



Inside this Issue

- 2 Message from the President
- 8 The 2012 Commencement Address
- 16 Building a Recovery Bridge
- 19 Course Reflections: "Judaism, Christianity & Islam: Why Can't We All Just Get Along?!"

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



A new academic year is beginning, with anticipation, preparation, celebration, and hope for another season of teaching, learning, and formation for ministries that will be marked by character and competence.

This is what we do.

This is why we are here, and how we will be remembered. We have work to do – business as usual – the same important ministry that BTS has carried out for generations.

And yet, this beginning is different from the almost 200 beginnings that have come before. This beginning is tempered by the reality of an ending. This year will end with a final commencement. This year begins with the installation of the final president of BTS, and ends with the opening of a new chapter, which will mean the closing of the previous chapter.

I am mindful of the tug and pull of endings and beginnings. To become the 11th president of BTS, I am leaving the church I have served for 25 years. I feel excitement, energy, and hope about the challenge of being a part of the “new thing” God may be doing at BTS, but I am so aware of the loss I am feeling about ending my ministry in Presque Isle. I believe radical change is necessary for BTS and other seminaries at this time, though I am torn by my own emotional ties as a BTS graduate, and an even deeper concern for the direct impact of the impending changes – the personal and professional challenges of this ending – on faculty, staff, and students.

In this issue of the Open Door, some items point to the future focus of the Third Century and Transition committees. The greater volume of content witnesses to our historic purpose and its current embodiment, as reflected in the lives of some of our BTS family – students, recent grads, faculty – who are making a difference in God’s world. From graduations and ordinations, to Marvin Ellison’s new book, to students with active ministries, to the work of the Transition

Committee, to the celebrations of the lives of those alums who have died. This Open Door reminds us that we are still firmly engaged in the work of today, while anticipating a re-imagined future.

We recognize that navigating the tricky terrain of endings and beginnings calls for careful consideration of the attention we give to this present ending, over and against a future beginning. The process of discernment and decision-making will continue, as we seek clarity about structure and strategy for our third century. But in these coming months, we must focus our energy, excitement, and hope on the goal of ending well. Our trustees and academic dean, our faculty and staff, are also committed to this goal – for our students, but also for each other, as well as our wider community of graduates and friends.

Starting with luncheon gatherings on each campus and the all-campus Opening Convocation and Installation in Waterville on September 15th, continuing with our January Convocation, and looking ahead to our last commencement service in June of 2013, we want to be mindful of the power of rituals. In these settings, as well as in other events and activities yet to be created, we will celebrate, honor, give attention to – with deep gratitude – the legacy of our past, including our alums and donors; the present contributions and concerns of our current BTS students, staff, and faculty; and the work of teaching and learning that continues to reflect our affection for BTS, and our commitment to a call to serve God, embodying a love of God and neighbor in all things.

We are on a journey of discovery, but not just for a future. We are committed to be faithful to the work we share here and now. We ask for your prayers and support – without ending – at this beginning of a new academic year.

Peace be with you,

The Reverend Dr. Robert Grove-Markwood
President



Since becoming the Chair of the Board of Trustees in May of this year, I have had a first row seat to observe the BTS team in action as it has never been before. Following are summaries of the activities of the Third Century Committee and the Transition Committee, which are

both doing essential work to plan our future and work through the numerous transitional issues which must be addressed between now and June 2013.

But the team I refer to consists of more than just trustees. All of our staff are now wearing multiple hats, even more than they wore in more “normal” times. Academic Dean Steven Lewis and the rest of the faculty are committed to making this last academic year the best it can be for our students. Bob Grove-Markwood has shed the “interim” title and has graciously agreed to remain as our President through until September 2013.

There’s no denying that we face many challenges, and

that there will be twists and turns in the road ahead. To be sure, we’re all in new territory, a place that none of us wanted to be, and while we are anxious about what comes next I hope that we will continue to talk candidly about our concerns, and rely on one another for comfort and support. As always, open and honest communication is key, and the trustees are committed to being as forthcoming as we can about our activities and plans for the future.

We are united by our loyalty to BTS and its history and mission. We believe that there is a continuing role for the seminary in the religious and cultural life of Maine and beyond, and with God’s help we are committed to find it.

Phil Gleason is a business lawyer and senior partner at Bernstein Shur in Portland, Maine. He has been on the Board of Trustees of the Seminary since 2007 and is the current Chair. He is a long-time member of Foreside Community Church, United Church of Christ, in Falmouth, Maine, where he has held several leadership positions. Phil and his wife Mary Schendel (also an attorney) have two grown children and have each been involved in a number of civic and charitable activities. Phil has many interests including classical music, cooking, wine, and sports of all kinds. He is an avid skier, fly fisherman, and road cyclist.

Staff Changes

Caroline Hammond, our staff accountant, resigned at the end of June to take a similar position with the Bangor Public Library. We are so grateful for Caroline’s consistently faithful service since 2009, and wish her well in her new endeavor.

In August, Rachel Grivois was hired to be our new staff accountant. Rachel will be responsible for managing the overall functioning of the business office and will be assisted by newly hired bookkeeper, Nick Norton. Both will be part-time employees in the business office.

Rachel is a certified public accountant who brings

a rich experience as a controller and CFO, and has supported a number of small and mid-sized businesses and organizations during times of transition similar to our own. Nick is in the accounting degree program at Husson University. He is entering his 5th and last year in the master’s program. He completed an internship at the accounting firm Baker Newman Noyes in Portland where he worked a full semester in their tax department. Upon completion, Nick was offered a full-time position after graduation in May 2013. Nick came highly recommended by his accounting professor and references.

We welcome them to the BTS community!

Third Century Committee Update

by Gary DeLong, Chair of the Third Century Committee

“We were trained for something that no longer exists” is how a young, competent pastor described her feelings of serving a congregation now that she is a few years out of seminary. Listening to and pondering provocative feelings and ideas like that and many others, some similar and others quite different, play a large role in the work of the Third Century Committee.

We have been listening: to stakeholders, which has included pastors, alumni, and others from across the northern New England landscape, to laity, seminary faculty, denominational executives, and staff from church related organizations. And it includes the thoughtful responses and comments from 147 survey respondents. We have spent quality hours being attentive as a committee to each other, to all

of our “thought-partners” and to the Holy Spirit, who continues to inspire us with confidence that the church is the way God gets God’s work done in the world.

We believe that words such as equipping and supporting faith leaders for theologically grounded and effective 21st century ministries start to help us shape an exciting and compelling mission.

We have listened and now we are under construction laying a keel, shaping the hull, creating a plan, one that will sail. Thanks to everyone who has cared enough to come to summer meetings near and far.

A simple phrase such as “we were trained for something that no longer exists” can be heard in many ways. We hear it as a compelling, even transformational affirmation that for all of us, pastors and laity

alike, learning and preparation must be cutting edge and lifelong. We are committed to being part of the process.

Members of the Third Century Committee include: Mark Monson-Alley, Carla Bailey, Ken Brookes, Gary DeLong (Chair), Allison Keef, Phil Gleason, and Robert Grove-Markwood

Gary DeLong served as the Executive Director of the Maine Sea Coast Mission, a nonprofit serving the islands and coastal communities of Downeast Maine from 1999 to 2010. Prior to this, he was the senior pastor of First Church of Christ in Longmeadow, Massachusetts, where he served for 26 years. He resides on Mount Desert Island and is married to Judith DeLong, a retired elementary teacher in Bar Harbor.

Transition Committee Update

by Mark Sundermann, Chair of the Transition Committee

The Board of Trustees appointed the Transition Committee to oversee the activities related to the transition from a graduate degree-granting institution. This differs from the activities related to daily operations, the business of the staff, and activities related to future plans, the scope of the Third Century Committee. The realm of the Transition committee encompasses all activities related to winding down the legacy institution.

