in Dialogue*. In addition, she led a popular ecumenical study group for women in the Hartford area known as "the Bible Ladies." She also taught Bible study classes at the First Church of Christ in Farmington, CT, where she was a member. Dr. Edwards is survived by a brother, Heywood Alexander of Hanover, New Hampshire; a daughter, Edith Heywood Edwards; a son, the Rev.

James D. Edwards of Stow, Ohio; a grandson; and many nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held in her honor at Hartford Seminary on March 5.

Dr. H. Allan Gleason Jr. (Ph.D. '46), 89, died in January at his home in El Paso, TX. Dr. Gleason was a distinguished professor and amazing storyteller. He came to the Hartford Seminary campus in 1938, and received a Ph.D. degree in 1946. His thesis on religious communities in India was an early indication of his interest in religion and society and his contribution to the global community. After serving as pastor of three churches in Virginia, Dr. Gleason became a professor of linguistics at the Seminary, and for the next 20 years he also taught phonetics, Indian studies, and geography. He served as librarian as well. Dr. Gleason's text "*Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics*" was the classroom standard for linguistics instruction for many years. Later he traveled to India where he was a visiting Linguistics scholar for two years. Dr. Gleason then became a Professor of Linguistics at the University of Toronto for 23 years. He also was a member of the American Bible Society. He is survived by his wife, Frances Everett Gleason; son and daughter-in-law, Henry and Jan Gleason; daughter, Martha Gleason; and a brother, sister and five grandchildren.

The Rev. Frederick C. "Rick" Lanz (M.A. '70 and M.Div. '71), 61, died in January. He was a resident of New Haven, CT, where he was pastor of the First Baptist Church. Previously, Mr. Lanz had been pastor at Harbor Baptist Church on Block Island for four years after 23 years leading an unusual street ministry to troubled youths of West Hartford, CT. Mr. Lanz graduated from Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1968. His interest in Eastern religions drew him to Hartford Seminary. He took a degree in psychology in 1970 and, finding himself drawn to the ministry, a degree in divinity in 1971. He was associate pastor at the First Baptist Church in Mansfield, Ohio, two years before starting The Street Ministry of West Hartford in 1973. He became certified as a marriage and family therapist and also taught counseling at St. Joseph College in West Hartford. Eventually he felt he wanted to work with a community not constantly in crisis so he decided to return to the pastorate on

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Block Island. He is survived by his wife Wilhelmina; two sons, Fritz and Benjamin, two grandchildren, and his mother.

Dr. Ruth Brett Quarles (M.A. '36), 92, died in January. A retired professor at Morgan State University in Baltimore, she had lived in Mitchellville, MD, since 1988. Dr. Quarles graduated from Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C., and received a master's degree from Hartford Seminary in 1936. She received a doctorate in education from Columbia University in 1945. She began her academic career as assistant to the dean at Spelman College in Atlanta in 1936, became dean of women at Dillard University in New Orleans in 1938 and dean of students at Bennett College in Greensboro, N.C., in 1942. Dr. Quarles moved to Tuskegee University in 1945 to become the co-director of student personnel services. She spent 1949 to 1951 at the University of Munich in Germany as a volunteer with the American Friends Service Committee, working with displaced German refugees after World War II. She returned to the United States to be dean of students at Fisk University in Nashville before joining Morgan State University in 1956. Dr. Quarles led the student personnel and counseling services at the university from 1956 until 1980. Dr. Quarles was the first African American to sit on the American Council on Education's Commission on the Education of Women. She also served on the national board of directors of the YWCA of America and was a past president of the National Association of Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors. Her long career in higher education, spanning 42 years, led the

National Association of Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors to sponsor a symposium in her name and present her a distinguished service award in 1980. Survivors include a daughter, Pamela Quarles; a stepdaughter, Roberta Knowles; three sisters; and three grandsons.

Helen R. Volkmann (B.R.E. '38), 90, died in February at Laclede Groves Lutheran Convalescent Home in Webster Groves, Mo., where she had lived since 1997. Mrs. Volkmann attended Muskingum College for two years and earned a bachelor's degree in religious education in 1938 from the Hartford Seminary Foundation. She married the Rev. Dr. Max F. B. Volkmann in 1937, and they served Congregational parishes - now known as the United Church of Christ - in Connecticut, North Carolina, New York, Nebraska and Minnesota between 1938 and 1959. They then served Methodist parishes in Minnesota before they moved to Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, in 1962 so her husband could join the Iowa Wesleyan College faculty. In 1964 she earned a B.A. from Iowa Wesleyan, and in 1968 she received an M.A. from the University of Iowa. She began work as an Iowa Wesleyan librarian in 1968, was promoted to library director, and retired from the college in 1978. She then became archivist to the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, until she again retired in 1988. Four children survive: M. Fredric Volkmann of St. Louis, Dr. Elizabeth Zeitz of San Francisco, Hannah Larsen of Dallas, and Prof. Mark Volkmann of Columbia, Mo. Also surviving are 13 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and a sister.

