

## Macdonald Center Faculty

# NEW



### **Ayoub Appointed as Faculty Associate**

Mahmoud Ayoub, a pre-eminent scholar in Islam and interfaith dialogue in the United States and around the world, has been named Faculty Associate in Shi'ite Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary, starting July 1.

Dr. Ayoub comes to Hartford Seminary from Temple University in Philadelphia where he was a professor and Director of Islamic Studies in the Department of Religion. Heidi Hadsell, President of Hartford Seminary, announced the appointment.

"It will be a pleasure and a privilege to welcome Mahmoud Ayoub,  
*Continued on page 9*

### **Michot Named Senior Professor**

The Board of Trustees of Hartford Seminary and President Heidi Hadsell have named Yahya M. Michot, an internationally known scholar in Islamic theological and philosophical thought, to the faculty at Hartford Seminary.

Michot will be Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, effective September 1. He will join the Seminary's Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and co-edit the Muslim World journal.

"I am delighted that Yahya Michot

*Continued on page 15*

## Agosto Named Academic Dean of Hartford Seminary



Efrain Agosto

Heidi Hadsell, President of Hartford Seminary, has named Efrain Agosto, Professor of New Testament and noted Pauline scholar, as Academic Dean of the Seminary.

The appointment was ratified by the Board of Trustees at a meeting in March.

"We are very pleased that Efrain has assumed this new position at Hartford Seminary," Hadsell said. "Efrain is creative, he loves Hartford Seminary, he understands the issues of theological education, and he enjoys the collaborative atmosphere at the Seminary."  
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### A Request - Please Send Us Your Email Address

Stay informed on a timely basis by sharing your email address with us.

Here at Hartford Seminary, we want to communicate better with you.

We would like to send out updates on what is happening at Hartford Seminary as well as information on our events and courses by email to those people for whom we have email addresses.

Right now we do not have any email address for many of you, our alumni/ae and friends.

Please send your email address to us to help in this effort.

We do not intend to discontinue publishing *Praxis* by the way; it will continue to arrive in your mail in spring, fall and winter.

Please send your email to me at [dbarrett@hartsem.edu](mailto:dbarrett@hartsem.edu) or call me at (860) 509-9519.

By the way, Hartford Seminary has a strict privacy policy. We do not share or sell e-mail addresses to a third party.

Thank you.

David S. Barrett  
Director of Public and Institutional Affairs  
Editor, *Praxis*

### Corrections

Our apologies for two errors that were made in the 2007 Annual Report, which appeared in the December 2007 issue of *Praxis*. Margaret Patricelli was erroneously omitted from the list of President's Council members. A gift received from Ms. Lois Ann Pike, which was listed under the "Partner" level of giving, also should have been listed under Memorial Gifts. Her gift was given in memory of the Rev. Sarah "Sally" A. Edwards.

# The World and Change:

## Through the Window of Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Southeast Asia

### A TRAVELING EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

Including Singapore and Ache, Bali, and Yogyakarta, Indonesia

January 5-17, 2009

Approximate cost: \$3,500

Please contact Karen Miller (860-509-9521 or [kmiller@hartsem.edu](mailto:kmiller@hartsem.edu)) to express your interest.

Space is limited to 20 participants, so interested parties are encouraged to contact the Seminary early.

Presented by Hartford Seminary in partnership with Plowshares Institute

## Understanding Christian/Muslim Dialogue for Congregations and Communities

August 4-10, 2008

This course – at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico - will equip pastors and lay leaders from congregations, presbyteries and other faith groups to be resources to their communities in generating new understanding and to celebrate the diversity in faith present in our world and nation.

In an interactive course of case studies, role plays and interfaith exercises, the instructors will draw on their extensive national and international experience in inter-faith and multi-cultural settings and conflict transformation training to provide an exciting class encounter. Participants will receive workshop designs to take home to equip their own congregations and presbyteries.

Plan now to nominate a team from your church or community to be a part of this course. The way the Church responds to this crisis of understanding will shape the future of our nation and mission philosophy as we seek to build a more peaceful and sustainable world.

### INSTRUCTORS

**Robert and Alice Evans, Simsbury, CT**, are Directors of the Plowshares Institute; former Senior Fellows of the Center for Conflict Resolution at the University of Cape Town, South Africa; and adjunct faculty at Hartford Seminary.

**Heidi Hadsell, Hartford, CT**, is President of Hartford Seminary, Professor of Social Ethics, an expert in interfaith dialogue, and former Director of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches in Bossey, Switzerland.

**Alwi Shihab, Jakarta, Indonesia**, is Indonesia's Presidential Envoy to the Middle East, former Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Indonesia, and a professor and Islamic scholar.

For an application or more information about the facilities, please look at the Ghost Ranch website: <http://www.ghost ranch.org/>. For more information on Plowshares Institute and its work world-wide, please look at the Plowshares website: [www.plowsharesinstitute.org](http://www.plowsharesinstitute.org). Information on Hartford Seminary is available at [www.hartsem.edu](http://www.hartsem.edu).

Editor: David Barrett  
Phone: 860/509-9519  
Fax: 860/509-9509  
E-mail Address: [info@hartsem.edu](mailto:info@hartsem.edu)  
Designer: James Baker

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like more information about *Praxis* or about Hartford Seminary, please contact David Barrett at Hartford Seminary, 77 Sherman Street, Hartford, CT 06105.

## Grant Received to Expand Building Abrahamic Partnerships Program

If you had spent one Friday last July in Hartford Seminary's Chapel, you could have shared in Christian, Muslim, and Jewish prayers. This special experience was part of a new advanced Building Abrahamic Partnerships course.

Now Hartford Seminary can expand the Building Abrahamic Partnerships (BAP) program, through a \$53,700 grant from the Alan B. Slifka Foundation.

The grant is for two years. It will support the BAP II course, development of BAP communications technology, and outreach to other seminaries for BAP replication or adaptation. Also planned is an evaluation of BAP.

The Building Abrahamic Partnerships program is an innovative program designed as a resource for Jews, Christians, and Muslims who seek a solid foundation in interfaith ministry. The basic course is an eight-day intensive immersion in interfaith dialogue and understanding.

The BAP advanced course is designed to develop 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.

Faculty Associate Yehezkel Landau, director of the program, says, "To my knowledge there is no Jewish-Christian-Muslim training program similar to BAP at any other seminary or religious studies department. The lack of other such initiatives, more than six years after September

11, 2001, amazes me. By now it should be abundantly clear that all our faith communities need help to overcome mutual ignorance and estrangement."

The BAP II course, taught by Landau, The Rev. Karen Nell Smith and Imam Abdullah Antepli, was offered for the first time in July 2007. The opening dinner featured an exercise in which everyone shared an object that had some personal symbolic meaning, as a means of self-introduction. These objects were then placed on a table in the center of the room used throughout the week, as a kind of altar. A candle in the middle of this table was lit at the beginning of every morning and afternoon session.

These and other ritual elements lent the course a sacramental dimension that helped make it more than a strictly academic program. They also provided some spiritual coherence to the disparate experiences throughout the week.

The final day was devoted to the practicalities of designing interfaith worship. The whole group participated in Christian morning prayer at 9 a.m., Muslim *juma'a* prayer at 1 p.m., and Jewish prayers to welcome *Shabbat* before the closing dinner. The Seminary Chapel was used for all the worship experiences that day.

Landau described, in a report, the activities – and impact – of the day:

*After the Christian liturgy, we convened in our regular space for our morning session, which was divided into two segments. The first part was the most enriching elicitive discussion of the whole*

*week. It was devoted to people's experiences in interfaith worship. Since by then the participants had been together intensively for a whole week, they had developed sufficient rapport and trust to share honest feelings and questions.*

*Prayer is a very personal act of faith, even when done in a communal setting; so talking about it can easily raise sensitive issues that are often not addressed in interfaith encounters*

*One Christian, for example, asked the Jews how they feel when some Christians adopt Jewish prayers like the "Sh'ma Yisrael" affirmation*

*of God's Oneness. A discussion about the dangers of "spiritual plagiarism" ensued. At another point, Jews honestly shared their fears and negative reactions when encountering a cross or other symbols in a church. We also addressed the sense of self-negation or inauthenticity that Christians can feel when giving up Christological language in order to accommodate Jews and Muslims in common worship. Participants later said (and I agree) that this was the most forthcoming and fruitful conversation on these issues that any of us had ever experienced.*

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### WABASH GRANT: LATINOS IN HARTFORD

Efrain Agosto, Academic Dean and Professor of New Testament, has received a grant of \$5,000 from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion to explore Latino/a theology and religion in the greater Hartford area.

The grant, entitled "Latinos in Hartford: A Seminar for Hartford Seminary Faculty," will engage several faculty members of the Seminary's Center for Faith in Practice in lectures, conversations and an immersion experience around issues in Latino theology, community and faith during the spring of 2008.

The goal is to incorporate Latino/a faith and theology in future course development of the Center and the theological curriculum of Hartford Seminary.

### LILLY GRANT: STUDYING CONGREGATIONS

Hartford Seminary has been chosen to house a \$507,672 grant awarded by the Lilly Endowment Inc. to the Congregational Studies Project Team to enlarge the conversation of engaged scholars studying congregations.

James Nieman, Professor of Practical Theology at the Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research, is project director.

The project builds from and expands upon an earlier project that enabled academic fellows to be mentored by scholars experienced in congregational studies in order to refine their abilities in responsible research that appreciates and engages the faith life of congregations.

The new project not only will continue to develop a growing pool of mentoring relationships, but also reach beyond that circle to other scholars and clergy who would benefit from wider networks of support in trying to face the challenges and garner the insights of congregations.

During the next three years, the project team will develop forms of mutual conversation, to further the study of congregations in the next generation, and to elicit partnerships among those likely to benefit from this shared interest.

## A Trip to Biloxi

by the Rev. Jacky Manuputty

*The Rev. Jacky Manuputty from Indonesia is a student at Hartford Seminary, studying Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. He is one of three Congregational Relations Program students at the Seminary this year. In February, he accompanied members of the First Church of Christ, Congregational, in Simsbury on a mission trip to Biloxi, Mississippi. This is his account of the trip.*

My journey as a volunteer with the UCC Simsbury team to Biloxi., Mississippi, from February 3 through 10 gave me a very rich experience. I was not merely exposed to another side of the American people, but also to the people who were the victims of the terrible hurricane disaster. I found out how they coped with their trauma.

My trip there, to help repair homes damaged by the hurricane, provided me with information regarding how the United States Government took on the responsibility to assist these people and others when a natural disaster occurs. I was shocked to learn the number of people who are, for almost four years, still living in trailers with limited supplies of basic necessities.

The people I spoke to indicated that they too were surprised at the minimal help that was offered in the way of “assistance,” which I find quite hard to believe. Their calls for help went unanswered by the government; this was not considered to be a “disaster,” as such.

It amazes me that the government paid such high attention to the tourism areas where the money was, such as the casinos, hotels, and big restaurants, and a longer and better beach area, while they forgot about the people, the “victims,” who were living in squalor. How does this abomination occur?

I was very surprised to see for myself the U.S. government’s response to Biloxi’s poor and unsanitary conditions and then compare the government’s quick response to Indonesia in the time of the tsunamis. I cannot forget what a huge effort was made by the U.S. government in sending a U.S. Naval medical ship with people, medics, medical supplies, and other needs for the tsunami victims; this was available to the people in Indonesia for four months, and acted as a hospital! Also, Former President Bill Clinton came to Indonesia as an ambassador for the U.S. to offer his hand.

Although I was surprised by all of this, I was still so taken aback by the strength of these victims and their strong faith ingrained in them in order to face all of these horrible situations. As bad as it was, they still held tight to their faith, and did not give up. I guess this is what impressed me the most.

The strength of these people’s faith is similar to the Karen refugees that I met, who are “forced to live” or be encamped in a region along the border of Thailand and Myanmar. They have been forced to live this way for at least 10 years.

In the same way, I saw the refugees of Sri Lanka become victims of the ethnic conflict; however, they too are held and bound together by their beliefs and faith. Similarly, the victims of the tsunami disaster had to draw upon their own strength and



*The Rev. Jacky Manuputty works on a home in Biloxi, during a mission trip in February.*

religious beliefs in order to survive. I don’t care, if others will say this phenomenon of faith is just considered as a “neurosis.”