Unwinding the affairs of an institution with two centuries of history is complex and requires great patience and respect. While the human issues and legacy of the Seminary are its primary concerns, the committee is also mindful of the Board of Trustees’ fiduciary responsibility to the institution.

To date the committee has worked with numerous members of the BTS community on a wide spectrum of transition challenges. Initial focus

was on the impact of the transition on people; students, staff, faculty, alumni, supporters, families, and friends. Additional work has been done related to the endowment, archives, library, services, systems, accounts, contracts, agreements, and properties. Every discussion has included addressing the impact of any decision on people (students, faculty, staff and others) and the legacy of the institution.

The committee is comprised of: Board of Trustee members Nancy

Preview: The Upcoming Academic Year

by Rev. Dr. Steven Lewis, Academic Dean



We are about to begin the final year of academic programs at Bangor Theological Seminary. Since 1814, BTS has had a rich history filled with the preparation of ministers and missionaries, social activists, and denominational leaders. Opening Convocations have marked the start of new school years with celebration and expectation. This year Opening Convocation is a particularly important event. It will be the final opening of an academic

Hawes, Ray Phillips, and Mark Sundermann, President Robert Grove-Markwood, Academic Dean Steven Lewis, and Executive Assistant to the President and Deans Adrea Jaehnig.

Mark Sundermann, chair of the Transition Committee, joined the Board of Trustees in 2011 to assist with technology and distance-learning initiatives. Mark spent 25 years in the information systems sector and currently assists non-profit organizations in various roles.

year and it will mark the installation of the eleventh and final president of Bangor Theological Seminary, Rev. Dr. Robert Grove-Markwood.

In the past few years, the seminary has celebrated Opening Convocation at both campuses, Bangor and Portland; however, due to the nature of the event, this year we will hold one celebration in Waterville on Saturday, September 15, starting at 10:30 am. The event will mark the beginning of the school year; faculty will robe and march in along with area clergy, adjunct professors, and trustees. We will also recognize the transition of Bob Grove-Markwood from the interim president to the eleventh president of BTS. President Nick Carter from Andover Newton Theological Seminary will speak to the BTS community on this important occasion. President Grove-Markwood will also have the opportunity to cast his vision for the transition of BTS toward its next stage of life while reflecting his dream for the final academic year.

It would be impossible to articulate

all of the emotions that people are experiencing, as many still struggle to receive the news that BTS will transition into another form. There is much to celebrate and remember, stories to be shared, appreciations to be given. Opening Convocation is the first celebration among many over the next year. Many people have made the seminary what it is. Staff, who are too often overlooked, sacrifice much to make our lives easier. Numerous adjunct professors allow the BTS curriculum to be delivered with quality and a commitment to ministerial preparation. Trustees make hard decisions that are not always popular, but they seek what is best for BTS. Faculty dedicate themselves to working closely with students, not simply to teach material, but to assist students in embracing a call of God on their lives and emerging as prepared pastors to change the world.

Opening Convocation is one way to celebrate all of these wonderful people who make up the BTS community. Please plan to attend and show your support for this wonderful community.

Steven Lewis is the Academic Dean and Professor of Ecclesiastical History at BTS. He obtained his Ph.D. from Saint Louis University. He is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church and has been a consultant and speaker in Germany and the United States on the future of the church amidst the shifting sands of postmodern culture. He is passionate about exploring and charting the intense relevance of Christian expression in the 21st century.

Commencement 2012

Bangor Theological Seminary's (BTS) One Hundred and Ninety-third Commencement was held on Friday, May 18, 2012 at the State Street Church, United Church of Christ in Portland, Maine.

This year's Commencement brought together graduates and their families, as well as faculty, staff, students, alumni/ae, and friends of BTS. It was a joyous occasion marking the accomplishments of the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts graduates and Certificate in Religion recipients. Congratulations to:

Advanced Certificate in Religion and Spirituality

Karen Dresser
Zareen Taj Mirza
Sally Kay Rehm

Master of Arts

Clare Hudson Payne
Sherry Lynn Poland
Rebecca Joyce Sommons
Cherie Sprague Sukeforth

Master of Divinity

Sue H. Brown
Jane Mary Frost
Robin Elizabeth Norcross
Carol Bennett Smith
Shelly Lynn Johnson Snow
Kana Marie Sundblad
Jacquelyn Ann Thornton

Alumni from the Classes of 1962 and 1987 were recognized for their 50th and 25th anniversaries. Special thanks to Rev. Robert Jackman '62 and his wife Patricia who returned for his 50th anniversary.

In addition, faculty members gave out the following student awards:

- Hoyt Hickman Award (Liturgical Leadership): Sue Brown
- Joshua Chamberlain (Portland Service Award): Kana Sterr-Sundblad
- Bangor Service Award: Linette George
- Massachusetts Bible Society (Excellence in Biblical studies): Carol Smith
- Haney Award for Social Justice: Linda Mawhorter, Tom Fales, Dom Barbieri
- Norm Clark Award (Rising senior with outstanding potential for ministry): Jen Curran
- Interpretation (Subscription to Interpretation for 5 graduates): Jackie Thornton, Shelly Snow, Sue Brown, Robin Norcross, Kana Sterr-Sundblad



Congratulations to all!

The BTS community also celebrated with faculty member and New Testament instructor, Dr. Pamela Shellberg, who was recognized for her successful dissertation defense and receiving her doctorate from Marquette University this past Spring.

Heartfelt Congratulations from the President of the Alumni/ae Association

The Rev. Dr. Ken Dale, President of the BTS Alumni/ae Association, delivered these remarks to the graduates at Commencement in May 2012.

On behalf of the Alumni/ae Association of Bangor Seminary I offer heartfelt congratulations to you on your certificates and degrees. Know that there are many who rejoice with you—having shared the experience in this moment as you do today. Your experience of this school and community of fellow students and especially faculty is something that will be with you and part of you in many ways as you continue life's journey.



Rev. Ken Dale congratulates Shelley Snow upon receiving her Master of Divinity degree.

Many of us have heard and endured, admired and been inspired by a number of speakers at the annual convocation in January. Just a few years ago we were blessed by the practical presence of Martin Copenhaver and Lillian Daniels—both of whom are now part of the UCC daily devotions that many enjoy each morning.

When the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association met in March following the announcement of the suspension of degree programs, I was amazed how timely Lillian Daniels' devotional from the day before was. She spoke of a church she served in 1988 and the experience of watching the sanctuary go up in flames. No one was hurt and fire fighters saved the building—though the sanctuary was left gutted. For months afterwards church members volunteered to plow through the rubble and rebuild—everything got washed down and it took over a year. But they wanted it back exactly the way it was. She joked that a suggestion that this might be the time to change the color theme in the sanctuary from maroon to blue was roundly defeated by congregational vote.

Her point was that it would never be exactly the same. "Calamity shapes us and changes us," she wrote, "but we may have some control over how it shapes us

and changes us." This commencement begins the last year of how it has been for BTS. But in June 2013, one year from now, a new, presently unseen and unknown beginning for BTS will take place. It will never be exactly the same—but it will be.

Last year the Alumni Association met and revised its mission statement to read that we will respond to the Spirit to create opportunities to nurture and support alumni/ae. Please know that the Alumni Association of our beloved BTS will be working hard to maintain those blessed ties that bind us together—to celebrate those cherished memories and connections, and help us enter into the next chapter of BTS history. And we welcome and encourage you into that endeavor filled with hope, inspiration, a new vision, and the God who says "behold I am doing a new thing."

Again, congratulations and may you always be aware of God's presence with you as you continue in your journeys of life and faith.

Rev. Dr. Ken Dale is Pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, Maine. He received his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from BTS in 1982 and 1994 respectively.