Seminary to Offer New Urban Ministry Course

Hartford Seminary will offer an exciting new course in Shared Community Ministry jointly to Black Ministries Program and Hispanic Ministries Program students this fall.

The course, titled "Shared Urban Spaces: Black-Latino Dialogue in Ministry," will be offered in November.

The course will be offered in English with Spanish translation available. Joint projects by teams of students in both programs will require students to work together to address city issues from a faith-based, urban ministry theological reflection basis.

Projects will introduce a service learning element into the course and might include such activities as cleaning up an area, restoring a blighted building, addressing a local social problem, establishing a tutoring program, etc.

The Shared Community Ministry initiative has the following goals:

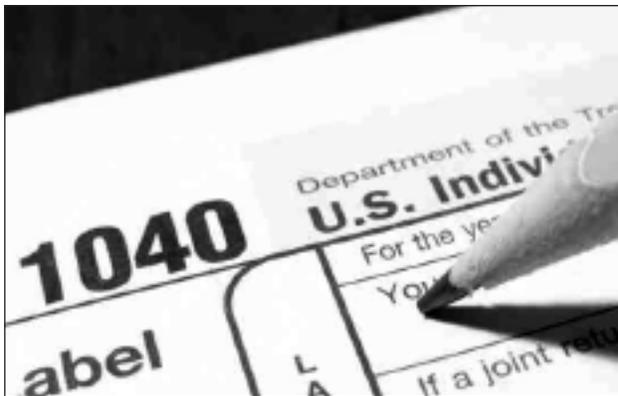
- Introduce African-American, Latino/a and other urban and metropolitan communities to theological reflection. For example, Black and Latino/a approaches to the study of scripture and theology, and the application of these approaches in the city and beyond, will be emphasized in the pedagogy program.
- Enhance the leadership, knowledge and skills of lay and ordained leaders in African-American, Latino/a and other urban church communities. In particular, the course will provide space for dialogue and community development between Black and Latino congregations.
- Serve as a catalyst for further cross-cultural cooperation. Communication between BMP and PMH students that begins in the classroom will translate into greater communication across groups in the community.

The J. Walton Bissell Foundation has awarded \$10,000 to the Seminary to finance the course.

BMP director Benjamin K. Watts and PMH director Efrain Agosto said that a pilot course of this nature is highly needed due to the overlapping nature of the ministry contexts of these students, namely urban communities in Greater Hartford and surrounding areas. Therefore, as these students learn about the methods and means of doing ministry in an urban setting, it is essential that they deal with issues of diversity – racial, ideological and cultural – and shared urban ministry concerns that will confront them in their congregations.

The Black Ministries Program, founded in 1982, is a national model for leadership development in the urban church. More than 1,000 religious leaders have graduated from BMP with new preaching, ministerial and community development skills.

El Programa de Ministerios Hispanos responds to a growing Latino/a population in the greater Hartford area. The Seminary launched this certificate program in 1994 to strengthen leaders in the region's Spanish-speaking churches.



A New Tax Savings Opportunity!

Have a traditional IRA with a tax burden looming in retirement? For 2006 and 2007, an IRA owner who is age 70 1/2 or over can directly transfer *tax-free* up to \$100,000 per year from an IRA to an eligible charitable organization.

Amounts transferred are *not* taxable, but please note that a deduction cannot also be claimed for the amount given to the charity. Transferred amounts are counted in determining whether the owner has met the IRA required minimum distribution rules.

If you are interested in benefiting from this new option from Uncle Sam, please contact the Development Office at 860-509-9556 and/or your financial advisor today.

Rewarding You-The Faith Club

We have a special gift for you! If you become a first-time donor to Hartford Seminary or are a returning donor willing to increase your traditional contribution to the Annual Fund, we would like to offer you a copy of the current *New York Times* bestseller, *The Faith Club: A Muslim, A Christian, A Jew – Three Women Search for Understanding*. This is a \$25 retail value. Look for our appeal in mid-spring. We appreciate your support.



Only five hundred of these generously donated books are available, so respond early to our appeal!