Anyway, if their faith can make them strong enough to face such tough situations, why not let them have their faith. We cannot offer anything else that would even compare with their faith, which keeps them so strong. It is only because of their strong faith that they are able to survive and stay well. On the other side, I believe that this faith does not only belong to the victims, but to the common volunteers from all walks of life, who come to assist them. They admitted that they are called by their own faith and recognize a sense of need and belonging together.

My journey to Biloxi equipped me when I returned to Hartford Seminary for my very rigorous academic

schedule. At least I know when I learn about interreligious relations or interfaith dialogue formally, it did not happen in an empty space.

Our interreligious relations and interfaith dialogue must develop in order to recover man’s dignity. We all did dialogue based on our consciousness, of the degeneration of man’s dignity. This consciousness will enrich and guide our dialogue in the right and meaningful direction.

This, I truly believe: That our consciousness of God must be intertwined with our caring for all of mankind regardless of race, ethnicity, faith, or class. I believe when we develop interfaith dialogue from the perspective of the victim, then our interreligious relations will be more fruitful and prosper.

## New Dean continued from page 1

Agosto came to Hartford in July 1995 after serving on the staff of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston for 12 years, the last five years as director of this inner-city urban theological education program, a campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. At Hartford Seminary, he also has directed El Programa de Ministerios Hispanos (Hispanic Ministries Program).

Agosto has a Master of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell and completed his Ph.D. in New Testament Studies at Boston University.

Asked about his priorities as academic dean for Hartford Seminary, Agosto said, "As a Christian and New Testament scholar, I would like to immerse myself more in the interfaith realities of Hartford Seminary. I have always been a strong supporter and have learned much from the exchanges that we as faculty have undertaken with our students and faculty from other faiths, especially Islam. Now as dean, I would like to learn and understand even more this vital aspect of our life together. I also want to be sure that I understand more fully all of our curricular programs, where all our faculty colleagues fit into delivering what we promise in our programs and courses, and how we can continue to invigorate our faculty research and teaching so

that those students who come to us from all over the world and from all walks of life are given the best possible theological education."

"Diversity, dialogue and faith commitments are the most important aspects of our reality," Agosto said. "These in turn motivate our work as teachers, researchers, writers and practitioners of theology and faith, whether we are students, faculty, administrators or stewards of Hartford Seminary."

Agosto said, "For me the strongest points of the seminary include our presence in a capitol city - the city of Hartford - from which we can do so much more in terms of interfaith exploration, interracial dialogue, and international connections. In other words, Hartford is a great example of thinking and acting 'local' so that we can think and act globally. Our interfaith and international commitments and our long-time tradition as a Christian ecumenical seminary in an urban center of Southern New England, that is essentially one-third Latino, one-third African American and one-third white and other communities, makes for a great confluence of resources for high quality theological education and reflection."

Agosto was born and raised in New York City; his parents came to New York from Puerto Rico in the 1950s. He attended

New York City public schools and received his B.A. from Columbia University in 1977. Agosto was nurtured in New York Hispanic Pentecostal churches and was a licensed preacher for the Hispanic Assemblies of God in the 1980s.

He has served on the pastoral staffs of Hispanic Pentecostal, Baptist and Congregational churches in New York, Boston, and East Hartford, CT. He was interim pastor at Boston's Hispanic Community Church (United Church of Christ) in 1994, and part of an interim pastoral team at the Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Esperanza (UCC) in East Hartford in 1999, where he continues to worship as an active lay member.

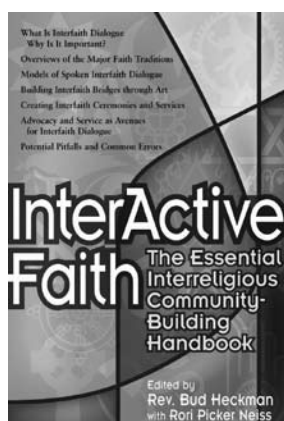
In his work in New Testament studies, Agosto teaches, researches and writes on the Pauline Epistles, especially the leadership and ministry of Paul and others in these communities. He has published several articles and book chapters on these topics.

His book, *Servant Leadership: Jesus and Paul* (Chalice Press), was published in November 2005. It studies issues of social status, leadership practice and theology in the Jesus movement and Pauline Christianity, with implications for the practice of religious leadership today. He has a forthcoming commentary, in Spanish, on Paul's Corinthian correspondence.

Agosto has taught courses in Paul and His Urban Churches, New Testament Introduction, Readings in Pauline Theology and Ministry, and with Professor Carl Dudley of Hartford Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research, New Testament Tensions and Contemporary Issues. His most recent interests include teaching and writing in the area of Latino biblical hermeneutics, and a course entitled Reading the New Testament through the Eyes of the Oppressed.

Agosto's wider service has included the Final Selection Committee and Mentor for the Hispanic Theological Initiative, a scholarship and mentoring organization which seeks to develop Latino and Latina doctoral candidates in religion and theology. He also served on the Executive Committee of the Association of Theological Schools, Committee for Underrepresented Racial and Ethnic Minorities in the Profession of the Society for Biblical Literature and was formerly a faculty representative to the Board of Trustees of Hartford Seminary. Currently he serves as chair of the Seminary's Center for Faith in Practice.

Agosto succeeds Dr. Ian Markham, who resigned a year ago to become dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA.



## InterActive Faith

Chief Development Officer Bud Heckman has edited a new book on interfaith dialogue, which is available now through the Hartford Seminary bookstore ([www.hartsem.edu](http://www.hartsem.edu) or 860-509-9527) or SkyLight Paths Press ([www.skylightpaths.com](http://www.skylightpaths.com) or 800-962-4544). Enjoying a wealth of contributions from some of the best in the interfaith field, *InterActive Faith: The Essential Interreligious Community-Building Handbook* is a comprehensive resource for fostering local interfaith work.

# “Luminous Spirits” of Hartford Seminary

By The Rev. Dr. Ralph Ahlberg



*The testimony of all the prophets (Peace be upon them), who among humankind possessed luminous spirits...and the testimony of all the saints, who with their luminous hearts are the spiritual poles of humankind, and testimony of all the purified scholars, who possess luminous minds, relying on their researches and verifications; the testimony of all these to the necessary existence, unity, and perfect dominicality of the Single One of Unity, ... the Creator of All Things, forms a truly vast and light-filled window.”*  
Bediuzzaman Said Nursi  
(From the Risale-I Nur)

1959 was a notable year in the history of Hartford Seminary. Quite incidentally, it was the year that Karl Barth published his *Dogmatics in Outline* and Teilhard de Chardin his *Phenomenon of Man*. I liked the year because as a Swedish American I could identify with Ingemar Johansson who won the world heavyweight boxing championship from Floyd Patterson. Dwight Eisenhower was still our President that year and had one to go while Charles De Gaulle was just beginning his role as President of the Fifth Republic in France. It was also notable in Hartford Seminary's more intimate history because in May of 1959 both

Bill Zito and I graduated from this institution with our bachelor of divinity degrees.

So, a part of me who often sits with many of you at these Monday morning chapel services does so with the perspective of an “old grad.” Occasionally, as Heidi Hadsell knows, I glance out of that window and nostalgically peer at the buildings that used to be the Seminary's shelter. And on this very spot – what used to be 99 Sherman Street – stood Tyler Hall, a residential apartment building named after the first president of the Seminary, a building that provided the housing for my bride and me at the beginning of my Middler or second year.

It's with these feelings of nostalgia for the Seminary and affection for former teachers like Bill Bradley who died a few months ago and others like Alexander Purdy, Harvey McArthur, Chalmers Coe, Rockwell Harmon Potter -- teachers only remembered for the most part by people like Bill and myself – that I offered to lead this chapel service on a day that falls not only when our Board of Trustees meet, but also very near the time celebrated by much of the Christian Church as All Saints or All Soul's Sunday. It's a time when we Christians recall some of those who've made strong contributions to the life of the spirit. In his descriptions of this gift, Nursi uses the word, “luminous.”

In the lessons we read this morning from Habakkuk and Luke -- actually they're the lectionary readings for yesterday -- the opening lines of Habakkuk are sadly all too contemporary.

Destruction and violence, injustice coupled with deceit seem to the prophet a reflection of God's callous indifference to the human situation. Granted Israel's sinfulness, but why, argues the prophet, allow an even more sinful oppression? God's response to Habakkuk points to the need for people who are confident “that God has certain purposes in human life and that those purposes are full of love and grace – even if God's people don't always understand in detail what God's up to.” Those who do understand and act on that understanding become heroes of the spirit, luminaries. It's not difficult to understand why this passage was chosen for “All Saints Sunday.”

And the lesson we read from Luke's gospel has the same kind of message. The commentaries tell us that Zacchaeus is the perfect antitype to Jesus' story of the rich young ruler. He was the one, who, when instructed by Jesus to care for the poor, becomes sad and turns away from what could have been a compassionate life. Zacchaeus, on the other hand, is also rich and also unhappy. But his response to Jesus' challenge is to welcome him into his own home. Then, he distances himself from overvaluing his wealth and uses it in ways that both humanize him and add to the humanization of his community. Bud Heckman must love this guy for his transformed generosity!

Our lessons this morning have prompted me to remember a few graduates of Hartford Seminary who've become personal “luminous spirits”; they're people who not only talked the spirit talk but walked the spirit walk. Our witness as a Seminary is doubtless modest in the whole realm of

theological education, but even so, this morning I'd like to recall, or maybe introduce you to, a few lives we don't often think of or even know about, but lives we in the Hartford Seminary community can look to with appreciation, and in them maybe even find inspiration.

One whose life impressed me was a kind of maverick pastor or minister whose name is William H. H. Murray, better known during his time as “Adirondack” Murray. After his theological training at Hartford Seminary, he served several congregations, developed a reputation for kindness, and was pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Greenwich at the time of the American Civil War. He was there when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. He stayed up all night on Saturday, April 15, 1865 draping the sanctuary of the church with black cloth. It was a time of shock and national mourning. On the following day, Sunday, he preached a sermon that so moved the congregation that its members published it. The sermon was widely distributed and became one source of healing for many at a difficult time in our nation's history.

But Murray received a national reputation in 1869 after he published a book entitled, *Adventures in the Wilderness*. The book documents his forays into the wilds of New York's Adirondack Mountains. He extolled the therapeutic benefits of being in nature; and he did it so effectively that thousands headed for those mountains – whether prepared or not! Earning the nickname, “Adirondack,” he's credited with opening the area up to the public. He's also remembered as an early American environmentalist who insisted that “there are on the earth certain creations too precious  
*Continued on next page*

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to humankind, too essential to human welfare to pass under private ownership.” Words of wisdom that remain very timely! He’s one of our Seminary’s “luminous” spirits!

Another one of the great spirits, who earned his bachelor of divinity degree at Hartford Seminary in 1917, was a man named Douglas Horton, who was probably the finest student ever to matriculate here. Not many probably will recognize his name, but for many of us from the older life of the Seminary, Horton is truly a hero. He introduced Americans to the work of Swiss theologian, Karl Barth. He’s credited with being the chief architect of the denominational merger in 1957 that formed the United Church of Christ. He was the key leader in transforming Harvard Divinity School in the late 1950’s and of orchestrating the Protestant presence at the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960’s. And his spiritual formation, in large part, happened here at Hartford Seminary where, as I said, he was a brilliant student. One of his biographers, Theodore Louis Trost, tells us that he spent an average of 18 hours a week in class taking subjects in history, homiletics, theology and biblical studies. He also determined to study Arabic. His father questioned him about that, to which he responded -- “the finest modern literature in the world” next to English is in that language. He wrote that “Arabic is good solid earth: not water, like apologetics; not fire, like philosophy; not gas, like homiletics.” To which we preachers say, Ouch!

In any event, I’m sure Douglas Horton would approve of our Seminary’s direction in appreciating the contributions of Islam and fostering interfaith understandings and teaching Arabic. He’s one of our “luminous” spirits.