The 2012 Commencement Address

The Rev. Mark Monson Alley delivered this commencement address at State Street Congregational Church in Portland, Maine in May 2012.

Thanks for the warm introduction—and to you, the graduates, for the invitation to speak today. It is humbling to be invited to speak, in fact, fulfilling the opportunity that was offered to me, but never acted upon, to preach in chapel during my senior year.

Yes, I'm an alum. In preparation for today, as I was thinking about my own graduation, I went to my old, dusty, BTS file in my old, dusty, filing cabinet to see who gave the address at my graduation—and what pearls of wisdom that person may have offered. It was Carl Dudley (Presbyterian clergy, small church ministry expert, Hartford Seminary faculty) but I didn't take any notes, and I'm afraid to say I couldn't tell you what he said. But, I happened to find these checks: a \$10 check made out to BTS that went with my application to seminary, a \$50 check that confirmed my acceptance to the seminary, and a \$1,750 check for my first semester's room, board, and tuition! I'm sorry, graduates. Please don't throw anything! It's good to be here.

Let me ask you to do a little imagining here: in your minds eye, go to the busiest crossroads you know and try to notice everything: all the people, the cars, the buses, the colors, the noises, the clouds, the birds, the spaces.



Though cars and buses weren't present 2000 years ago, this brings to mind for me the crossroads near Golgotha on the day Jesus was nailed to the cross. As part of what happened there, the gospel writer John records this: "Pilate . . . had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' Many of the Jews read this inscription because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek." (John 19:19-20) [Hebrew or Aramaic (the Semitic vernacular), Latin (the official language of the Roman Empire), and Greek (the language of commerce).]

Years ago I was taught that the three languages witnessed the cosmopolitan nature of that particular location—a thoroughfare from one important place to another. In fact, if you travel to Jerusalem today one of the proposed sights of Golgotha is right next to a present

day bus terminal—a crossroads, if you will. What I'm saying is 2000 years ago, at *that* crossroads, there was a lot going on!

It seems in these days that a good description of Bangor Theological Seminary might be "the busiest crossroads" that we can think of. Here we are at a commencement service—a time of great celebration for these fourteen people—from a distinguished educational institution whose days have sadly been numbered. The decision to discontinue offering degrees through BTS has impacted many—in some way, everyone here—and brought us all to a crossroad, where we speak many different languages.

You, *the graduates*, are at the crossroad shouting the language of celebration today! We all yield to the din of your voices—celebrating the completion of this part of your formal education. And the fourteen of you probably have fourteen

different sets of feelings about this day. Joy that you're graduating—while sad about the community that we love—concerned for the future of the underclassmen and -women, the faculty and staff. Anger at the Trustees' decision that was made in February—and maybe even the decision makers.

Speaking in another clear and articulate language at the crossroad is the *faculty*. You whose very lives have been committed to this institution—whether you've been here since my seminary days like Marvin or whether you have barely unpacked your bags like Steve. As one who remembers, before my days in pastoral ministry, having lost a job due to no fault of my own, I have a small degree of appreciation for the position that you find yourselves in today. I can imagine fear and anxiety, anger and concern—and of course, because of who you are, a great degree of pride for the fourteen people we celebrate today.

Another quieter language spoken at our busy crossroad is *our staff*—folks who sometimes seem to have no voice—or no power, at least. Yet from this Trustee's perspective, you and the faculty both have poured yourselves into helping the students traverse the frightening landscape of what it means to attend a school with a short life expectancy. I've heard of story after story of examples where you've gone the second mile for the faculty, administration, even the Trustees—but most importantly, the students. And all the while, your futures are in limbo. Your "language" at the crossroad is truly important!

And while I have no idea how many of our *continuing BTS students* are

here today, your own language adds to the murmur at the crossroad. Will we able to finish our degree at BTS—and, if not, what will be the perils of attending Andover Newton Theological School? Can we do all the work that's needed between now and the end of June 2013? Can we *afford* to pay for all the work that's needed to complete our degrees between now and the end of June 2013? Will we *survive* all the work?

The crossroad gets busier and louder with the added language of our *BTS Alum*. What a shock it was to hear the announcement of three and a half months ago. Bob had given us some kind of warning at the Alumni lunch at Convocation in January, but none of us imagined the magnitude of the changes to be announced soon. One thinks that one's alma mater will be around forever. Our foundation has been shaken. Anger, frustration, confusion, resignation. Our language at the crossroad reveals pain, too.

Trustees. Maybe our language added to the crossroad is the sound of screams from the roller coaster ride which we have taken over the last nine months—excitement of the Presidential search, the arrival of our new Academic Dean, the promise of a challenging curriculum revamping. Oh sure, it was tempered in November by sobering reports from consultants about the state of theological education in general. But then the news of the "hard numbers" at a special meeting in January—numbers that indicated an unsustainable future. Guilt; being forced into a corner; sadness.

The languages don't stop there. There are family/friends/congregations served by students and/or alum.

The cities of Bangor and Portland, Husson University, State Street Church, the Maine Conference of the UCC, other ecclesiastical bodies, even those who had sent letters of inquiry about attending BTS or those who had applied for the position of President of BTS, each of us adds another language to the sign at our crossroad.

It is a busy crossroad, isn't it? While the crossroad at Golgotha contended with three languages, many more languages can be deciphered at *this* crossroad. And while there is joy at this commencement, and the graduation of you fourteen folks, there are other languages that need to be acknowledged and honored as well.

Into this setting let me share Psalm 29 with you. The footnote in the NRSV calls this a "Hymn to the God of the storm." Today, maybe we can call it a "Hymn to the God of the raucous crossroad."

Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name;
worship the LORD in holy splendor.

The voice of the LORD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over mighty waters.
The voice of the LORD is powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

Continued on page 10

The 2012 Commencement Address (continued from page 9)

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl,
and strips the forest bare;
and in his temple all say, 'Glory!'

The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king for ever.

May the LORD give strength to his people!
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

The writer of this Psalm speaks eloquently of the awesomeness of God—in word pictures and writing style and poetry. “But however strong the artistic power of the psalm may be, the artistic power is not what matters most. The most important aspect of the psalm is the religious one... What matters most is...the God who appears in the tumult of the elements and manifests [God’s] awesome glory.” (“The Psalms” by Arthur Weiser, Westminster Press, 1962)

Some have said that this is one of the earliest psalms written, and that it was based on a Canaanite hymn—that it argued for Yahweh’s supremacy compared to the Baal

gods. And while there aren’t many of us here who tend to defer to the gods of Baal, most of us here tend to believe that we are in control, and that our own efforts can achieve our security. After all, many of us here are (or will be in a few minutes) ‘degreed individuals.’ And if it wasn’t the degree, we might talk about age or economic status or nationality or race or gender or sexual identity or, for clergy, the size of the church that we serve. Those of you who are receiving your certificates or degrees today—whether or not you have specific plans for what you will be doing next—might ask the question: after these many years, and these many courses, do I have what it takes? Yah, well—not so much! But you do have the God that it takes! It is the God of glory and strength and holy splendor, as spoken about in the Psalm.

And in the midst of the storm, to this glorious God, the psalmist makes intercession for his or her people, asking God to bestow upon them God’s *strength* and peace. It is strength that we need to let God be god, to help us find the next steps after this commencement, to keep moving on into an unknown future. And it is the *peace* that passes all understanding—the peace that the world cannot give—a peace that may come to us even in the midst of the storm before the last thunderbolt has cracked.

Those of us here today who follow the Christian tradition know about the scene where Pilate ordered the sign to be created and nailed over Jesus’ head. And we know that the cross—that scene—was not the final word. The worst thing was not

the last thing. We know about the resurrection. May all of us who speak languages of pain today experience a resurrection for ourselves.