The three authors of *The Faith Club* will be at Congregation Beth Israel in West Hartford, CT, on Sunday, May 6, at a 5:00 p.m. supper and program. If you are interested in registering for the event, please call Sarah Beck at Beth Israel, 233-8215, or leave your name, address and telephone number so a flyer for registration can be sent to you. There is a modest charge for the supper and program.

The Annual Fund for Hartford Seminary is now two-thirds of the way to its goal. Donations must be received by June 30 to count for the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

Syrian Students

Seven Syrian scholars are studying at Hartford Seminary to earn Master's degrees in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations.

The students have enrolled at Hartford Seminary as a result of an agreement between the Seminary and Al-Fath University in Damascus.

In 2005, a Hartford Seminary delegation led by President Heidi Hadsell spent 10 days in Syria, and met with Dr. Hussam al-Din Farfour, founder of Al-Fath University and Dr. Maher abu al-Dahab, dean of languages at the university.

The conversation resulted in the decision by the university officials to send students to Hartford Seminary to study interfaith relations.

The seven students all have a background in Islamic Studies at universities in Cairo and Damascus.



Pictured here, attending a program in February on interfaith dialogue, are, in top photo, Souhaila Ramadan and, in bottom photo, Sabrina Aloukla and Omama Diab.

Worship, Websites, Conflict Affect Growth in Congregations

Contemporary worship, geographic location, a website and the absence of conflict are key factors in why some congregations in America are growing, according to the latest national survey of U.S. faith communities.

The survey, sponsored by the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership, found that wanting to grow is not enough. Congregations that grow must plan for growth: “Congregations that developed a plan to recruit members in the last year were much more likely to grow than congregations that had not.”

The survey findings are available in a newly released report, “FACTs on Growth.” The data was taken from the Faith Communities Today 2005 (FACT2005) survey of 884 randomly sampled congregations of all faith traditions in the United States. The survey updates results from a survey taken in 2000, and is the latest in CCSP’s series of trend-tracking national surveys of U.S. congregations.

David A. Roozen, Director of the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership and Professor of Religion and Society at Hartford Seminary, said that, “If you are at all interested in research on ‘church’ growth, this brief report is must reading. It tests the continuing salience of long ‘taken for granted’ principles of growth (e.g., location, conservative theology) as well as the more recently proposed (e.g., contemporary worship, spiritual practices and purposefulness).”

“Perhaps most importantly, it suggests several newly emergent dynamics to consider (e.g., the potential for growth in downtown areas and within multi racial/ethnic congregations). It is a helpful and important follow-up to the

“Pockets of Vitality” analysis of the ground breaking FACT2000 national survey,” Roozen said.

Among the findings in the new FACTs on Growth report:

- Congregations that change worship format and style are more likely to grow. More than half the congregations that use contemporary styles of worship have experienced substantial growth since 2000. Frequency is important as well: The more worship services a congregation holds, the more likely it is to have grown.
- Congregations located in new suburbs are more likely to experience growth. But surprisingly the second best area for growth is the downtown of metropolitan areas.
- Congregations that have experienced major conflict are quite likely to have declined in attendance. The strongest correlate of growth is the absence of serious conflict.
- Congregations that have started or maintained a website in the past year are most likely to grow. The effort to have a website indicates that the congregation is outward looking and willing to change by non-traditional means.
- While most congregations in America are composed of a single racial/ethnic group, those that are multi-racial are most likely to have experienced strong growth in worship attendance.
- More important than theological orientation is the religious character of the congregation and clarity of mission and purpose. Growing churches are clear about why they exist and about what they are to be doing – “purpose-driven growth.”

• Congregations that involve children in worship are more likely to experience significant growth. Also, important to growth is the ability of congregations to attract young adults and families with children.

• Almost all congregations say they want to grow, but it takes intentionality and action for growth to occur. Congregations that developed a plan to recruit members in the last year were more likely to grow than congregations that had not. Particularly helpful in achieving growth are sponsorship of a program or event to attract non-members or the existence of support groups.

The report was written by C. Kirk Hadaway, Director of Research at the Episcopal Church Center in New York. A link to view “FACTs on Growth” online 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, multi-faith 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 FACT2005 survey.