My third such “luminary” is one who produced one of the great books of devotion written by an American. He earned both his bachelor of divinity degree and his Ph.D at Hartford Seminary. I picked out some words of his I especially value which, I believe, could have been written by the likes of Abraham Heschel, Brother Lawrence or Said Nursi. He writes: “Walk and talk and work and laugh with your friends. But behind the scenes, keep up the life of simple prayer and inward worship. Keep it up throughout the day. Let inward prayer be your last act before you fall asleep and the first act when you awake.” And also these words; “I have in mind something deeper than the simplification of our external programs, our absurdly crowded calendars of appointments through which so many pantingly and frantically gasp. These do become simplified in holy obedience, and the poise and peace we’ve been missing can really be found. But there is a deeper, an internal simplification of the whole of one’s personality, stilled, tranquil, in childlike trust listening ever to Eternity’s whisper, (and I especially like this) walking with a smile into the dark.” The words are from *A Testament of Devotion* by Thomas R. Kelly, one of several outstanding Quakers who studied and taught here. His mentor was A.L. Gillett after whom one of the buildings on the old campus is named. Kelly’s life was filled with a desire for academic excellence and a longing

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## Abu-Rabi’ Leaving Seminary Faculty



Seventeen years ago Hartford Seminary appointed Ibrahim Abu-Rabi’ as the first Muslim core faculty member at an Association of Theological Schools-accredited seminary in North America. At the end of June, Abu-Rabi’ is departing to become the first holder of the Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities Chair in Islamic Studies at the University of Alberta, the first teaching and research chair of its kind in Canada.

In between these two precedent-setting appointments, Abu-Rabi’ has been a prolific author, popular professor, and tireless recruiter on behalf of Hartford Seminary. He has served as Co-Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, and co-editor of *The Muslim World* journal.

“Ibrahim has been a valued member of the Hartford Seminary faculty and community,” President Heidi Hadsell said. “We will miss him, as a scholar and as a colleague. He has played a key role in bringing Hartford Seminary to its current status of a preeminent school for the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and has helped make us well-known in the Muslim world. I wish him well in his new position.”

Through his international contacts, Abu-Rabi’ has

helped the Seminary increase the number of international students who study at the Seminary. Currently three dozen international students from 11 countries are enrolled in Seminary degree programs.

Abu-Rabi spent the early part of his life in Palestine. He has degrees from Birzeit University (in Birzeit, West Bank, Palestine), the University of Cincinnati, and Temple University, Philadelphia. His Ph.D. is in Islamic Studies from Temple.

In explaining his teaching philosophy for his Seminary web page, Abu-Rabi’ wrote, “Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* has enabled me to understand the complexity of the interaction between nationalism and religion in the modern world. In my search to understand the position of Christianity and Islam in modern industrial societies, I try to combine the philosophical/theological dimensions of religion with the social and political. In modern Islamic intellectual history, it is quite impossible to understand the position of Islam without having a clear understanding of such terms as nationalism, secularism, industrialization and modernity. Modern Islamic ideas and forces have been the product of not just the past tradition, but the intellectual, social, political, and economic transformations of the modern world as well. Once we understand these important facts, we will be able to conduct interreligious dialogue on the basis of both theology and modern facts.”

Abu-Rabi’ has written numerous books. The most recent include *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, editor; *Challenges and Responses of Contemporary Islamic Thought: The Contributions of M. Fethullah Gulen*, editor; and *Contemporary Arab Thought: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History*.

Abu-Rabi’ starts his new position at the University of Alberta on July 1.

for spiritual community. He really should be marked as one of our Seminary’s “luminous” spirits.

Let me come close to closing with two African American graduates. The first is J. Deotis Roberts. In the third volume of Gary Dorrien’s recently published, *The Making of American Theology*, he tells us that Roberts “represents the stream of the black-theology movement that retained a strong component of social-gospel theology and an explicit identification with the liberal tradition.” He earned a bachelor of divinity degree here in 1951, and then went on to a doctorate in philosophical theology at the University of Edinburgh. In the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, he developed a black theology that resisted the extremes of righteous anger that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He also argued for a greater confidence and self-esteem within the African American theological community. He wrote: “We’ve been lured away by our white teachers to seek religious insights from the Euro-American tradition, which has never given birth to a great religion. Our black fathers had a rich religious heritage in Africa when the Norsemen (my ancestors) were living in caves.” What he’s teaching is the quality of self-esteem that’s so essential for human development and growth.

The second African American is probably our best known living graduate. Our world remembers him as one of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s close aides, as Jimmy Carter’s Ambassador to the United Nations, as a representative to the

United States Congress from Georgia, and as a two-term mayor of Atlanta. He’s written a couple of books that describe his life. In one of them, *An Easy Burden*, he tells about becoming involved with an ecumenical organization known as the United Christian Youth Movement that eventually led him to work as a youth organizer in Connecticut and Rhode Island. He was assigned to live in a dormitory at Hartford Seminary. He writes: “I liked the atmosphere at Hartford and I was intrigued by the students. I decided to enroll in two courses for the fall semester: Philosophy of Religion and New Testament. The classes at Hartford were small and intimate, and professors led discussions instead of lecturing from a distant podium. It was intellectually electrifying. Although I was working as a youth organizer, I woke early to study and came to every class prepared. I read the assigned materials and asked for more reading. I sat in the dining hall with other students and argued over the religious concepts. . . It was . . . exhilarating. . . Later in the semester, I approached Dean Tertius Van Dyke about enrolling as a full-time student.”

When Andy Young was accepted as a student here, he said all he wanted to do was “to run around the campus and hug all the trees. . .”

Well, I want to hug the trees as well when I recognize the direction and the contributions of Hartford Seminary.

Now, I’m almost finished. But I want to add that while my illustrations this morning have all been male, this institution was the first

of its kind to include women and it’s been doing that for well more than a century. So that I could just as easily have identified people like Dosia Carlson, a classmate of Bill’s and mine, whose disability necessitated her whizzing around the Seminary campus in a wheelchair and whose ministry in Arizona following her graduation included that of hymn writing – she is credited with three of them in the hymnbook we’re using this morning.

Or another faculty member during the same period in the late 1950’s was Dr. Helen Khoobyar, a professor of Christian Education. She was born in Iran and died after being hit by a truck in California at the age of 81. When I was a new pastor on Long Island, she was the first Hartford Seminary faculty member I invited to speak, and she was terrific. She published at least one book, *Facing Difficult Problems in Adult Education*. For me, she’s always been a “luminous” spirit.

Or Dr. Jane Smith, one of the most outstanding of our alumni: If you haven’t read her latest just published book, *Muslims, Christians, and the Challenge of Interfaith Dialogue*, you should. Our Seminary has a perspective of theological pluralism that’s not accidental and yet it’s so important, so critical in our time. That perspective has come through the courageous faith and intellectual acumen of scholars like Jane. They’re people who’ve opposed exclusivist religion and who’ve said, in effect, to all those who are willing, “let’s talk, let’s attempt to understand one another.”

Or one of her recent students, Guat Kwee See, who returned to

Singapore with a natural enthusiasm and energy and with insights that will doubtless make a huge contribution to interfaith dialogue in that country. It would be difficult to turn away from someone with the spirit of Guat!

What the scripture lessons we read this morning point to is valuing extraordinary lives of the spirit. Thankfully, Hartford Seminary has these in significant numbers among students, faculty, trustees, alumni; all those various searchers for meaning with strong flavorings of reconciliation and peace-seeking – all living and dead --- all are heroes and luminaries of the spirit.

So long live Hartford Seminary in its purpose as Heidi puts it, “to provide an education that enables graduates both to understand themselves and their faith traditions better, and to be able to contribute more fully to a culture of dialogue and creative leadership in our civic and faith communities.”

Therefore fellow trustees, faculty, students and friends, when the tough and frustrating times come – as I’m sure they will – let’s remember that Hartford Seminary is worth the struggle.

Let the people say,  
Amen!

**The Rev. Dr. Ralph Ahlberg, a member of the Board of Trustees, offered this sermon during Chapel at Hartford Seminary on November 5, 2007. Dr. Ahlberg is Minister Emeritus of Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich, CT.**





with his dedication and skill in classroom teaching and interfaith programming,” said Professor Jane Smith, co-director of Hartford Seminary’s Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. “A long-time participant in Abrahamic dialogue in the United States as well as in interfaith

relations, Islamic theology, interpretation of the Qur’an, and understanding sectarian distinctions. A Lebanese Shi’ite educated in Quaker schools, Ayoub has been involved in interfaith dialogue, what he calls ‘the dialogue of life,’ since early childhood. He has written poignantly on the concept of suffering in Shi’ite Islam, helping explain the doctrines that characterize this important school of thought from both historical and theological perspectives,” Smith said.

At the Seminary’s Macdonald Center, Ayoub will teach, advise students in the international Ph.D. program, and continue

Ayoub is the author of a number of books including *Redemptive Suffering in Islam* and *The Qur’an and Its Interpreters (vol. 1 & 2)*. The summer of 2000 saw the release of his two-volume publication, *Dirasat fi al-‘Alaqa al-Masihyyah al-Islamiyyah*, in Arabic (Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations). *Islam: Faith and History* appeared in 2004. Currently he is working on the third volume of *The Qur’an and Its Interpreters*.

conversations in many parts of the world, Dr. Ayoub brings experience and understanding consonant with the work done at the Macdonald Center and at Hartford Seminary.”

“Mahmoud Ayoub has researched, written and spoken on a wide range of subjects related to the faith, including Christian-Muslim

his research projects. In the fall semester, he will teach a course on Shi’ite Islam.

Ayoub said that he regards his appointment at Hartford Seminary “as a wonderful reward for me after my retirement from fulltime academic work. I will do my best to honor this association and will do all that I can to live up to the challenge of

an opportunity to serve the Macdonald Center and its students and to realize my hope of using my free time to complete the research projects I already am engaged in and embark on new ones.”

He remembered that his association with the Macdonald Center goes back to the 1970s, when he was a beginning scholar. He served as an adjunct faculty, and remains a member of the editorial board of the Muslim World journal, which is edited by Seminary faculty.

Ayoub was born in South Lebanon. He received his education at the American University of Beirut (BA, Philosophy, 1964), the University of Pennsylvania (M.A., Religious Thought, 1966), and Harvard University (Ph.D., History of Religions, 1975).

Since 1988, he has taught at Temple University. That year, Ayoub helped devise and launch a graduate M.A. level program in Christian-Muslim relations and comparative religion for the Centre for Christian-Muslim Studies, University of Balamand, Lebanon, and, since the spring of 1999, has been its visiting professor.

Throughout his academic career, Ayoub has received distinguished awards and scholarships, for his achievements and his research. Among others, he was a recipient of the Kent Doctoral Fellowship and the Canada Council Fellowship. In 1994-1995, he participated in the Fulbright Exchange of Scholars program for

Malaysia. In the Spring-Summer of 2000, he undertook a research project on Christian-Muslim relations in Egypt and Lebanon, also on a Fulbright scholarship.

Ayoub is the author of a number of books including *Redemptive Suffering in Islam* and *The Qur’an and Its Interpreters (vol. 1 & 2)*. The summer of 2000 saw the release of his two-volume publication, *Dirasat fi al-‘Alaqa al-Masihyyah al-Islamiyyah*, in Arabic (Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations). *Islam: Faith and History* appeared in 2004. Currently he is working on the third volume of *The Qur’an and Its Interpreters*.

In addition, his articles have appeared in books and journals such as *The Muslim World*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, *Bulletin of the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies (Tokyo, Japan)* and *Islamochristiana (Rome, Italy)*.

Ayoub’s authority in both the scholarship and comparative study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations, as well as interreligious dialogue, is demonstrated by the national and international recognition he has received. This is reflected by his numerous local and overseas scholarly engagements. Since 1999, Ayoub has participated in the U.S. Department of State’s program, serving as one of its ambassadors to various parts of the Middle East and S.E. Asia, commenting on American society and institutions, interreligious dialogue and Islam in America.