This God loves you. Hear that in whatever language you are speaking in this crossroad (may we have a Pentecost moment here.) Not because you are so learned or have so much “time in,” or have such potential or have even received a certificate or degree today. Whatever your self-sufficiency, hear the psalm that claims that God is god and we’re not. Remember, in spite of our best efforts, we don’t have what it takes, but we have the God that it takes to make it through this crossroad.

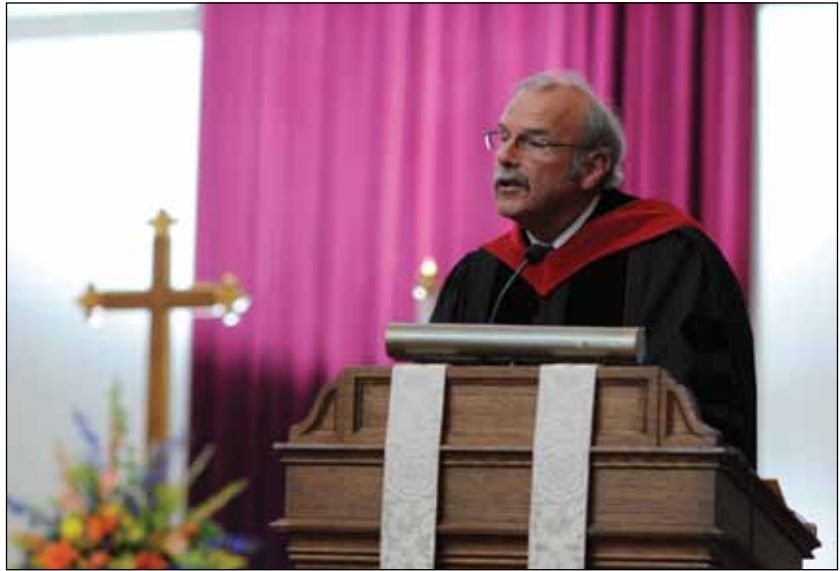
To give us strength,
To grant us peace,
Hear that, and believe. Amen.

The Reverend Mark Monson Alley received his Master of Divinity degree from BTS in 1984. He is currently a member of the BTS Board of Trustees. Rev. Alley is a Full Member of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC), as well as an Ordained Elder in the UMC. Rev. Alley currently serves as Senior Pastor of the UMC in Dover, NH and has previously served as Pastor of John Street UMC—the product of a merger between two congregations in Camden and Rockport, Maine—as well as the Tuttle Road UMC in Cumberland, Maine. Born in South Portland, Rev. Alley is known for his tremendous pastoral experience and presence, as well as his love of Maine and BTS.

Memories & Appreciation of BTS

by Rev. Ken Dale

Being a student at Bangor Theological Seminary was an opportunity for the creation of so many memories and appreciations. Without question one of my fondest memories was the obvious tension between Dr. Throckmorton and Dr. Zeigler. One of them would be leaning toward the existentialist and the other toward the historicist. (O.K. “leaning” may not be the correct word.) I remember taking as many courses as I could with each of them. But then one semester I had them back to back: “The Z” first, immediately followed by “Throcky.” After several weeks of exposure to these different, but both brilliantly presented and convincing perspectives in back to back classes, I asked Dr. Throckmorton after his class if I could talk with him as he was my advisor. We went to his office and I told him that I felt like I was on a fence, with him on one side and Dr. Zeigler on the other. I asked, “Am I supposed to get off the fence and be on one side or the other?” He smiled and said, “No, no, no—it’s much too early to do that! Stay on the fence and get all you can from both sides.” Then he commented that he had the same experience with Bultmann and Barth! There was always much to learn in the different perspectives, even in the tension between. I am forever grateful to both Dr. Throckmorton and Dr. Zeigler for all that I learned over the years with them. They remain with me even today in so many ways in preparations for teaching and preaching.



Then there was the practical side of it all in Dr. Walter Cook. Walter and I became close friends and did some fly fishing together and had wonderful conversations about preaching and being a pastor while either hiking to his favorite spot at Lily Pad Pond or sitting in the canoe fishing. His beloved wife, Merle, gave me his fly rods when he died and I still cherish them. Walter was the one I’d go see to talk when I experienced the frustrations of serving a church when I was in Carmel. He was the only one who would pray with me and he always asked, “Have you been out visiting the folks lately?” If I proclaimed not having time for that, he would tell me that was my problem. “Get out and visit and you’ll feel better about what you’re doing!” He was always right and his wisdom still holds true today.

I will forever be grateful for all that BTS has done in shaping me and preparing me for the lifetime of pastoral ministry I have cherished in so many ways.

Rev. Dr. Ken Dale is Pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, Maine. He received his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry degrees from BTS in 1982 and 1994 respectively.

Want to share a part of your BTS story? Members of the BTS community are invited to contribute their memories and appreciations of BTS in 500 words or less to be included in a future *Open Door*. Please submit your story to Adrea Jaehnig at ajaehnig@bts.edu by November 15.

Savoring the Cup of Memory

by Carol Smith '12

“O Taste and See That the Lord is Good”

(Ps. 34.8)



Thinking back to Commencement last May when I received my Master of Divinity degree, a delightful mess of emotions percolates through me. Now just two months later, as I fuss over my garden and work on my profile seeking a call to ordained parish ministry in the United Church of Christ (UCC), I often think about my time at BTS leading up to Commencement. I anxiously drink in those days once again, leisurely, lingering over their flavors, savoring the cup of memory that is served up with delight and wonder.

As I pour a cup of memory, the anticipation I felt when I transferred to BTS five semesters ago tingles through me. Enrolling in the M.Div. program at BTS was life changing for my family and me. We were apart from each other for half a week every week until graduation. I remember wondering how we would manage this distance learning arrangement—wife and

family in Connecticut and me in Maine. Now, I feel grateful for this time that grew us in unexpected and holy ways.

Sipping from my cup of memory, I feel the welcome and belonging I felt as part of the BTS community. I remember the delight and responsibility I felt being in this sacred place with its history of meeting the needs of the body of Christ, a history of equipping people to be pastors and its heritage of faithfulness and transformation through the Word. I taste again the sweetness and zest of assignments, dialogue, and people that stretched my soul, deepened my faith, equipped my spirit, challenged my understandings, and grew God's call in me.

I savor my generous cup of memories, feeling honored and humbled to have received my degree surrounded by family, friends, staff, faculty, and “so great a cloud of witnesses” that included my parents, grandparents, and past BTS graduates who have gone on before and in whose footsteps I and my classmates follow. Receiving my M.Div. from BTS at Commencement this past May is my personal testimony to God's faithfulness and loving kindness that pursues me always. I have certainly tasted the goodness of the Lord.

Carol Smith '12 is a member of Foster Memorial Church in Springfield, MA where she worships with her family. She has been a Member In Discernment with the Massachusetts Hampden Association of the United Church of Christ (UCC) since 2005. Currently, she is pursuing a call to ordained parish ministry in Western MA and/or Northwestern or Central CT.

Graduation Poem

Written and sent in by Henry C. Wilson, '87 of Hilo, HI

On this day of your graduation.....
I would be proud of you, could I attend.
Would I now know the things I never know,
Could I have watched you come to comprehend,
The wonder of the world in which you grow.

Do not think that I did not think of you.
Imagining the beauty of this day,
For I was at your graduation, too,
Though long ago (3 June 1987) and in a different way.

Life can be full, no matter short or long,
As long as love can fill it with its grace.
And I have felt such pride, and love so strong,
That you will live your life in my embrace.

So of the pride today, I claim my share.
Though I am not, I know that I am there with all of you today.