*FACTs on Growth may be purchased online at fact.hartsem.edu/products/index.html. You may also purchase copies of *Insights into Financial Giving*, a brief, FACT-based introduction for new members of stewardship committees. Or you may order either by contacting Mary Jane Ross at (860) 509-9543 or mross@hartsem.edu.*

SUMMER SESSION 2007

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Hartford Seminary's Summer Session will begin Monday, May 28 and continue through Friday, June 29. The Seminary's courses are open to members of 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 partici-

pants 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 \$1,460. The non-credit audit fee is \$575. A special audit fee of \$385 is available for those who are age 62 and older, 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 pastors whose churches participate in the Congregational Relations Program of the Seminary.

To register, please contact the Registrar's Office at (860) 509-9511. Her e-mail 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. For information about accommodations, please contact the Student Support Office at (860) 509-9552 or vaw@hartsem.edu.

SPECIAL SCHEDULE

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Avoiding Denominational Decline

ONLINE – Monday, May 28 through Friday, June 29

Questions addressed in this on-line course will focus on what the purposes of denominations are currently, and what seem to be major strengths and stresses in present "loyalty" of lay members, clergy, congregations and regional bodies to their denominations. *Adair Lummis, Faculty Associate in Research*

Theology and Ethics: A Case Method Approach

Tuesday, May 29 – Thursday, June 28, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Many believe the United States is in a moral crisis complicated by a polarized society. This context challenges persons of faith to build skills in ethical reflection as well as reconciliation. Using true, "problem-posing" case studies, class discussion will focus on economics, environment, health and sexuality. This dynamic, interactive approach helps religious and community leaders deal more faithfully and effectively with ethical decision-making from a faith perspective. *Robert A. Evans, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics and Executive Director, Plowshares Institute, and Alice Frazer Evans, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics and Director of Writing and Research, Plowshares Institute*

Building Abrahamic Partnerships

Sunday, June 3 – Sunday, June 10 (intensive schedule, includes 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. *Yehezkel Landau, Faculty Associate in Interfaith Relations and Co-Founder, Open House, Ramle, Israel*

United Church of Christ History, Theology and Polity Institute

Monday, June 18 – Friday, June 29, Schedule varies by day (see syllabus on www.hartsem.edu)

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. This year's Institute is a special opportunity held in conjunction with the UCC General Synod being held in Hartford from June 22-26, 2007. *Kent Siladi, Adjunct Professor of Church History and Regional Minister of the South Central Region of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ and Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adjunct Professor of Church History, former president of Hartford Seminary and editor of the seven-volume "Living Theological Heritage of the United Church of Christ"*

Understanding Congregations

Thursday, June 21 – Monday, June 25, Intensive day and evening sessions

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 pastors 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 to study one congregation during the class meetings and then each student will explore his or her own congregation as the final assignment. *Scott Thumma, Professor of Sociology of Religion and Web and Distance Education*

Institute for Pastors and Pastoral Workers on Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations

Sunday, June 24 – Saturday, June 30

Christians are increasingly aware of the need for a clearer understanding of Islam and closer relationships with Muslims. Misconceptions, anxiety, and lack of understanding have prevented some Christian leaders from reaching out to Muslims; others have desired more information about Islam and Christian-Muslim relations, and time to reflect theologically on the teachings of Islam and Christianity. This institute, held at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., will give Christian pastors and pastoral workers the opportunity to reflect with others on these topics. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of Islam and the confidence to incorporate this knowledge as they address challenges Christians and Muslims face together in the contemporary world. *Taught by Faculty of Hartford Seminary, Georgetown University, and Howard University*

Building Abrahamic Partnerships II

Monday, July 9 – Friday, July 13 (includes some evenings)

This course is designed primarily for students who have taken the basic *Building Abrahamic Partnerships* course. It presumes a familiarity with the beliefs and practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and some experience in interfaith dialogue. The focus is on developing practical skills for interfaith leadership, including: facilitating interreligious encounters; compassionate listening and nonbelligerent communication; joint study of sacred texts; designing interreligious worship; and spiritual resources for conflict transformation. Some evenings will be devoted to informal socializing and networking. Prerequisite: *Building Abrahamic*

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Partnerships or permission of the instructor. *Yehezkel Landau, Faculty Associate in Interfaith Relations and Co-Founder, Open House, Ramle, Israel*

WEEK OF JUNE 4 – JUNE 8 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Changing Our Perception of God: Environmentalism and Justice

Changing our perception about human life and its connections to all the complex web of life is the key for changing our perception of God. It is from our simple daily experiences, from our body, our relationships, our gender and our social location that we can begin a process of new education of our perception. From this perspective, we are invited to reflect on the different ways or forms that enslave human perception. In the same direction we want to introduce a reflection on how some values can change or liberate our perception. It is from this orientation that the value of Justice will be introduced as a direction regarding personal, social and environmental changes. The new perception of God and the reflection on it will be a consequence of this complex and passionate process in which we are. *Yvonne Gebara, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics, author of "Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation," and former faculty member at the Theology Institute of Recife, Brazil.*