## AROUND AMERICA IN 113 DAYS

### *Reflections of an Egyptian Visiting the U.S. for the First Time*

By *Mustafa Khattab*

Man is the enemy of the unknown, says an Arab proverb. As a student of English, I am a big fan of Hollywood movies. Those movies have, for the most part, shaped my perceptions of America. I believed, as many Arabs still believe, that *all* American men are violent, drunk, immoral, irreligious, and promiscuous and *all* American women are loose. The American government and the American people are one and the same. It was not before I came here through Fulbright's semester-long interfaith program that many facts unfolded, many stereotypes vanished, and many horizons opened.

The first lesson I learned here was: it is unfair to generalize about an entire culture, faith, or region just because of the actions or sayings of a few individuals. America houses about 300 million people from almost every corner of the earth; hundreds of religious denominations, races, and cultures. It is a land of diversity and opportunity.

What I saw in South Carolina was different from my experiences in California, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Washington D.C., Georgia, Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island. Clemson, SC, and Los Angeles looked like two different countries on two different continents.

Accompanied by The Rev. Dean Ahlberg, after giving a lecture at his First Church of Christ, Congregational, I visited a farm in Redding, CT. I was so impressed by the "honor system" followed in some local farms. You go to a room, take whatever fruits, vegetables, or dairy products you want, and put the money in a box and leave. Nobody is watching you. I told Dr. Ahlberg that this system humanizes man and promotes him to the level of God's trustee on earth. "Did you really put money in that box?" I said teasingly as we were getting into his car.

Generalizations about America are as evil and sinister as generalizations about Arabs and Muslims as well as any other faith or ethnicity on earth. Before I came to the U.S., I believed that Americans had hundreds of misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. But when I came here, I discovered that I was wrong: Americans have millions of misconceptions about me and my faith. Many of them even call me *moxlem*, with a /z/

sound (which in Arabic means "dark"), not Muslim, with an /s/ sound (someone who submits himself/herself to God).

The painful truth is that throughout its history, the United States has unlearned its stereotypes about African-Americans, Jews, Native Americans, the Irish, the Chinese, etc. How long will it take Americans to unlearn groundless misconceptions and stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims? Nobody knows.

#### **Fulbright Program**

The first of its kind in the history of Fulbright, the "Interfaith Community Action Program" brought together eight scholars: four Muslims (Palestinian, Turkish, Nigerian and Egyptian), three Christians (Russian, Pakistani and Indonesian), and one Baha'i (Scottish).

I was taken to places I never thought I would visit, talked to people I never believed I would meet, asked questions I believed I would never be asked, and introduced to new things I never imagined I would experience. I was appalled by Hollywood Bowl's fireworks and awed by Buddhist generosity at a Los Angeles temple, Muslim spirituality and warmth in Clemson, SC, and the beauty and grandeur of Washington D.C. and its fabulous architecture. I'm speechless and spellbound. I now understand why people in demonstrations in the Middle East shout "Death to America" and whisper in the same breath "Give Me Visa." Nobody hates America; they don't like its foreign policy.

#### **Egypt**

Egypt is a predominantly Muslim country: 90% Muslim and the majority of the rest is Coptic. Every time I traveled to other Arab countries (such as Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Syria, or Libya), I was surrounded by Muslims. The U.S. is a land of religious diversity and pluralism. Even within Christianity, there are many denominations and sub-denominations. It was here that I toured cathedrals, synagogues, and Buddhist and Hindu temples. This is the first time in my life that I was a part of a religious minority in a country. Since religion is very central in people's lives in the Middle East, issues such as conversion and interreligious marriages are not easily tolerated.

As a farmer (who grew up on a farm in the Delta, 55 miles to the north of Cairo), I loved Santa Barbara, CA, Clemson, SC, and Hartford, CT, for their trees, peace, and quietness. I felt like an orphan in New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles (because of their noise, crowdedness, and fast pace of life). I have to admit, though, that the food I liked the most in America was un-American (Mexican, Indian, Chinese and Egyptian foods). The only exception was Dunkin' Donuts.

The first interfaith lesson I actually got was from my late father (who couldn't read or write). He was a farmer and a trader. I remember when Coptic traders came from another village to buy something from my father (a cow, for example) and it happened to be during the month of Ramadan (all Muslims are fasting), my father would ask my mother to prepare nice food for the non-Muslim guests. Upon completing the transaction, both parties (my father and the Coptic buyer) would recite the first chapter of the Qur'an to express good will and truthfulness as to the actual price of the cattle and to call upon God to witness. That was amazing.

#### **Hartford**

My host institution, Hartford Seminary, kept me busy all the time. I gave lectures frequently. My Muslim

*Continued on next page*

brothers created their own schedule for me. Every Friday they took me to a mosque or a chapel to give *Khutbah* (Friday sermon) and lead the prayer. During Ramadan, I led the diverse Muslim community in Clemson, SC, and gave more than 70 speeches on different Islamic topics. Every Muslim family was responsible for feeding the entire community a day in Ramadan, so every day we had a special food from an entirely different country. Mmmmm!

The Qur'an (30:22) says, "And among God's Signs is . . . the variation in your languages and your colors: verily in that are Signs for those endowed with sound knowledge." Diversity is a blessing from God. "Imagine if we all speak the same language, have the same skin color, eat the same food every day, etc. Would it not be boring? Plus, some businesses would run out of business - like tourism, translation, money-exchange, and travel agencies. Go where? See what?" as Fadel Soliman, Director of the Bridges Foundation, puts it. I never understood that Qur'anic verse until I came to the United States.

Through the many lectures I gave at churches, chapels, and educational institutions, I tried my best (in my power point presentations) to advocate a better understanding between world faith traditions through interfaith dialogue, present the true message of Islam (as conveyed in the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet), and clarify some misconceptions about Islam, Muslims, and Arabs in America as well as misconceptions about Americans in the Middle East.

- I learned immensely from those Americans who champion interfaith dialogue, peace, tolerance, and understanding between world faiths. I discovered that there are so many people in our world today who work diligently for peace and justice. These people never make headlines simply because the media focuses on controversy. We have the same problem in the Middle East. On Fox News, for example, we only saw Palestinians rejoicing and burning the American flag on September 11, but not those millions of Muslims who denounced the heinous crime.

- I was able to formulate better ideas for my PhD on "the image of Islam and Muslims in American media." Hartford Seminary was generous enough to invite its faculty (including Prof. Jane I. Smith, an expert

on Christian-Muslim relations) to discuss a paper I submitted regarding my PhD at their collegial sharing session in November. Their comments, feedback, and insights were invaluable. I also benefited from the tips and advice of Dr. Ibrahim Abu-Rabi', Dr. Yehezkel Landau, Abdullah Antepli, and Rev. Bud Heckman (whom I teasingly called *Sabir Muhammad Aal-Heckman*).

- My speaking abilities, communication skills, and English have improved so much.

- I had a firsthand exposure to the American culture and way of life.

- I experienced for the first time how it feels to be a part of the Muslim minority in a non-Muslim country - with all the expectations and challenges. It made me reflect on how non-Muslim minorities feel in the Muslim world.

- My host institution opened my eyes to the idea of "Muslim Chaplaincy." I acted as a chaplain a couple of times in Hartford: once at Hartford Hospital and another at the seminary itself.

Once in Egypt, I'll share my experiences in America with the students I teach at al-Azhar University, Cairo, and the people I preach to at mosques.

Like Martin Luther King, Jr., *I have a dream* that all nations, irrespective of race, religion, or color, will be able to co-exist peacefully. *I have a dream* that all humans will be united as one brotherhood under God. And *I have a dream* that the future will be much better and safer for my daughter and all future generations.

If we can't live together like brothers, are we not supposed to love our enemies and forgive those who curse us?

The words will be long remembered after the speaker is gone.

*Mustafa Khattab was a Visiting Fulbright Scholar at Hartford Seminary in the fall. He also was the imam of the Clemson Mosque in South Carolina. An Assistant Lecturer of Islamic Studies in the English Department at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, he received an M.A. with Distinction on the "Nation of Islam." Khattab currently is working on his Ph.D. on the image of Arabs and Muslims in the American media.*

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## Abrahamic Partnerships Program *continued from page 3*

*After a break, the second part of Friday morning focused on personal religious practices. Several students volunteered to share with the group spiritual disciplines that connected them with the Sacred. The most inspiring moment came when two Muslims chanted a long series of couplets in Turkish based on Divine names in Islam. For all of us, it was an uplifting experience of genuine devotion.*

*These discussions and devotional offerings were a prelude to the "main course" of spiritual nourishment on that Friday: interfaith worship services in the Chapel that afternoon, which were prepared by two mixed subgroups of students who had worked on the liturgies since the previous day. I am sorry we did not tape these worship experiences, for no words can adequately convey their beauty and depth. They were extraordinary, both with regard to their spiritual content and the inclusive, participatory process by which they were conceived and led.*

*These worship services demonstrated how closely connected the participants were by the end of the course, and how this kind of creative undertaking can be a genuine blessing for all.*

Besides allowing continuation of the advanced course, the Slifka Foundation grant will enable the Seminary to improve the BAP website. The site will present ideas and experiences from projects that participants are implementing and facilitate a discussion about current events.

Landau also plans to develop relationships with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim institutions, and with individual communities such as the Alabama Faith Council (which sent participants to the BAP program), in order to help them start their own interfaith programs based on the BAP model.

"If we can be helped to see our own limitations and moral lapses through the eyes of our Abrahamic siblings, we have a chance to truly experience the Kingdom of God on earth. The beginning of redemption is the humble recognition that we need one another to be redeemed. BAP is one modest effort to foster that recognition among Jews, Christians, and Muslims and to develop a praxis of partnership in that spirit," Landau said.

# Experiences in Libya, Egypt and Damascus

By Tubanur Yesilhark

## Tripoli, Libya

I attended the second meeting of the Evangelical Christian-Muslim Dialogue held in Tripoli, Libya from January 3 through January 6, organized by the World Islamic Call Society. The aim of this conference was to have conversations around the topic of “Human Nature and the Divine Presence.”

Professor Ibrahim Abu Rabi’, Tom Verdi, a Master of Arts student, and I represented Hartford Seminary among many others coming from all kinds of places such as Fuller Theological Seminary, North Park University, Temple University, Lake Forest College, the University of Western Ontario, American Islamic College, Loyola University, Wheaton College, and the Arab Baptist Seminary in Beirut, Lebanon. Also attending were representatives from national and international organizations such as Open Doors, Sojourners, World Vision International, Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding and Venture International.

The conference was co-facilitated by Dr. Donald Wagner (North Park University) and Dr. Mahmoud Ayoub (Temple University). Both faiths agreed on having an honest conversation with each other, expressing their own creeds and beliefs freely and frankly. It was interesting for me to see how both sides were challenged in different ways but nevertheless the atmosphere remained always warm and courteous.

I experienced the difference it makes to have dialogue with Christians who take their scripture as seriously as Muslims take their Qur’an as the word of God. Secondly, I saw how important it is not to compare the ideal of Islam with the reality of Christianity and vice versa. The two ideals have much in common, whereas it is unfair to establish the normative of one religion on the same level with the realities and practice of the other.

The general outcome of this conference was that everybody agreed that it is important to carry this kind of dialogue further. Toronto, Canada, and Istanbul, Turkey, were suggested as possible sites. (The first conference was held in Chicago.)

## Cairo, Egypt

Never have I seen a more chaotic city than Cairo. Once there, I appreciated the traffic of Istanbul and cleanliness of Damascus, which I will talk about later. I did not see one car that was not scratched on both sides. Nevertheless, people seemed to be happy and seemed to have their very special rules of driving.

In Cairo, the rest of our group from Hartford Seminary met and we were a delegation of 13 people in total.

Our guide explained to us the components of Al-Azhar: the first being the religious office, the second the university, the third the Ministry of Endowments, the fourth the Dar al-Iftaa and the fifth the Islamic Research Academy. We visited two of the modules, the Dar al-Iftaa (the

House of Fatwas<sup>1</sup> and the Al-Azhar University. At the Dar al-Iftaa, we met the Mufti of Cairo, Ali Jum’a, on January 7. At Al-Azhar University, which has 430,000 students, male and female from 102 foreign countries, we had the opportunity to talk with the director, Ahmad at-Tayyib.