*Our prayers and best wishes,
Henry and Domwoko Wilson*

What, It's Over?

by Shelly Snow '12

And he said to them, 'Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.'
(Matthew 4:19)

When I came to BTS three years ago, I knew that my time here would not last long. There would be many classes, seminars, late nights, and carbohydrate-filled suppers in the car. Still, when graduation day came I could hardly believe this leg of my journey was over. It was like a ferry ride, not always a smooth one, but as classmates we were all in it together. Maybe never physically laying eyes on one another, some of us with cars and others with backpacks, but all traveling toward a similar destination.

Commencement was a part of the journey for which I kept my suitcase packed with room to spare. Room to remember the faces of all those people walking with me, living with me on this journey. Another opportunity to thank God for the opportunity to be united with others.

I remember processing the details of the ceremony as if they occurred in slow motion. The pews of State Street Church were filled with family, friends, professors, mentors, and strangers. The people in the pews were there for a reason, also. We were disciples. All disciples with different callings. We know that as Jesus spent time with his disciples He taught them to fish. He taught them to minister. Matthew shows us how the disciples left their families, friends, and jobs to



accompany Jesus. Why? To learn, to practice, to question. To observe, to absorb, to heal.

Many of us graduates, like the disciples, had left one sort of routine, setting to soak in Jesus' teaching, in preparation of another. As we leave Bangor Theological Seminary, we are physically leaving our place to go public, so to speak. We are leaving the known and comfort for the unknown. BTS has given us the sacred gift of learning and encouragement to always question and to be authentic. With these gifts, we must go.

Reverend Shelly Johnson Snow '12 serves as Chaplain at the Dorothea Dix Psychiatric Center in Bangor, Maine. She resides in Dover-Foxcroft with her husband, Michael. Currently, Shelly is thoroughly enjoying all that life, and being a new grandmother, has to offer.

Fall Chapel Services

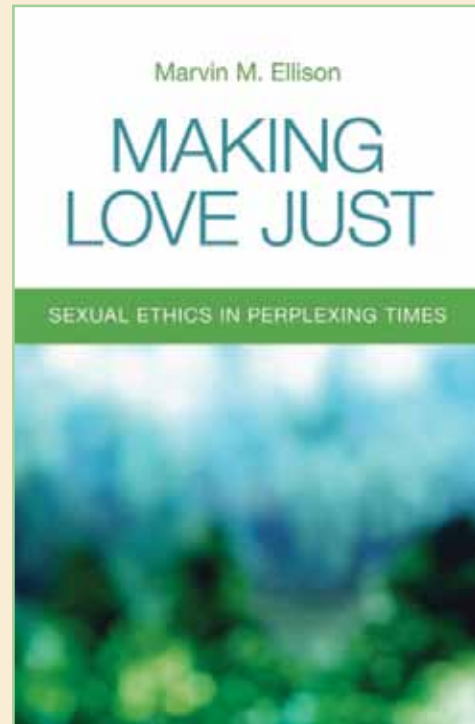
Opening Chapel services will be held on both campuses for Monday September 10 from 12:15 - 12:45 p.m. Chapel will be held every Monday when school is in session. All are welcome!

Grace T. Haines Scholarship Recipients

In addition to providing need-based financial assistance, for the Academic Year 2012-2013, Bangor Theological Seminary is pleased to announce the Grace T. Haines Scholarships recipients. The Haines Trust was established to provide scholarships for deserving students; these scholarships were not dependent on financial need. Degree-seeking students were selected based on one or more of the following criteria: promise for ministry; proven scholarship ability; and/or potential for service to the larger community of the church.

Robert Anderson, M.A.
Madonna Arsenault, M. Div.
Alison Barker, M.A.
Sarah Brobst, M. Div.
Tricia Carver, M.A.
Linda Couture, M.A.
Jennifer Curran, M. Div.
Allison Flaherty, M. Div.
Irvn Gammon, D. Min.
Allison Gammons, M.A.
Linette George, M. Div.
Rachel Girard, D. Min.
Sandra Horne, M.A.
Carolyn Kellis, M. Div.
Catherine Knowles, M. Div.
TJ Mack, M.A.
Jeffrey McIlwain, M. Div.
James Mello, M.A.
Carolyn Neighoff, M. Div.
Sharon Piantedosi, M. Div.
Cathy Genthner Plaisted, D. Min.
Sammi Ripley, M. Div.
Robert Ross, M. Div.
Maureen Steer, M. Div.
Patti Stratton, M. Div.
A. Mavoureen Thompson, M.A.

Congratulations to Professor Marvin Ellison whose latest book, **Making Love Just: Sexual Ethics for Perplexing Times**, was released this summer! This marks Marvin's tenth book. Please join us in expressing our heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to Marvin for another wonderful contribution to Christendom and the world.



Ethical reflection about sexuality is increasingly controversial, complex, and conflicted. After centuries of conflicting messages from the tradition, Christians are understandably confused about how exactly the good news pertains to sexuality. Using a series of provocative questions; Marvin Ellison, a pioneer in contemporary Christian rethinking of sexuality and sexual ethics, attempts to increase readers' skills and confidence for engaging in ethical deliberation about sexuality. Redrawing the conventional, rule-based sexual morality, often rigidly and legalistically applied or broadly ignored, entails transcending fear and shame to redraw the sexual map, he argues. Ellison works to affirm a more relationally focused ethical framework, from which to deliberate about premarital and extramarital sex, marriage and divorce, homosexuality, contraception, abortion, spousal abuse, and sex-education. Students and all adults will welcome this book for enabling their personal clarity, approach to relationships, and mindful participation in respectful moral debate.

Doctor of Ministry Candidates 2013

This group of Doctor of Ministry students began their three-year program of study together in the Fall of 2011. The D.Min degree is designed to emphasize a collegial model of practical inquiry and theological reflection with both Seminary faculty and professional peers. In addition to on-campus study and regional seminars, D. Min candidates engage in study and theological reflection with a team of diverse lay leaders in their ministry context.



The D.Min. candidates have finished their first two years of seminars and are now ready to plunge into the project year, with the expectation that all of them will be graduating June 2013.

They are pictured here at the end of their June Intensive: Back row: Roger Daum, Irv Gammon, Beth Hoffman, and Tim LeConey. Front row: Rosalee Glass, Rachel Girard, Cathy Genthner Plaisted and Professor Marvin Ellison.

Please Give to the 2012-2013 Bangor Fund

While there are changes ahead for the Seminary, BTS will continue to be a fully functioning and graduate degree-granting theological school for the 2012-2013 academic year. Your gifts to BTS Bangor Fund will help our students, our seminary, and the churches and communities in which our graduates serve and will serve. Your support makes a tremendous difference!

Building a Recovery Bridge

by Jim Mello, M.A. student

My first encounter with the disease of addiction began in childhood. If my life is a three-point sermon it is this: I am a child of addiction and mental illness, I am a child of the 1960's (which didn't help: I inhaled) and I am a child of Recovery (Redemption.) This history and the path that God has brought me on have led to a deepening conviction that it is crucial to bridge the gap which exists between the Church and people struggling with recovery from the impact of addiction.

It distresses me when I realize that millions of people will explore spiritual options in some stage of their recovery and the Church is only marginally aware and poorly equipped for this task. It is estimated that 1 in 5 people suffer from an addiction and that they will painfully impact five or six people close to them. This means that our pews and communities are full of affected others. I dream about equipping the church for this right-here-at-home mission field. We need to learn the language and needs of this population that lives not only right outside our church doors, but often silently suffers within the gates of the Sanctuary itself.

I've been in the addiction field since 1999, and currently am an LADC (Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor) and a CCS (Certified Clinical Supervisor.) Along with owning a small substance abuse counseling



agency in Farmington, I have been a clinical supervisor in methadone maintenance since 2005. Building on my own spiritual and recovery journeys, with the encouragement and support of my clinic director and supervision colleague, two years ago we began to offer basic spirituality groups to the patients in the Discovery House clinic in Bangor. This fueled the burden to establish a bridge between my two worlds of recovery and spirituality, and led ultimately to my entering BTS.