Max Weber: Understanding Religion and the World

Max Weber has always been recognized as a "founding father" of the field of the social scientific study of religion. However, in the 1970's his methodology and insights went out of fashion. In recent decades there has been a growing appreciation of the relevance of Weber's historical analysis of religion as well as his methodological approach to the study of religion. Using Weber's more well known writings, this course will explore the causal role of religion in the birth of modern, disenchanted culture and then the possible contributions that religion can make to remedying some of the debilitating aspects of that culture. *Basit Koshul, Adjunct Professor of Religion and Society and author of "The Post-Modern Significance of Max Weber's Legacy"*

WEEK OF JUNE 11 – JUNE 15 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Becoming Effective Leaders: Models and Inspiration from History and Today

This course focuses on studying the various theories of leadership and, in particular, understanding what is behind the tremendous power and influence that religious leaders demonstrate. What makes religious leaders so powerful that people follow them— even die for them? How do religious leaders acknowledge and draw upon their divine source? To explore religious leadership, we will be using a sample of case studies from figures such as Moses, Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Dorothy Day. Readings will include cutting-edge, practical theories of leadership, and will invite you to examine, identify and develop your own personal goals, spiritual practices and leadership style. *Gilbert I. Bond, Adjunct Professor of Arts of Ministry and founder and president of the Leadership Center for Christian Reconciliation, New Haven, CT*

The Gospel of John and Johannine Literature

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 Biblical Studies*

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*

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. *Eric Tebbett, Adjunct Professor of Worship and Ian Markham, Professor of Theology and Ethics and Dean of Hartford Seminary*

WEEK OF JUNE 18 – JUNE 22 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Jesus for the Non Religious: Seeking the Divine in the Heart of the Human

This course is aimed at those who live on the edges of Christianity or even are already alienated from the Church. The goal is to explore the Christologies of the past and chart a Christology for the future. Students will be encouraged to think outside the traditional boxes of the Christian creeds without feeling that they must abandon the formulas of the past. Students will be invited to see the divine in the heart of the human and to see Christianity outside religion. *John Shelby Spong, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics, retired Episcopal Bishop of Newark, N.J., and author of 14 books, including "Why Christianity Must Change or Die"*

Rituals and Responsibilities of Muslim Leaders in America

This course is designed for Muslim leaders, including Imams and chaplains, who are serving American Muslim communities. The course examines Muslim leaders' role and responsibilities as well as the proper application and performance of some important areas of Islamic ritual law. Emphasis is on practical application of the law and much of the course is taught in workshop format. *Sheikh Muhammad Nur Abdullah, Adjunct Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of Religious Affairs and Imam of the Islamic Foundation of Greater St. Louis*

EXPERTS SPEAK ON DIALOGUE

On February 5, three national experts discussed strengthening relationships among Jews, Christians and Muslims in America today, what works and what doesn't in Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations, and the obstacles for effective partnerships, and how can they be overcome. Pictured in right photo on the cover are, left to right, Rabbi Arthur Waskow, director of the Shalom Center, Philadelphia, PA.; Daisy Khan, executive director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, New York, NY; and John Borelli, special assistant to the president for interreligious initiatives at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and national coordinator for interreligious dialogue and relations for the U.S. Jesuit Conference. In left photo, second row, among those in attendance was William J. Cronin Jr., chair of the Board of Trustees. Pictured on this page, in photo at right, are Borelli, Khan and Waskow responding to a question from the audience. Below, members of the audience listen to the presentations.



4th Annual President's Reception

Justice from an Eco-Feminist Perspective
With Elizabeth Amoah and Ivone Gebara

Wednesday, June 6, 6 p.m.

Eco-feminism explores the relationship between the domination of women and the domination of nature. In this program, Ivone Gebara, one of Latin America's leading theologians, and Elizabeth Amoah, an active participant in the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians, discuss the

need to seek, reflect on and live out the spirit of a different kind of culture, different forms of relationship, and a different theology.

Elizabeth Amoah is Senior Lecturer in Religion, University of Ghana, and a visiting professor at Hartford Seminary this semester. Ivone Gebara, author of "Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation" is a former faculty member at the Theology Institute of Recife, Brazil.

Please RSVP to this event at (860)509-9555 or events@hartsem.edu.



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