Although Al-Azhar claimed to be very open to interreligious dialogue, I was surprised to hear that they did not accept any non-Muslim students into the institution. To my question, “how it was possible to strengthen the students’ consciousness toward

to teach Islamic Studies and Dialogue in English. He offered to cooperate with the students of Hartford Seminary by having us come to Al-Azhar to teach and, in reverse, be taught Arabic.

Two of the highlights in Egypt were the visit to the Ibn-Tulun Mosque and later the visit to Imam Ar-Rifai Mosque, where students of the four schools of thought<sup>2</sup> within Sunni Islam studied together.

## Damascus and Aleppo, Syria

Once one has visited Damascus and Aleppo, one cannot escape

*I saw how important it is not to compare the ideal of Islam with the reality of Christianity and vice versa. The two ideals have much in common whereas it is unfair to establish the normative of one religion on the same level with the realities and practice of the other.*

people of different faith traditions without the possibility of direct engagement?”, I was told that the institution would send their students to the Anglican Church located there to have dialogue. They do not offer any courses on Christian Theology; however, comparative religion courses are taught.

Lastly, we had the opportunity to meet Dr. Ali Shaban, who is the head of the Faculty of Language and Translation. He explained to us their need for professors

the beautiful spiritual atmosphere that fills the air with their long history of Christianity and Islam. Here, dialogue is deeply rooted within people’s history and, whether consciously or not, dialogue is just lived.

Diverse religious groups and nationalities have lived here together for centuries and share the same base: Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, Turkmens, Druze, Christians, Sunnis and Shiites, just to name a few. They are neighbors, friends and work partners. While wandering through Damascus and Aleppo, one

*Continued on next page*

1. Fatwa: non-binding religious advice on any issue in religion.

2. The four schools of thought are the Hanbali, Shafii, Hanefi and Maliki.

Continued from preceding page

can admire churches as well as mosques standing side by side.

Because of its important geographical status, Syria is a country that opened its doors to others. Thousands of refugees from Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine found asylum. The percentage of the Christian population increased to 10 percent after the arrival of the Christian Iraqi refugees. Like their Armenian brothers in faith, who fled from the Ottomans, the Iraqis were granted asylum.

The Armenian priest Bishara from Aleppo, who is a third generation Syrian, explained that Syria is his home and that he never had the feeling of being a foreigner there. He is deeply hurt when other Armenians call Syria the ‘Diaspora’ and breaks into tears when he says:”I am still deeply hurt when I think of my history and what happened to my ancestors. But we have to forgive. Syria is my home and I do not see it as Diaspora.”

At the conference “The Mutual Knowledge of Civilizations and Messages – Under the Shadow of One Hu-

man Family,” which was held under the patronage of Professor Mohammad Abdulsattar Alsayed, Minister of Endowments, on January 13, we again had the impression that dialogue is not a strange terrain for Syria.

Among the 50 speakers was the Mufti of Damascus, Shaykh Abdul Fattah Al-Bizem and the representative of the patriarchic Church of Antioch, Mar Ignatius Zakka I. Both of them disagreed with the impression that the Arab World does not seek interreligious dialogue.

We had the opportunity to meet with political as well as religious leaders, among them the Vice President of Syria, the Minister of Culture, Information and Endowments, the grand Mufti, the Mufti of Aleppo and Damascus, the President of the Al-Fath Institute, where our Syrian students at Hartford Seminary come from, as well as many Christian leaders.

Besides having interesting conversations, the highlight of our visit was to see the Umayyad Mosque, to visit so many tombs of the companions of the Prophet



Seated at left is Ibrahim Abu-Rabi’, co-director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary, and a participant in the conference “The Mutual Knowledge of Civilizations and Messages – Under the Shadow of One Human Family,” held in Damascus, Syria.

Muhammed (peace be upon him), as well as our visit to Ma’lula and Sydnaya, two entirely Christian cities where the population still speaks Aramaic.

Once more I experienced how crucial it is to travel, if one wants to become a peacemaker. It is not enough to talk about peace and to really feel for other people, before seeing them and building up relationships with them. Now I am able to relate to people when somebody talks about Libya, Egypt or Syria. Other than what’s going on at a political

level, we should never forget that the majority of the people in those countries sincerely care about world peace, about the future of humanity and about mutual understanding. And those who do not really think about those issues – they just want to live in peace and earn their daily bread, just like everywhere in this world.

*Tubanur Yesilhark is a Master of Arts student at Hartford Seminary, studying Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, and a member of the Communications Office.*



## New Staff

**Kim Weiner DeMichele** of West Hartford is the new Congregations Relations Assistant and Events Coordinator, working with Chief Development Officer Bud Heckman.

Prior to a several year hiatus to stay home with her children, Kim worked in social services and behavioral health care management and consulting. A student in the Women’s Leadership Institute, she hopes to further her studies at the Seminary to vitalize her participation in interfaith and bridge building activities. Kim holds Masters’ degrees from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in both Clinical Psychology and Business Administration. She enjoys reading, biking and just hanging out with her husband, Gary, and kids, Julia (9), Nicholas (7), TJ (5) and Emma (3).

## Retirement Planning: Adding Charitable Giving to the Mix

In retirement, you want to take care of yourself and your family, of course. But what about the causes and purposes you care about in this world? How can you adequately plan for your own retirement needs and effectively seek to make a difference or leave a legacy at the same time?

As listed in the previous issues of *Praxis*, there are several options.

Among the ideas that combine retirement savings with charitable giving intentions are the deferred payment gift annuity, the charitable remainder unitrust, and the bequest of all or part of your retirement plan to a non-profit organization.

We will cover the third below.

### Give or Bequeath Retirement Plans to Charity

For retired persons with the bulk of their assets in individual retirement accounts, corporate or partnership pension plans, or profit-sharing plan accounts, there are other options. Significant advantages exist in giving or bequeathing funds to charitable institutions such as Hartford Seminary from your retirement assets. This may be accomplished using two strategies – either an IRA rollover or designating a beneficiary.

#### Beneficiary Designation

Charitable bequests can be funded with retirement funds by naming Hartford Seminary as a beneficiary.

**A.** The disposition of IRA's, pension, and profit-sharing plans is not governed by a person's will, but rather by beneficiary designation forms provided by the plan itself. The participant designates on the beneficiary form whom he or she wishes to receive the retirement benefits which remain after death. In the absence of a designation, the participant's surviving spouse is the primary beneficiary. A non-profit organization such as Hartford Seminary can also be named, with the non-participant spouse's consent. (Spousal consent is not required for an IRA.) The designation could take several forms:

- As *secondary* beneficiary (for example, one's spouse is named *primary* beneficiary to receive

retirement benefits for his or her life, *then* the institution would receive payments of those benefits, but with the surviving spouse free to change the secondary beneficiary).

- As *contingent* beneficiary (meaning that the institution would receive the benefits if the employee's spouse predeceases him or her).
- Hartford Seminary could be named as beneficiary for full benefits, for a fraction of the account or for a stated cash amount.
- If the person is survived by descendants, the designation could be to the surviving spouse first for his or her life and thereafter the balance in the account is divided between Hartford Seminary and those descendants, as well as any other charities the participant desires.

**B.** There are distinct tax savings in making testamentary charitable gifts using retirement assets compared to probate assets. Unlike other assets, retirement funds are subject to income tax when distributed, unless the funds are paid to tax-exempt charities. Accordingly, the best way to fund a charitable bequest at your death is by means of your retirement plan. Pursuant to a recent and very helpful change in the tax laws, even if you are 70½ or older, naming a charity as the beneficiary of your retirement plan will no longer accelerate the required minimum yearly distributions to you during your life. At death, if persons other than the surviving spouse or tax-exempt charities are beneficiaries of your retirement funds, these funds are also subject to estate taxes. Total taxes on retirement plan assets could reduce the net value of the account to as little as 36 cents on the dollar.

**C.** Most of an individual's other assets, such as real estate, taxable investments, and business ownership, are not subject to income tax and may pass to children or other heirs for, at most, an estate tax of 45 cents on each dollar, depending on the size of one's estate.

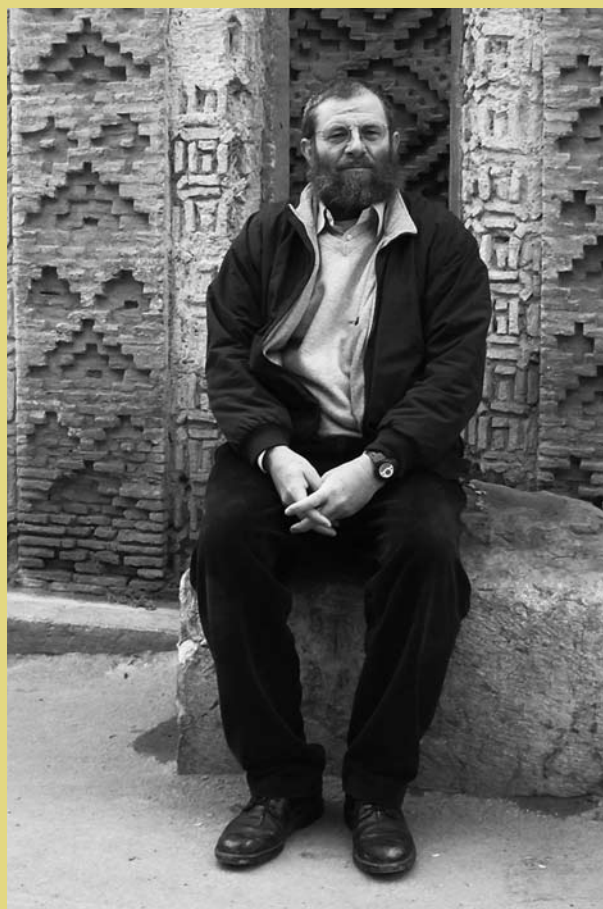
**D.** Thus, charitable bequests funded with retirement accounts minimize taxes and enable you to pass assets to Hartford Seminary without a prohibitive cost to your heirs relative to the after-tax assets they otherwise would receive.

**E.** If you have an IRA, pension and/or profit-sharing plan account balance and you are considering naming Hartford Seminary as a beneficiary, be sure to consult a lawyer or other tax advisor to properly execute that designation.

Retirement should be a time in our lives when we can do things such as travel, spend time with our friends and family, and work on behalf of non-profit organizations that perpetuate our values. If we prepare well for retirement, we can indeed find that it is the best time of our lives. A representative from Hartford Seminary would be happy to speak with you about your options.

Contact:  
Rev. Bud Heckman  
Chief Development Officer  
Hartford Seminary  
bheckman@hartsem.edu  
Tel.: 860-509-9556





will be joining the faculty at Hartford Seminary,” Hadsell said. “Yahya is an innovative thinker who has shown great skill as a professor and researcher. Our students will benefit from his scholarship and his fresh approach to Islamic studies and Abrahamic dialogue. A colleague of his described Yahya as one of the leading Islamic scholars in the world today.”

Since 1998, Michot has been Islamic Centre Lecturer in the Faculty of Theology at Oxford University in Great Britain and a fellow of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. Previously he was director of research and lecturer at the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie at Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium.

When asked why he is coming to Hartford Seminary, Michot said the Macdonald Center has an excellent

reputation in the field of Islamic studies, “as illustrated by the international circulation and high quality of the journal *The Muslim World*.” He also found attractive “the interdenominational nature of the Seminary and its long commitment to the improvement of Christian-Muslim relations, not just through interfaith academic dialogue, but with a readiness to get involved in specific issues of public life and the will to contribute to their effective solution.”

Michot described as strengths of the Seminary, “The teaching of, and research in, theologies beneficial for our time, sourced in the Abrahamic legacy but respectful of the diversity of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish thought.” The Muslim Chaplaincy Program “is a fascinating project,” he said.

Michot was interviewed in February at the Seminary and, he said, he noted “the team spirit manifestly uniting the Seminary’s faculty.”

Ingrid Mattson, chair of the Seminary Search Committee for the position and Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, noted that “the search committee had a delightful dilemma in choosing from an extraordinarily talented pool of applicants.”