This Spring my advisor approved an Independent Study project that consisted of integrating spirituality into recovery in three settings: the two Discovery House Methadone clinics I work in, my counseling agency in Farmington, and an Adventist church in Auburn. The results were challenging and rewarding. Even though people with opiate addiction are seen as the lepers of the addiction treatment world, their spiritual hunger and hard-won

spiritual insights have been amazing. Like the early alcoholics, dubbed "frustrated mystics" by Carl Jung, they continuously displayed courage, faith, and deep insight into the spiritual dimensions of life and recovery.

At my agency, an interfaith group still meets and over time has deepened into a true support community based on solid spiritual principles. While defining and exploring what spirituality means to us, we share our beliefs, practices, and experiences in a safe environment. A few of the group members are healing from wounds suffered in their faith communities of origin and are learning to apply healing grace to their recovery. For me, this is a microcosm of what faith communities can become.

The church community setting proved to be challenging. Only a handful of people were able to admit their need and seek healing from wounds related to addictive histories, either their own or those

whose addictions have affected them. Across the denominational spectrum this same story is repeated: only a small portion of the church body sees a need, while the larger portion of the church tends to see the problem as “out there.”

It is this challenge that I encountered in the church setting that deepens my desire to help the Church to see and understand the great need for ministry in this area. It will require

a fearless look at our lack of honest, open, non-judgmental fellowship. My convictions were reinforced by a book we read for our recent summer intensive, “Inward Journey, Outward Journey.” The author articulates what I have felt for a long time—namely, that the church needs to be “engaged” with ourselves, with God, and with others in an authentic way to be effective in the 21st century. It is the first encounter, engaging with our (inner) selves that often

is not part of church culture, but is essential to this work, because that encounter with the inner self lies at the heart of the recovery process. It’s here that the bridge to the recovery community is crying out to be built.

Jim Mello is planning to finish his M.A. by next June. In the meantime, he works in the addiction field by day and follows the muses of poetry and music by night.

Being Lutheran in a Non-Lutheran World

by Carolyn Neighoff, M.Div. student

It was during a high school field hockey game during the fall of 2005 that an acquaintance approached me to chat about seminary. She had heard that I was considering a call to ministry and wanted to compare notes as she was also considering attending seminary to explore her call to ministry. We had a brief conversation about our particular denominations, she being Methodist and me being Lutheran. We decided in that moment that we would go to Bangor and look into attending Bangor Theological Seminary.

I am a lifelong Lutheran who grew up in the Baltimore area of Maryland where there were lots of Lutheran churches. The Lutheran Churches worked together to provide Lutheran opportunities for their young people. Since moving to Maine 41 years ago at the age of 20 I have been an active member at two different Lutheran Churches in Maine. Many people here in Maine tend to look at me quizzically when I mention I’m Lutheran. I’ve often attempted to

explain what a Lutheran is, and what we believe. It seemed strange that the closest Lutheran Church was almost an hour away. It was a somewhat isolating feeling. After a decade in Maine I decided I needed to go ecumenical. As the founder of Bread of Life Ministries I realized it couldn’t be a Lutheran project like it would be in Baltimore. Rather, I needed to reach out to the other churches in the area for support. They received me warmly and the result was a number of churches of different faiths reaching out to those who needed it.

In the spring of 2006 I took my first class at BTS and enjoyed it very much. I continued to take one class each semester while I was an administrator in the Augusta School Department. At times I wished there were more Lutherans at BTS, but I found it educationally and spiritually enriching to be among a diverse group of people who have as much passion for God as I do. I took all my New Testament classes with David Trobisch in my first few years at BTS because he

is an ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Lutheran and I wanted to take as many classes as possible from him. It was while taking one of his classes that I met Karen Indorf, another ELCA non-traditional student. It felt good to get to know her and to discuss Lutheran theology and activities outside of class.

David Trobisch moved on and I never anticipated that the next New Testament professor would be another ELCA Lutheran. Pamela Shellberg arrived at BTS about the time my advisor, Ron Baard went on sabbatical, so I asked to have Pam as my advisor. She has been so helpful in guiding me in an ecumenical world, but on a Lutheran path. My one disappointment is that I had already taken my New Testament classes and will not experience her as a teacher.

As I looked at the list of classes for spring of 2009 I noticed that Elaine Hewes, an ELCA Pastor

Continued on page 18

in Bangor and a BTS graduate, was teaching the "Introduction to Preaching" class that semester. I quickly enrolled in the class, being somewhat apprehensive about giving a sermon in front of a preacher of her high caliber. I subsequently did my mentored practice at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Bangor with Elaine as my mentor. In the fall of 2011 I took the "Introduction to Worship" class with Elaine.

Elaine and Pam have been good friends and mentors to me. Without my experience at Bangor Theological Seminary I would never have gotten to know them. They have helped guide me toward ordination in the ELCA. Dr. Shellberg, as she now is formally addressed, went with me to Springfield to meet with my candidacy committee. The hours in the car spent chatting about life and discussing my path toward Lutheran ordination were invaluable.

I am amazed when I reflect on my experiences at BTS. I am amazed that a UCC seminary would offer

a Lutheran experience within the ecumenical experiences of classes, chapel, retreats, and convocations. I am amazed at the love and support of all the staff and faculty. I am thankful for all I have learned from people from so many different walks of life.

If you asked me what it's like to be a Lutheran in a non-Lutheran world, I'd say that it's been one of the best experiences of my life. It's opened my eyes and ears to the beliefs of other people. One of the most transforming moments in my seminary life was listening to Richard Snyder's sermon at one of the retreats in Augusta. His words spoke to me in a powerful way, not as a Lutheran, but as a Christian who is wondering where God is leading us all. He encouraged us not to just rely on the way things were in the past but to move forward. "Now the interfaith nature of our world is challenging us to perceive new ways of understanding what the sharing of the good news might mean." He went on to give Biblical and modern day examples where God has made a way, when we think there is none.

That is the future for BTS and for each one of us: to open our eyes to the "new thing" that God is doing in our world.



Carolyn is a married mother of two and grandmother of four. She lives in Augusta with her husband Jack. This month, she will officially retire from a career in education as a teacher, coach, and administrator. Recently, Carolyn was honored with a community service award from the Kennebec Chamber of Commerce for her community service work with students and for being the founder of Bread of Life Ministries, a soup kitchen and homeless shelter in Augusta.

Call for Nominations – Distinguished Alumni/ae Award

The Alumni/ae Association of BTS gathers for its annual meeting during January Convocation each year. In addition to the regular business of the meeting a Distinguished Alumni/ae Award is presented. This award is given in recognition of lifetime achievement in ministry, specialized ministry, or service to the seminary. Nominations for this recognition come from seminary alumni/ae.

At this time, we encourage alumni to nominate someone deserving of this award. Please complete the Distinguished Alumni/ae Nomination Form on the BTS website under the Alumni/ae & Friends section and return it to Rev. Larry Zimmerman, P.O. Box 245, Holden, ME 04429 or e-mail to lzdraycott@aol.com. Nomination forms and letters must be received by November 1, 2012 to give the Executive Committee adequate time to consider and make a decision.

Course Reflections: “Judaism, Christianity & Islam: Why Can’t We All Just Get Along?!”

by Reza Jalali and Rabbi Hillel Katzir

What are a Muslim and a Jew doing teaching at a Christian seminary? Well, separately we have taught Introduction to Islam and Introduction to Judaism; and last Spring we co-taught a course we call Judaism, Christianity & Islam: Why Can’t We All Just Get Along?!

The fact that Bangor Theological Seminary invited us to teach these courses is, in our eyes, a great step forward in interfaith relations in Maine. For many centuries, our three religions—all of which trace back in one way or another to Abraham—have had some problems getting along. We believe that, to a great extent, this is due to ignorance about each other’s beliefs and practices. The opportunities we have been given by the Seminary to dispel that ignorance can only be to the good!