“Professor Michot is a wonderful fit for the Macdonald Center: he is an outstanding scholar of international repute and a brilliant teacher with a warm and engaging personality. I eagerly anticipate welcoming Professor Michot as a colleague,” Mattson said.

Michot has research interests in Islamic thought, particularly classical Islamic theology and philosophy, Islamic history, Muslim societies, compared religion, interfaith dialogue, and the Arabic language. He has written extensively on the Persian philosopher Avicenna (d. 1037) and the Syrian theologian Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), their sources, their times and their influence on later Islamic societies.

“During the coming years,” Michot said, “my research will most probably continue to be devoted to Islamic thought, both classical and modern, as well as to interfaith relations. As my understanding of the religion of Islam has now matured and benefited from years of teaching and discussions with students, peers, co-religionists and non-Muslims, I would like

to give some attention to the development of a contemporary Islamic theological thought which would be both well rooted in the classical tradition and able to meet the requirements of this age of religious plurality.”

As he begins his work at Hartford Seminary, Michot said, “I intend to maintain an interfaith perspective, in interaction with my new colleagues, students, and the wider public. President William Mackenzie once spoke of honoring the fathers by ‘re-expressing their spirit and following their method, doing for our time what they did for theirs through a creed which is as contemporary for us as theirs was for them.’ For a Muslim academic, this remains a totally relevant challenge.”

Since 2000, Michot has participated in more than 40 international conferences. Recently he spoke on “Islam and modernity” at a course on strategic issues for senior Defense officers of the United Kingdom and participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Doha Conference on Interreligious Dialogue in Doha, Qatar.

Outside work, Michot said, “My family and community are of paramount importance for me. I also love art -- particularly Islamic, medieval and impressionist, classical music -- European, Arabic, Turkish, Iranian... , manuscripts and old books with engravings, photography, and traveling. For years, I have done a lot of do-it-yourself plumbing and carpentry work.”

# Interfaith Worship Increasing, Congregations Concerned About Growth

-- The increased attention given by communities of faith to interfaith engagements since September 11, 2001 continues to be dramatic.

-- Strong beliefs exist among members of congregations at both ends of the theological spectrum, whether conservative or liberal.

-- Membership growth and increasing or maintaining the activity level and participation of existing members are the most important issues facing faith communities today.

These are among the findings of the most recent survey of congregations by the Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership.

The survey findings are available in a newly released report, "American Congregations 2005," based on a 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 faith communities, this report is must reading. It provides both an overview of faith communities, broken down by denomination, and also details on worship, spiritual practices, interfaith involvement, conflict, leadership, finances, electronic communication, identity and vitality, growth, and challenges.

## Interfaith Involvement

One unanticipated consequence in the immediate aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001 was an upturn in interfaith awareness and interfaith engagements. And beyond the traditionally presumed melting pot of Protestant, Catholic and Jew, America's religious consciousness now included Islam.

A comparison of data from this latest survey to the original survey found that interfaith activity among faith communities had more than tripled – from 7 percent to 22 percent participating in interfaith worship and from 8 percent to 38 percent joining in interfaith community service activities.

## Identity and Vitality

The theological and political outlooks of congregations tilt decidedly toward the conservative side. Even a majority of Old-line Protestant congregations indicate that their members fall to the somewhat conservative side of the scale.

Old-line Protestant congregations also appear more invested in communal bonds (close-knit family)

than purpose-driven or adapting to the rapidity of social change characteristic of today's world.

Theological as well as political stereotypes tend to identify social justice with liberal. Theologically this relates to liberalism's priority for equality and "this worldly" concerns. The survey found that there is considerable truth in the stereotype, at least in regard to the predispositions of American congregations.

The survey confirmed that a congregation's propensity for strong belief is linked to the strictness of its theology. The more conservative a congregation, the greater is its propensity for strongly held beliefs, according to the survey. At the same time, however, the most liberal congregations also have a propensity for strongly held beliefs.

## Issues and Challenges

The survey asked, "What is the most important issue or challenge currently facing your congregation?"

More than 90 percent responded. The top five answers were:

- Membership growth
- Increasing or maintaining the activity level and participation of existing members
- Finances and the need to raise more money or reallocate funds
- Changing demographics
- Buildings and the need for more or renovated space

Other findings in the survey were:

Congregational conflict is a near fact of life. A majority of congregations reported either minor or major conflict. There is more conflict and more severe conflict within Old-line Protestantism than within other Protestant denominations. Also, persons of faith tend to view conflict through a negative lens, and it frequently does have negative consequences. Another cost of conflict is its diminishing effect on congregational vitality.

Congregations are increasingly feeling financial strain. With a steady half century of membership losses, the financial pinch has been especially sharp within Old-line Protestantism: Less than half report good or excellent financial health.

The 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>, where it may be purchased online. For special orders and questions, contact Mary Jane Ross, at Hartford Seminary's Hartford Institute for Religion Research, (860) 509-9543 or [mross@hartsem.edu](mailto:mross@hartsem.edu).

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*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.

FACT/CCSP strives to offer research-based resources for congregational development that

are useful across faith traditions, believing that all communities of faith encounter common issues and benefit from one another's experiences. It also informs the public about the contributions of congregations to American society and about the changes affecting and emanating from one of America's major sources of voluntary association – local congregations. For more information on CCSP, visit [fact.hartsem.edu](http://fact.hartsem.edu).



### **Southern India Study Tour**

Heidi Hadsell, President of Hartford Seminary, led a group of Seminary alumni/ae and friends on an educational and cultural tour of southern India in January. The Indus Valley culture of India has given seed to several major religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Migrations and mission work have brought both Christianity and Islam as well, making India a unique place to study the interface of world religions. The group visited a number of religious and cultural sites and educational institutions, and had the opportunity to explore cultural and interreligious understanding. In this photograph, the group is standing in front of the open air chapel at the Henri Martin Institute an organization that works as a resource center for mediation and conflict prevention, located in Hyderabad. *(Photo by Stephen Roberts)*

## In Memoriam

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

**John Dillenberger**, Hartford Seminary President from 1978 to 1983, died of complications from Parkinson's Disease on February 12, at his El Cerrito, CA, home. He was 89. Dillenberger's tenure at Hartford Seminary included the construction of the current building designed by famed architect Richard Meier. Among other notable achievements while he was President was bringing the Christian-Muslim Relations faculty and program back to Hartford after five years at McGill University and then institutionalizing it into the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations; institutionalizing the research program into the then Center for Social and Religious Research; and the re-introduction of Degree programs -- first the Doctor of Ministry and then a dual track Master of Arts in Lay Ministry and Christian-Muslim Relations. Dillenberger also was instrumental in founding the Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, CA, which is now the largest partnership of seminaries and graduate schools of theology in the country. Dillenberger served as the GTU's first president from 1963 to 1971, and continued as a professor of historical theology there for another seven years. He returned to Berkeley after five years at Hartford

Seminary to write and serve as a GTU board member. In 1997, he was persuaded to become the acting librarian, heading the reorganization of the library and refurbishment of the structure. And in 1999, the president of the GTU resigned, and the Board of Trustees asked Dillenberger to serve again as president for one year. Earlier in his career, Dillenberger taught at Princeton University (1948 to 1949), Columbia University (1949 to 1954), Harvard College (1954 to 1958) and Drew University (1958 to 1962). During his years of studying and teaching, Dillenberger wrote several books on the history of religious art and other theological subjects. His best-known works include "Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings"; "Theology of Artistic Sensibilities"; "Images and Relics"; "John Calvin: Selections from his Writings"; and "Visual Arts and Christianity in America." Dillenberger also published an autobiography in 2004, titled "From Fallow Fields to Hallowed Halls: A Theologian's Journey." Dillenberger is survived by his wife, Jean; two sons from a previous marriage; one step-daughter; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

**The Rev. Dr. Harvey King McArthur**, '40 STM and '41 Ph.D., died January 12 at age 95 at Loomis House in Holyoke, MA. He taught at Hartford Seminary, where he held the Hosmer Chair of New Testament Studies, from 1948 to 1978, and was Acting President from 1976 to 1978. McArthur graduated from Wheaton College in Illinois, where he received a Ph.B., in 1933; and from the Westminster Theological Seminary in Chestnut Hill, PA, where he received a Th.B. in 1937. From Westminster, he received a one-year scholarship

for graduate studies in Berlin and Tubingen, Germany, 1937-1938. He then obtained a Master's Degree in Sacred Theology and Ph.D. at Hartford Seminary and was ordained a minister in the Congregational Church in 1942. For three years McArthur was pastor of the Federated Church of Blackstone, MA. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1944 and served as a chaplain in the 75th Infantry Division in Europe where his service included the Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns. On his return from the war, McArthur taught at Wellesley College in the Department of Biblical Studies and then at Hartford Seminary. He was a recognized scholar in the field of New Testament studies and known for collaborating with scholars of different religious faiths. He was the author of several books including "Understanding the Sermon on the Mount and The Quest Through the Centuries." In 1961, he received an American Association of Theological Schools Fellowship for research at Heidelberg University, Germany; in 1967, he received an American Association of Theological Schools Fellowship for research at Cambridge University, England. He was a visiting scholar at the Tantar Ecumenical Institute, Israel in 1976. McArthur was president of the board of the Connecticut Institute for the Blind and Disabled for many years. After retiring in 1978, he preached widely in Vermont and Massachusetts. He was a guest lecturer at Mount Holyoke College for one year. He was a member of the South Hadley Community Chorale for many years and member of the First Congregational Church in South Hadley. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Elizabeth Dimock McArthur, '45 BRE; three children; two

grandchildren; a brother; a cousin; and several nieces and nephews.

Muriel Jones Cashdollar has informed us that her mother, **Fannie M. Jones**, '36 BRE, passed away on January 19. She was 94 years old. Muriel writes that her mom spent a year with Hartford Seminary. "Her year there was special to her."

We were recently notified that **Dr. Wolfgang F. Kollert**, '53 KSM, passed away last year. He was living in Germany.

**The Rev. Lyman G. Potter**, '47 B.D., passed away at the age of 85 on February 11, 2008 at the McLean Home in Simsbury, CT. Potter was born in Vellore, India, and grew up in Norfolk, CT. He was a veteran of World War II, having served in the U.S. Navy V12 Program. Potter was ordained at the First Church of Christ, Norfolk, in 1947 and was Pastor of First Church of Christ, Simsbury, from 1963 to 1986. Upon his retirement he was elected Pastor Emeritus. Between Norfolk and Simsbury, he served churches in Detroit, MI, Putnam, CT, and Wetlake, OH. He retired to Saratoga Springs, NY, and served as Interim Minister at several churches in that area. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Amy Lang Potter.

**Marjorie F. Reed**, '38 B.D. and School of Religious Education graduate, passed away on December 18, 2006 after a brief illness. She was 93 years old.

**Winifred Hemingway Thomforde**, M.A., died on November 14, 2007, at the age of 91 as the result of renal failure. She lived in Pleasant Hill, TN. Described as a "brave" missionary, Winifred traveled the world from China to Iran to Italy as a missionary, teacher, librarian and translator. She was born in Taigu, *Continued on next page*

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Shanxi Province, China, where her father, a Congregational Church missionary, was a founder of the Taigu Hospital, which is still in operation. Her mother was also born in China of missionary parents and was active in Christian education and social work there. Thomforde studied at Oberlin College and graduated in 1938 with a degree in elementary education. She received her Master's Degree in Chinese studies from the Hartford Theological Seminary. She worked with her mother and sister at the Taigu Hospital, even under Japanese occupation during World War II. She later taught kindergarten in Washington, DC, and was the supervising kindergarten teacher at the Japanese relocation camp in Poston, AZ. Growing up in China, she spoke the North China dialect of Taigu and later learned Mandarin and Italian. As World War II came to a close, she was hired by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration as an English-Chinese translator. It was about this time that she met her husband, also employed by UNRRA, and they had five children. In 1955 the family moved to Iran, and in 1959 to Rome. Thomforde volunteered at the Overseas School of Rome, attended by her five children, and subsequently worked as a lower-school librarian. She and her husband retired in 1982 and moved to Tennessee. In retirement, she inspired many children to appreciate literature by reading to them and she recorded more than 90 books on tape for the benefit of her grandchildren.

**Elizabeth "Betty" Wirth Avery**, '47 M.A., writes, "The Praxis is great! Many thanks to all writers."

**Richard A. Hasler**, '64 Ph.D., recently shared that his new book on walking titled "Surprises Around the Bend: 50 Adventurous Walkers," was released by Augsburg-Fortress Publishers in January. "In my reading of biographies through the years I noticed that many of the most creative men and women in history have been ardent walkers. Further, they claim that their walking positively influenced their creativity. Still further, not a few of them have cited a particular walk that proved to be a serendipitous experience leading to personal transformation. I have written the book with the expectation that these companions of the way will inspire the reader to be a diligent walker too."

**Donald Cairn Helm**, '62 M.Div., writes that he is glad to read of Alumni/ae News in Praxis. He is looking forward to retiring in June '08 from teaching at Morgan State University in Baltimore and plans to write full time. Donald sends his best wishes to alumni/ae, faculty past and present, and staff, and he says that his "memories of Hartford Seminary are precious."

**The Most Rev. Josiah Idowu-Fearon**, '93 D.Min., was installed as a Six Preacher at Canterbury Cathedral in Great Britain last July by Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. Idowu-Fearon previously was Archbishop of the Province of Kaduna in Nigeria. The appointment is for five years and may be renewed. The Six Preachers of Canterbury Cathedral were originally the idea of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, forming part of his plans for a new foundation to replace the dissolved Canterbury Cathedral Priory. Canterbury was unique in that no other cathedral had a group of preaching priests and is a reflection of Cranmer's determination to give greater prominence to preaching.

**Robert M. Johnston**, '77 Ph.D., writes that he retired in 2002, but he continues to teach half a year and he lectured in Russia this past summer.

In December, **The Rev. Ralph E. Marsden**, '53 B.D., was named Minister Emeritus of the Greendale People's Church in Worcester, MA, for his lifetime commitment to others. Marsden stepped down as pastor of the church in 1998 but he still assists area churches, officiating at funerals and other services. About once a

month, he offers reflections on a morning prayer radio program. A member of the Worcester Ecumenical Council and past president of the International Council of Community Churches, he received the Pope John XXIII Award from the Diocese of Worcester for his work in ecumenism.

**Canon Richard T. Nolan**, '63 M.Div. and former faculty member, recently shared that he and his life partner, Robert C. Pingpank, received a Certificate of Appreciation from The Palm Beach County Chapter of the ACLU of Florida for "Exceptional Leadership and Devoted Community Service." The award was given at the ACLU's Annual Freedom Award Luncheon on February 24, 2008. Nolan and Pingpank have "served as powerful witnesses to the dignity of GLBT persons for over 50 years. They actively and publicly support the ACLU's GLBT project, fighting discrimination and shaping popular opinion through the courts, legislatures and education. As an Episcopal priest, Canon Nolan led many within the Episcopal Church USA to support the ordination of gay and lesbian clergy and the blessing of same-sex unions. Locally, he is a Founding Board Member of the Pride Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches and an advisor to The Hemlock Society of Florida."

**Alton H. Ridgway**, '48 KSM, writes, "From the Seminary (under the Methodist Mission Board) we went to Antwerp, Belgium for the Tropical Medical Institute, thence to the Piper Hospital at Musumba at Kapanga in the Katanga Province. Then because of medical necessity had to return to the USA in 1952. Medical problems prevented us from returning to Africa so from 1953 to 1983 worked in a medical practice to support the family. Now retirement is a reality as service to our Lord Jesus Christ is the full time occupation at 90 years." Alton's wife is **Lucy D. Ridgway**, KSM and SRE.

In the December 11, 2007, issue of Christian Century, "Bonhoeffer and King: Speaking Truth to Power," written by **The Rev. Dr. James Deotis Roberts**, '51 B.D. and '52 S.T.M., was reviewed by Willis Jenkins, who teaches social ethics at Yale Divinity School. "In his comparative study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Luther King, Jr., Deotis Roberts presents striking parallels in the biographies and theological commitments of the two activist-theologians," writes Jenkins.

**David C. Williams**, '64 M.Div., writes that he is still ministering part time as Stewardship and Planned Giving Associate at the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC and doing Capital Campaign consulting at age 68.

In December, **Efrain Agosto**, as interim dean, attended the Annual Meeting of the New England Association for Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the regional accrediting body. He also moderated a panel discussion on Sikhism and Judaism at the Connecticut Council for Interreligious Understanding conference held at Asylum Hill Congregational Church. In January, Agosto was the keynote speaker for the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. service of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Hartford, held at House of Restoration Church in Hartford. He also preached at the opening of a new sanctuary for Grace Fellowship Church in East Haven, Connecticut. Agosto has been elected to the Board of the Universal Healthcare Foundation of Connecticut and attended his first board meeting in February. Also in February, he gave a workshop on Pauline leadership at the Fountain of Salvation Church in Mount Kisko, New York. In March, he was part of an accreditation team for the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for a new theological school in Massachusetts and preached for the First Congregational Church of Redding, CT. He also spoke on the Apostle Paul's interpretation of Abraham as part of an interfaith presentation on Abraham at the Seminary.

**Steven Blackburn** led a book discussion at Hartford Public Library in December on Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul*, during which he met Mrs.

Nafi Donat, wife of the Seminary's former Archivist who served in the Case Memorial Library during the 1960's and 1970's. Blackburn led a Collegial Sharing session for the faculty on continuing work in the Seminary Archives, including a few recent "rediscoveries" of unconventional materials gathered by past professors on subjects such as extra-terrestrials, psychic phenomena, and Missouri Synod Lutheran clergy active in Democratic Party circles in the 1940's. As an outcome of the 2007 Pastors' Institute on Muslim-Christian concerns, Blackburn was invited to St. Francis Episcopal Church in Stamford to speak on "What's in – and not in – the Qur'an." He also continues to fill in occasionally in local Congregational-Christian pulpits.

**Kelton Cobb** has been teaching a series on St. Augustine's *Confessions* at Immanuel Congregational Church in Hartford, and continuing to edit the journal *Conversations in Religion and Theology*.

**Heidi Hadsell** led a study tour to India in January. Participants engaged in cultural and inter-religious understanding while visiting a number of religious and cultural sites and educational institutions in southern India. She spoke at the Northeast Synod (Presbyterians) on "Theology & Ethics in the Context of Globalization" at Stony Point, NY. In February, she chaired a panel on "*Theory and Practice: Ideas in Action*" at a Forum on Religion and Ecology Conference at Yale University and, with David Roozen, hosted the case writing team for the seminary's Pedagogies for

Interfaith Dialogue grant.

**Uriah Kim** is on the Editorial Board of a new journal called *Society of Asian North American Christian Studies*. He spoke at a Seminary program, "Interpreting the Scriptural Story of Joseph from Three Faith Traditions," at the Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven in December. The first issue of *Reviews in Religion and Theology* under Kim's editorship came out in January. Also, he presented a paper entitled "Reading the Story of David for Our Time" at *Chatlos Bible Conference: "One Bible, Many Milieux,"* sponsored by New York Theological Seminary, in February.

In November, **Yehezkel Landau** was the Jewish Scholar-in-Residence at a religious educators' colloquium on the "Scandal of Particularity" in Richmond, VA, sponsored by the Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies in Baltimore; lectured on "What in God's Name is Happening in the Holy Land?" -- The The Spiritual Requirements for Israeli-Palestinian Peacebuilding" at the Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford; and spoke on "Jews, Christians, and Muslims: The Challenge of Interreligious Peacebuilding" at First Baptist Church in West Hartford. In December, he gave a Jewish perspective on "The Story of Joseph" as part of a Hartford Seminary outreach event at the Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven and participated on a public panel on "The Holy Land in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Perspectives" at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Activities in February

included: A talk at the Jewish Community Center in West Hartford on "Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations Today"; a sermon on Christian-Jewish relations and an adult forum on peacebuilding in Israel/Palestine at Trinity Episcopal Church in Southport, CT; the keynote address at the first public forum of the Alabama Faith Council in Birmingham, AL, where he met with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim community leaders there; a "Faith and Justice" lecture at the First Congregational Church of Woodbury, CT; and a lecture on "Religious Peacebuilding among Israelis and Palestinians" at Marymount Manhattan College in Manhattan. In March, Landau spoke on "Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations after 9/11" at Temple Emanuel in Worcester, MA. He also joined Imam Yahya Hendi for an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA, and delivered a paper on "The Religious Dimension of Israeli-Palestinian Peacemaking" at a conference on the Middle East at Central Connecticut State University.

In December, **Ingrid Mattson** had the honor of addressing attendees of the biennial of the Union for Reform Judaism in San Diego. Mattson spoke on behalf of the Islamic Society of North America about the need for American Jews and Christians to work together for peace and justice and announced her support for the ISNA-URJ partnership to educate their communities about each other's faiths. In February and March, Mattson participated in a number of Seminary sponsored events, including a discussion of

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her book, *The Story of the Qur'an*, a panel response to Reuven Firestone's lecture on Abraham, and a discussion with visitors from Kosovo and Macedonia. Mattson also chaired the search for a new Macdonald Center faculty. During the winter season, Mattson participated in a number of events related to the release of the document "A Common Word Between Us and You," a historic outreach on the part of Muslim leaders worldwide to the Christian world. Mattson, one of the original signatories of the document, spoke about it on the WNPR program, "Where we live" and discussed it with the Christian-Muslim Dialogue Group of Connecticut. She also participated in an event organized around the document at The Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry in Hartford. Mattson gave lectures at a number of venues in Connecticut, including the West Haven mosque, the Woodbury People of Faith, the Muslim Students Association of the University of Hartford, and the Town and County Club. Nationally, Mattson gave lectures or participated in panels at the following places: the annual meeting of the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles, a Martin Luther King Day program at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in NYC, the University of Wisconsin Eau-Claire, and Alaska Pacific University. Internationally, Mattson gave a number of talks at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

In early January **David Roozen** traveled to Phoenix for a three-

day meeting of the Interdenominational Executives' Group, a peer support and learning community of chief executive officers from ecumenically oriented North American denominations. Upon his return to Hartford, he contributed a now regular segment on different models of engaging the religiously other for Yehezkel Landau's week-long, *Building Abrahamic Partnerships*. Toward the end of the month he hosted and chaired the two day, Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership, winter steering committee meeting. In early February he and Heidi Hadsell hosted the case writing team for the seminary's Pedagogies for Interfaith Dialogue grant. In late February the long awaited report on the Faith Communities Today 2005 national survey of congregations was published, and is available online for viewing or in paper for purchase at [fact.hartsem.edu](http://fact.hartsem.edu). The report's circuitous route to publication notwithstanding, there is any number of bits of good news attached to its arrival. One is that the report is the first installment on one of the FACT survey series' major purposes, specifically the regular tracking of trends in the character and vitality of American congregations. Of special note in FACT2005 are changes in congregations' interfaith activity since 9/11. A second bit of good news is that the report did arrive before the FACT2008 survey went into the field the week after Easter.

In February, **Jane Smith**, presented a lecture titled "Who Are Today's Muslim Women?" at the Monday Reading Club in Bloomfield and spoke

to the Farmington Valley Association Committee on Ministry and the parishioners of St. Francis Episcopal Church, Stamford CT. In March, Smith presented a talk on "Christian Responses to Pluralism" at South Church, Granby CT.

**Scott Thumma** is on sabbatical until June and is engaged in several research and writing efforts during this time. Along with colleagues from Leadership Network, he is engaged in another national study of megachurches in North America. In addition to this, he is doing field studies of 12 megachurches around the country. These visits include over 50 interviews per church, full staff surveys, and a survey of all the attendees at the churches. He is working on a book about what churches of all sizes can learn from large church success.