The course that we co-taught this past Spring gave us both the chance to share our own faith traditions and focus with our students on some of the things that have kept those traditions apart. Among the questions that we posed to the students were the following: What is there about each faith tradition that might create tensions with the



of these customs as not in keeping with their own values in these areas;

—The early Christian doctrine of supersessionism (a.k.a., replacement theology), which has been repudiated by some—but not all—Christian denominations, has caused a great

deal of harm in Christian-Jewish relations; and conflicting claims to ultimate truth have created tensions over the centuries between Christians and Muslims.

On the other hand, the most hopeful answer we found to the second question was:

—All three religions teach a form of the Golden Rule. If each of these traditions could get its adherents to truly live by that, there is no question that this would be a better world for all.

Just the titles of a couple of the books we used as texts say a lot about our

others? What is there about each faith tradition that might overcome tensions with the others?

Some of the answers we came up with to the first question were:

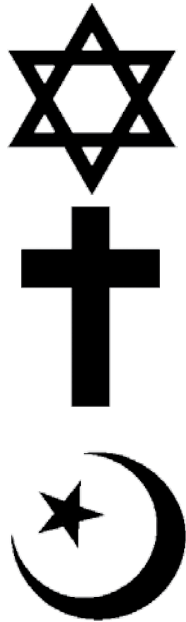
—The extent to which Judaism focuses on claims to the Land of Israel can cause tensions, particularly with Islam, but also with Christianity regarding holy sites;

—Many local customs that have become identified with Islam, such as how women are treated in some countries with Muslim majorities, can cause tensions with Christians and Jews who see some

The fact that Bangor Theological Seminary invited us to teach these courses is, in our eyes, a great step forward in interfaith relations in Maine.

Continued on page 20

field of study. In *When Religion Becomes Evil*, Charles Kimball, a Baptist minister and professor, poses the rhetorical question: Is religion the problem, or is religion the solution? His answer is yes, and yes! Anyone who has studied history knows that many things have been done throughout the centuries in the name of one religion or another that are difficult or impossible to square with the Golden Rule. But when people really do practice what their faith preaches, religion can be a tool that prevents people from doing bad things to each other.



The title of Rabbi Brad Hirschfeld’s book says it all: *You Don’t Have to be Wrong for Me to be Right!* Religious belief seems to have become a zero-sum game: only one of us can have the true path to God; if I admit that your path is also a legitimate way to connect with God, then I must be admitting that my path is somehow at least partly wrong. Our response: God is bigger than any box we try to put God in! If we say that there is only one way to God, aren’t we in effect limiting God? And isn’t “limiting God” a contradiction in terms?

The response of the students who took the course was truly heartwarming. One of the students said that she has been waiting her whole life for this course! Other students expressed surprise about

some of the things we taught them about Judaism and Islam; but also about Christianity from our own perspectives. One of our goals—to get our students to think about their own faith tradition in a new way—was definitely achieved.

One topic that has served this purpose in an important way is the Crusades. To most Christians, the Crusades seem to be ancient history, but to Jews and Muslims they are still an open wound. For Jews, it is difficult to forget the Crusaders, with the cross on their dress, violently wiping out whole Jewish communities in the Rhineland before they ever even got out of Europe to the Holy Land.

For Muslims, the Crusades were an early manifestation of European colonialism and Christian expressions of superiority over Islam, phenomena that were repeated in the 19th and 20th centuries in many Muslim-majority countries by the European colonial powers, all of them with Christian majorities.

A couple of years ago, Rabbi Hillel was challenged on this topic by a student in his Introduction to Judaism course. After some discussion of the atrocities committed by the Crusaders against Jews in Europe, one student asked if Rabbi Hillel was looking for an apology for those atrocities from the Christians in the class. The answer was no, that the students weren’t there, and were

not personally at fault. But what Rabbi Hillel did want them to do – and this is something that we all must do – is to own what has been done in the name of our own faith traditions in history. We do not have the right to ignore those things just because they cause us discomfort. On the contrary, we must struggle with them and try to understand how they could have happened, so that they will not happen again. For example, Jews must struggle with God’s commands in the biblical Book of Joshua to wipe out whole populations; Christians must come to terms with such historical eras as the Crusades and the Inquisition, and the extent to which Christian anti-semitism led to an atmosphere in which the Holocaust could happen; and Muslims must deal with things that have been done in the name of Islam, such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

We are both very grateful for the opportunities we have had to teach at the Seminary, and hope that similar opportunities may arise in the future, whatever the direction the Seminary takes.

Shalom/Salaam/Peace,
Reza Jalali and Rabbi Hillel Katzir

Rabbi Hillel Katzir is spiritual leader of Temple Shalom Synagogue in Auburn. Reza Jalali is Program Coordinator in the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs at University of Southern Maine.

In Memoriam

The Reverend Harold L. Shepard '53

The Rev. Harold L. Shepard, 84, of Forbes Lane, died unexpectedly at home on Thursday, April 19, 2012. Born in Sturbridge, MA, he was the son of Charles H. and Ethel L. Dorous Shepard. He was a graduate of Mary E. Wells High School in Sturbridge, the University of Maine in Orono, and BTS. He was also a Navy veteran.



During his theological education, Rev. Shepard served the Monroe Community Church and the Monson United Church. Ordained in 1958, he pastored the Madison Congregational Church and later retired from the Westbrook-Warren Congregational Church after 27 years of service. He had also been an associate pastor at North Windham Union Church UCC and most recently served the Highland Lake Congregational Church in Westbrook.

Rev. Shepard was predeceased by his first wife, Nancy Rae Taylor Shepard; his daughter, Lois Whitlock; and a stepson, Timothy Richter. Surviving him are his wife of 29 years, Lois K. Brown Shepard of Windham; son, Charles P. Shepard and wife Cindy of Westbrook; stepson, Jon Richter and wife Brenda of Gray; four grandchildren, two step-granddaughters, and two great-grandchildren.

The Reverend Malcolm H. Miner



The Reverend Malcolm H. Miner, 91, of Koloa, Kauai, an Episcopal priest and a Navy veteran who served in World

War II, died in Wilcox Memorial Hospital. He was born in Holyoke, MA. Reverend Miner was a non-graduate member of the BTS class of 1945. He lived an extraordinary life with a rich and vibrant ministry as a pastor, teacher, writer, father, grandfather, husband, and healer. He is the author of three books: *Healing Is for Real*, *Healing and the Abundant Life*, and *Your Touch Can Heal*, and has lectured on the ministry of healing throughout the world.

Father Malcolm Miner was beloved by many on the island of Kaua'i and far beyond. He was known for his compassionate care, healing touch, loving embrace, engaging smile, affirming laugh, wonderful sense of humor, inclusive theology, quick wit, exuberant spirit, and wise words. Malcolm Miner was one of a kind and truly lived out his calling as the person that God created him to be. He loved deeply and lived fully.

Malcolm is survived by Imogene Hagensen Miner, his wife of 23 years; three children; and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Rev. Richard E. Ryder, Jr.



The Rev. Richard E. Ryder Jr. died May 9, 2012, at Piper Shores, Scarborough. He was born April 25, 1933, in Hartford, Conn., the son of Richard E. Ryder and Lois Fralic Ryder.

He was raised in West Hartford, Conn., and graduated from Hall High School in 1951, from Amherst College in 1955 and Harvard Divinity School in 1959. Beginning in 1958 he served United Church of Christ, formerly Congregational Christian, pastorates in Newtown, Conn., Presque Isle and All Souls Congregational UCC, Bangor, 1965-1977. He was president of Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ, chair of the board of trustees of Bangor Theological Seminary, moderator of Penobscot Piscataquis Association of Maine UCC Conference and a corporator of United Church Boards of Homeland and World Ministries. In 1977 he became pastor of First Congregational Church, UCC, Chappaqua, N.Y., and served there until 1987, when he became the senior pastor of Seabreeze United Church, Daytona Beach, Fla. Later he served interim pastorates at First Congregational Church, UCC, Camden, and First Congregational Church, UCC, Springfield, VT.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Susan Goff Ryder; four daughters,

Continued on page 22

Carole Ryder of Cumberland, Lois Ryder Judge and her husband, Hugh Judge, of Cumberland Foreside, Beth Ryder and her husband, Michael Tierney, of Greenwich, Conn., and Laura Ryder and her husband, Peter Weis, of San Francisco; 11 grandchildren; and his sister, Lois Reed and her husband, Donald, of Southwick, MA.

The Reverend William S. Choate, Sr. '58



William Sawtelle Choate, Sr. '58 was born on June 30, 1931, in Philadelphia, PA and passed away at his home in Fresno, CA on Monday, May 14, 2012. After graduating from high school in Searsport Bill attended Bowdoin College before joining the U.S. Navy. After one year in the service he received an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Following his three semesters there, Bill left the academy and returned to his family's home in Searsport to commence his studies at BTS.

In 1955 Bill met Gretchen Haimbach and they were married in 1957, taking up residency in Jackman, ME where Bill was serving as student pastor of the Moose River Congregational Church. He later served Maine churches in Caratunk and the Forks, and upon graduation from the seminary in 1958 he was called to serve the Congregational Church in Newport, ME. In 1961 he resigned as pastor and returned to school in order to complete a B.A. in English at the University of

Maine, Orono. Bill taught English at Maine Central Institute for one year before he and his family moved to Fresno to resume teaching. After two years at Central Union High School, he moved to Bullard High School. His successes as a teacher included developing a bible course for high school students at Hoover High and the Experienced Based Career Education at Edison High. He garnered many local, state, and national awards for his teaching and leadership skills.

In 1989 Bill retired from teaching to work as a fundraiser for Witnessing Ministries of Christ. He accepted an appointment to the California State Senior Legislature to pursue his interest in senior issues. He was an officer in the Fresno/Madera Area Agency on Aging, treasurer for six years of the Sunrise Rotary in Oakhurst, receiving special awards for his service to their causes. He taught Adult Bible Study and for a short time he served as part-time Associate Pastor of the Community Church of Oakhurst. In 1997 he was called to serve as pastor/teacher of Grace Community Church, UCC in North Fork where he continued to serve until his retirement in 2007. In 2006 he and Gretchen were named Citizens of the Year in North Fork. A lifelong teacher and pastor, Bill leaves Gretchen, his loving wife of 55 years; his daughter Eleanore; his sons, William, Jr. and Aaron; and five grandchildren.

The Reverend Phyllis C. Dodd '79



The Rev. Phyllis C. Dodd, 92, died Monday, May 21, 2012, in Hartford, Conn. She was born Feb. 13, 1920, in West Hartland, Conn., daughter of

Bertha Lawrence Hitchcock and the Rev. Philip Harrison Dodd.

Phyllis attended Randolph-Macon Women's College, Lynchburg, Va.; Savage School of Physical Education, New York City; received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Beloit College, Beloit, Wis.; a Master of Science degree from the University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn.; and a Master of Divinity degree from Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor. After retiring from teaching, Phyllis was called at age 55 to the ministry and began studies at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, but later transferred to Bangor Theological Seminary, Bangor, where she completed her studies. Upon graduation Phyllis served churches in northern, central and southern districts of Maine.

Phyllis is survived by her husband, Harry and two sisters and a brother and her companion of 35 years, Carlene F. Bessey of Palmyra.

Opening Convocation & Presidential Installation

**September 15, 2012 | First Congregational Church – UCC Waterville, Maine
10:30 a.m. with luncheon to follow**

Opening Convocation marks the official beginning of the academic year and this year will also include the installation of President Robert Grove-Markwood as the 11th President of Bangor Theological Seminary. Opening Convocation for both campuses will be held at the First Congregational Church – UCC in Waterville, Maine. All students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and friends are invited to attend.

Please RSVP by September 6 to Patricia Annis at pannis@bts.edu if you are able to attend.

Alumni, faculty, staff, and students, please send us your news to share with the BTS community!

Please send to Bonnie Wright at bwright@bts.edu.

Thank you!

BTS Community News

Rev. Robert A. Jackman '62 was ordained 50 years ago (June 22, 1962). He served the Eastport Congregational Church as a student (1960-62), Webster Congregational Christian Church, Havre de Grace, MD (1962-69), First Congregational Church (United Parish of Upton, MA (1969-81), Lakeview Congregational Church, Worcester, MA (Interim -1982-83), and Baiting Hollow Congregational Church, Riverhead, NY (1983-2002) from which he retired. He is presently living in North Brookfield, MA with his wife, Patricia.

Rev. Martin W. Perry '62 was ordained to ministry 50 years ago (August 5, 1962) at the Days Ferry Congregational Church, Woolwich, Maine. He served the Days Ferry Congregational Church as well as the Edgecomb Congregational Church in the Maine Conference. Rev. Perry also served as Associate Minister at Grace Congregational Church, Framingham MA for 4 years and then served as minister to the Park Congregational Church in Worcester MA for 32 years from 1967 until his retirement in 1999. He is currently serving as an Annuitant Visitor for the UCC in Central Massachusetts.

Rev. Glenn E. Swope '60 was ordained to Christian ministry 50 years ago. He served churches in the Maine Conference in 1956-58 (Amherst-Aurora Congregational, while a student at Bangor Theological Seminary), 1958-1960 (Milford Congregational, again as a student), 1968-70 (Tory Hill & North Congregational, Buxton), and 1981-96 (High Street Congregational, Auburn, from which he retired).

Prayers and blessings for the following members of our BTS Community on their ordination in the Episcopal Diocese of Maine on June 23 at the Cathedral Church of Saint Luke:

To the Diaconate – Richard Rasner

To the Transitional Diaconate – Suzanne Roberts '11

To the Priesthood – Gary Cyr '10 & Laura Peckham '08

James A. Parr '09 was ordained on June 3 at the North Windham Union Church.

Congratulations and blessings to Rev. Bill Imes and his wife Judy who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in August.

Shelly Snow '12 was ordained on Sunday, July 29 at the Dover-Foxcroft Congregational Church.

Sarah L. Pringle-Lewis '08 was ordained and also installed as Associate Pastor of the Hammond Street Church in Bangor, Maine on June 9.

January Convocation 2013

January 14-16, 2013 | Gracie Auditorium – Bangor, Maine

January Convocation is an exciting event for the extended BTS family to gather in worship, prayer, and theological reflection. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Belden C. Lane will be one of our presenters at Convocation in January 14-16, 2013.

As a Protestant member of a Roman Catholic faculty at Saint Louis University, Dr. Lane is a Professor of Theological Studies, American Religion, and History of Spirituality. He is the author of *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality*, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*, and most recently, *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality*.

Dr. Lane's teaching explores the history of spirituality and the connections between geography and faith. The relationship of Christian spirituality to the wonder and beauty of the natural world is close to his heart, whether seen in the earth-sensitive practices of Celtic spirituality or Calvin and Edwards' perception of the world as a theater of God's glory in the Reformed tradition.

*More to come!
Please mark your
calendars to attend!*



On the Cover - Class of 2012

Front Row (L to R) Carol Smith, Kana Sundblad, Shelly Snow, Sally Rehm, Karen Dresser, Jane Mary Frost

Back Row (L to R) Zareen Mirza, Sue Brown, Jacquelyn Thornton, Clare Payne, Sherry Poland, Robin Norcross, Rebecca Sommons