**Miriam Therese Winter** joined Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan as keynote presenters at Epiphany Explorations 2008 in Victoria, British Columbia, in January. The Jesus Seminar scholars shared their latest collaborative work related to the lives of Jesus and Paul. Winter spoke on the relevance of biblical women, offering an opportunity for the assembly to reconsider this rich resource through a quantum lens. Sunday morning worship featured her songs, hymns, and prayers. She also preached the sermon. On her return to Hartford, she went back to writing her book on quantum spirituality, which is due to be published by Orbis Books in the spring of 2009. Three of her earlier books are scheduled for republication with a fresh new look later this year.

## Annual Fund 2008 Securing the Future

First and foremost, a heartfelt thanks to those who have already supported the 2007-2008 Annual Fund with a pledge or gift... members of our leadership, alumni/ae and friends, faculty and staff, faith communities, businesses, and foundations. As of early March, with approximately 60% of our fiscal year completed, we had met approximately 60% of our goal for the year.

In our most recent Appeal letter to alumni/ae and friends of the Seminary, President Heidi Hadsell spoke of her pride and thanks for the direction the Seminary is heading... enrollment and programs are flourishing, and we have continued to grow in many ways.

Dr. Hadsell's letter reminded our constituents that, while we do receive generous funding toward our programs, grant funding and student tuitions do not cover the expenses it takes to run this great institution. In fact, they make up less than half of our operating budget. Hence the need for Annual Fund support each year.

If you have not yet contributed to the 2007-2008 Annual Fund, please consider sending your pledge or gift today. And please give as generously as you are able to. If you have already contributed, please consider a second gift this year. Help us to secure the future of this great institution and the important work we do. The current Annual Fund runs through the close of our fiscal year, June 30, 2008.

Finally, plans are underway for an Appreciation Event, honoring all \$500+ donors to the 2006-2007 and/or 2007-2008 Annual Funds as well as Annual Fund volunteers. The event will take place on Thursday evening, October 23, 2008, during our week long 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

If you have any questions about Hartford Seminary's Annual Fund or the Appreciation Event, please contact Mary Kalencik, Associate Director of Institutional Advancement, at [giving@hartsem.edu](mailto:giving@hartsem.edu) or at (860) 509-9520.

Hartford Seminary's Summer Session will begin Tuesday, May 27 and continue through Friday, June 27. 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 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 \$1,550. 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](http://www.hartsem.edu). For information about accommodations, please contact the Student Support Office at (860) 509-9552 or vaw@hartsem.edu.

## SPECIAL SCHEDULE

### Major Islamic Thinkers: Jalal Eddine ar-Rumi (NEW)

ONLINE – May 26 through June 27

Rumi is one of the most renowned Sophists in Islamic thought. His horizons and writings on the knowledge and love of Allah are well known. This course will focus on presenting Rumi's view of the universe and human activity within the created order through a Sufi perspective that highlights the overwhelming love of Allah for humanity and creation. Besides the reading of Qur'anic texts and Islamic theology, the course engages the fields of spirituality, worship, and human understanding of God, nature and creation. *Imam Mahmud Abul-Huda Al-Husaini, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Dr. Munzer Absi, Adjunct Professor of Religion and Literature and Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of Aleppo (Syria)*

### Marriage, Family, Sexuality: The Theology and Ethics of Relationship

Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 27 through June 26, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The changing nature of marriage and family life reflects the need for a thoughtful understanding of the complexity of these relationships and their theological base. This course will explore classic, modern, and contemporary views of marriage and family, including the spiritual, social, and sexual aspects of family relations. Readings will be from Augustine and Luther on up to current feminist and gay/lesbian views of marriage and family life and contemporary socio-cultural analyses of American family life. These explorations will fund our answers to questions such as whether marriage is a sacrament or a contract, whether marriage is between one man and one woman, and what can be done to support families in contemporary American culture. *Heidi Gehman, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics*

### Introduction to Arabic Morphology and Syntax

Monday, June 9 – Friday, June 27, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 3:20 p.m.

Vernacular Arabic will be the focus of this course, with an accent on all four linguistic areas of language learning: oral, aural, reading, and listening. Basic sentence and phrase structures will be highlighted while a vocabulary of several hundred words will be built. Assumes a prior knowledge of the Arabic phonology and script. Prerequisite: LG-580, or permission of the instructor. *Steven Blackburn, Faculty Associate in Semitic Scriptures*

## WEEK OF JUNE 2 – JUNE 6

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### Building Abrahamic Partnerships

(Sunday, June 1 through Sunday, June 8 - intensive schedule, includes all days and some evenings)

This 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. Building on the 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*

### Matthew, Mark and Luke: The Synoptic Gospels

This course is an in-depth study of the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith in light of current biblical scholarship with special attention to the theological perspectives of Matthew, Mark and Luke as reflected in their varying presentations of the Good News in these three "synoptic" Gospels. *Wayne Rollins, Adjunct Professor of Scripture*

## WEEK OF JUNE 9 – JUNE 13

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

### Church Challenges: Ecclesiology and Leadership Today (NEW)

Understanding the nature of the church and its emerging challenges is essential for effective ministry. This course examines both classic insights and new directions in ecclesiology, including their implications for leadership in churches today. During the week of the course, students will participate in a two-day conference that includes leading ecclesiology scholars reflecting on their own writings, and regional denominational leaders addressing significant challenges in their traditions. Students also will be invited to think of the church as a sign, considering exactly what the church signifies in and for the world. *James Nieman, Professor of Practical Theology*

### Contemporary Islamic Ethics

For Muslims committed to living Islam as a way of life, contemporary society offers many challenges. A commitment to the common good exists in tension with the need to protect individual rights. The desire to uphold family values may conflict with the need

*Continued on next page*

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to defend pluralism and civil liberties. In a world threatened with violence from many sources, self-defense and security take on new meaning. In this class, we will examine these tensions and the Islamic principles that can help Muslims live ethically and with integrity in American society. Case studies will include debates about abortion, gay marriage, militarism and minimum wage. *Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations*

**WEEK OF JUNE 16 – JUNE 20**  
**9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**America's Most Popular Theologian: Exploring the World of C.S. Lewis (NEW)**

This course explores the theology of C. S. Lewis as seen in both his fiction and non-fiction works. Placing his writing in the context of his life, we explore his Anglican orthodox theology, his apologetics, as well as his distinctive positions. We will look at the growing secondary literature on Lewis and discuss together the reasons for his popularity. *Christy Lohr, Adjunct Instructor of Theology and The Rev. Dr. Bennett Brockman, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fairfield, CT. Previously Dr. Brockman was associate professor of English at the University of Connecticut, with special competence in religion and literature and children's literature.*

**The Business of Being the Church (NEW)**

This course is a five-day intensive course on at least some of the things “they never taught us in seminary” in the areas of parish administration and personal finance. The five subjects covered include Creating a Mission Driven Budget, Funding Ministry, Human Resources Management, Stewardship of the Physical Plant, and Personal Clergy Finances. The instruction will take the form over the course of each day of lectures, interactive seminars, case studies, and partnered projects. Each student will receive a binder with resources for when it comes time to put theory into practice. *The Rev. Ian Montgomery, Rector, All Saints' Episcopal Church, Palo Alto, CA, and The Rev. David Sellery, Priest-in-Charge, St. Peter's by the Sea Episcopal Church, Bay Shore, NY. Revs. Montgomery and Sellery combine experience in parish ministry with professional experience in financial and endowment management, planning and fund raising.*

**Islamic Congregations (NEW)**

This course will explore the diverse world of Islamic congregations. Having looked at the data, which describes the number and size of Islamic congregations, students will be given the opportunity to look at the different cultures found in these congregations. The challenge of sometimes being immigrant communities, which are adjusting to life in the United States, will be discussed. At the end of the course, students will understand what makes for a healthy and effective Islamic congregation. *Faculty*

**WEEK OF JUNE 23 – JUNE 27**  
**9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Building Abrahamic Partnerships II**

*(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: DI-650 Building Abrahamic Partnerships or permission of the instructor. *Yehezkel Landau, Faculty Associate in Interfaith Relations and Co-Founder, Open House, Ramle, Israel*

**U.S. Christianities: Difference, Diversity, and Borders (NEW)**

The story of Christianity in the United States is one about diversity of belief, dissent, myth and history, insiders and outsiders. It is a history about a people who sought to understand God, as a new nation was being forged. This class will examine the major trends and religious movements that have helped to shape the Christianities of today. Issues such as gender, race, ethnicity, language, immigration and the varieties of religious experience will inform our discussion of American religious history. Readings will include primary documents as well as secondary literature, with extensive classroom discussion of these, as well as lectures and media presentations. *Daisy L. Machado, Adjunct Professor of History and Professor of Church History, Union Theological Seminary, New York*

**Growing Healthy Congregations**

Everybody thinks that “bigger is better” and a growing church is “blessed by god” -- but is that really true? Numeric church growth as an end in itself is unhealthy. This course will explore both current theories of church growth and recent sociological information about the characteristics of growing churches. Students will be encouraged to wrestle with an individualized and appropriate theory of congregational development that rests in a multi-dimensional understanding of the total health of a faith group and the unique vision and context of each congregation. Students will undertake a practical health and growth assessment of their own or another congregation within the course. *Scott Thumma, Professor of Sociology of Religion and Web and Distance Education*

**TRAVEL SEMINAR (TS)**

**Mainland China and Hong Kong: Transition, Development, and The Role of the Church**

*Monday, May 26 – Monday, June 9*

This travel seminar is offered by Hartford Seminary in cooperation with the Plowshares Institute. The seminar will use the church as a window examining Chinese society, especially as it pertains to issues of transition and development. Through personal dialogue with church, government, and academic leaders, participants will wrestle with the issues facing China including environmental degradation, poverty, and human rights and reflect upon what these challenges mean in light of increasing global interdependence. Through visits with Chinese government representatives, exposure to China's rural areas, conversations with economic leaders, and dialogue with church and academic leaders, participants will have the opportunity to experience China in a way that extends far beyond the beaten path. The seminar will conclude with several days in Hong Kong. For more information and an application for the seminar please contact the Plowshares Institute directly at (860) 651-4304. For information about taking the seminar for credit please contact the Hartford Seminary Registrar at (860) 509-9511. There are additional fees for this travel seminar.

PREPARING PEACEMAKERS FOR 175 YEARS:  
TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE

# CELEBRATING THE HISTORY OF HARTFORD SEMINARY



OCTOBER 18-26, 2008  
**175TH ANNIVERSARY WEEK**

OCTOBER 23-25, 2008  
**ALUMNI WEEKEND**

OCTOBER 25, 2008  
**GALA DINNER AND CELEBRATION**  
At the prestigious ON20  
(formerly the Polytechnic Club) in Hartford

For 175 years, Hartford Seminary has been preparing peacemakers to meet new challenges posed by society. It started in 1833 with a group of Congregationalist pastors who formed an association and created a library. A year later in East Windsor Hill, Connecticut, they formally formed what was one of America's first seminaries, known today as Hartford Seminary.

Early work focused on training clergy for parish work, then later educating missionaries and Christian educators for the field, and some years later yet, enabling exceptional sociological research and urban leadership development in faith communities. Hartford Seminary is still evolving and pioneering today. In a world filled with interreligious strife, Hartford Seminary is unique among schools in the world for its programs, faculty, and focus on interreligious dialogue.

In a time when its expertise is needed most, Hartford Seminary is educating Christians, Muslims, and Jews to work and learn together side by side, to become thoughtful and faithful peacemakers in a world divided by differences. With its rich history of visionary leaders as a foundation, Hartford Seminary will continue to adapt and innovate to meet the needs of the world in which it serves.

A week of celebrations and special events will kick-off the anniversary year, 2008-9. Special bus trips, tours, unveilings, displays, films, worship services, speakers, and gatherings are planned. These events from Saturday, October 18, 2008 to Sunday, October 26, 2008 will engage the alumni/ae, friends, and the public in the rich history and promising future of the Seminary.

Alumni are encouraged to save three days - Thursday, October 23 to Saturday, October 25 - for a concentrated series of special events designed especially for them. *Please save the dates* for this Alumni Weekend. A postcard reminder and more details are forthcoming.

Got questions or ideas? Please call 860-509-9521 or write to [alum@hartsem.edu](mailto:alum@hartsem.edu).



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Hartford, CT, USA 06105-2260  
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