Inside: letter from the editor, words for friends, heaps of pictures from seminary life, reflections from students on what they’ve learned in seminary and favorite moments, and so much more!
This issue of Kairos is dedicated to K.C. Ptomey: an amazing pastor, teacher, and friend.

“That’s my opinion and it oughta be yours!”

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

A Note of Thanks...........................................................3
(Barrett Abernethy)
A Year in Pictures.........................................................4
10 Things I Learned in My First Year of Seminary.........................6
(Kelly Shoenfelt)
Why Honduras.............................................................7
(Danita Nelson)
Words for Friends.........................................................8
(Molly McGinnis)

Student Loan Help........................................................9
(Gordon Blackman)
Community Orchestra Practice........................................10
(Holly Swift)
My Favorite Seminary Moment.........................................11
(Chris Dunn)
Kronos.................................................................15

(Kairos Logo designed by Jo Kretzler)
The summers following my first two years of college were spent working at a church camp. Many of you know this scene of tie-dyed shirts, energizing camp songs, and hot dogs on Friday all woven around a theme of Christian fellowship. The last night of that second summer, after all the campers had dispersed back to homes and the comforts of their own beds, we camp counselors spent that night in one of the cabins. All gathered around one another, we retold the same stories and shared a few new ones well into the wee hours of the morning. There was a sense of finality to it all. We were saying our goodbyes by reliving the stories that had shaped our friendships and molded us into people called to enjoy the summer with a diverse and wonderful collection of God’s children.

I find myself very much in this same place as I end my time as your student body president. It has been a wonderful opportunity. In many respects, I feel as if you gave me the privilege to be your pastor, and that this was my “first call.” I have tried to be present to your concerns and needs and available to you as this year has progressed. It has been a joy to witness all that we have done, together. From the First 500 last September to the QA Worship Service just a few days past, we have represented this institution well and more importantly have represented what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. I am excited for the wonderful opportunities that lay before you soon-to-be seniors and middlers. You have so many gifts, passions, and abilities to promote life on this campus and beyond these walls. Rest in the comfort of your gifts and allow those to shine through. There will be stresses along the way, but see how those can only enhance your ministry in the future. Know that you were called here for a purpose.

As Braegan and I get ready to head back to Alabama, I look forward to a “cabin talk” with you. I look forward to reliving those stories with you, because you have left an indelible mark on my life and I will take your wisdom with me into my ministry. What a gift seminary has been. What a gift you have been. Blessings be upon you in your journey.
A Year in Pictures

Currie Dorm Residents make a community dinner.

Roberta Parrillo and Kelly Shoenfelt at Spring Prom.

Stephen Cottingham, Jo Kretzler, and Joe Tognetti prepare for a class presentation.

Students enjoying the first annual APTS Crawfish Boil.
Layton Williams, Amy Wilson-Stayton, Molly Atkinson, Cindy Eschliman, and Emily Beghin at Prom.

Andy Lemlyn, John Harrison, and Lindsey Becker in Currie.

Cindy Eschliman, Hailey Malcom, Jo Kretzler and friends participate in the Color Run.

Members of the Holy Spirit Squad (Sarah De La Fuente, Michelle Ruiz, and Jo Kretzler) cheer on APTS at Manna.

Nancy Hinson and Betsy Wilbur dress up for Polity Bowl.

Seminary children playing baseball in the Hicks House lot.
10 Things I Learned in My First Year of Seminary:

1) God is bigger than I ever knew God to be.

2) Community is awesome. I love being around friends and getting to know all sorts of people. (This may be more awesome for those of us who have a place to go outside of the community when we get tired of being here....if you ever need an escape, my parents live 45 minutes away and will gladly host seminarians-who-need-to-escape.)

3) No one warned me about the “Junior 15” I would gain from consumption of candy and desserts at various functions and the SAV Suite.

4) I now require 2 cups of coffee each morning, whereas I used to not require any.

5) I should have gotten vision insurance because seminary reading and computer screens have killed my formerly 20/20 vision. I have not read this many books in my entire life, nor have I ever enjoyed school books this much.

6) It is possible to write very effective papers, sermons, etc on the patio at the Crown & Anchor while enjoying sunshine and a beer. Have I mentioned how much I have learned from being on a student’s schedule instead of 8-5?

7) People aren’t who you think they are at first glance. I have enjoyed getting to know people and seeing all of the awesome and unique people whom God has gifted for ministry.

8) Don’t be afraid to ask for help and don’t be afraid to show weakness. This has been a harder lesson for me this year, but one for which I am very grateful and am still working on.

9) Serving the needs of friends and neighbors in this place is remarkably similar to serving God’s people wherever we will be called. Listening, laying aside your own needs, prioritizing, scheduling, acting, and listening a lot more....

10) Seminary is weird. And fun. And stranger than I ever imagined, but even more wonderful than I ever hoped for.

Cheers to a strong finish to the year -- whether it is your first, second, third, or tenth!
Actually, that’s not the only question prompted by a recent extended weekend mission excursion to Central America. Other concerns revolved around “why me?” and, “why now?” The journey was an effort organized by Agricultural Missions, Inc., an 83-years young ecumenical initiative dedicated to advocacy for family and small-scale farmers around the world. Our hosts were the Garifuna, who also invited other first peoples or indigenous groups, from Honduras to their ancestral lands for a gathering to discuss and develop strategies around a wide range of issues. About 200 people were expected to attend; instead, nearly 400 – including many youth – represented six of the nine Honduran first peoples.

The apparent growth industry in Honduras is security. This beautiful country is incredibly militarized. The wealthiest residents hire armed guards, the drug traffickers (narcos) employ armies of paramilitary guerrillas, and the national police greet arrivals to the airport with automatic weapons at the ready, dressed in battle fatigues. The advantage of countless road blocks was the opportunity for our transport to drive slowly enough to take in the lush tropical landscape.

Why Honduras?

The Garifuna are of African ancestry, the descendants of Africans shipwrecked onto the Honduran barrier islands in the late 1700s who intermarried with Arawak peoples (the “Indians” Columbus claimed to ‘discover’). Over the course of time, they settled in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, and Belize. Despite colonization by the Spanish and British Empires, the Garifuna were regarded as able defenders of the Honduran coastlines, and received title to huge land grants in response to their service. Today, in disregard to international (United Nations) support of the claims, their ancestral lands are being acquired by multinational industry interests, narcos, and government. The gathering included workshops designed to equip participants with history, information, and strategies to defend their rightful claims to land, address effects of climate change, and pursue sustainable development.

There is much to be learned from these proud, hardworking, and dignified people. An appreciation for communal living and collective economic effort was reinforced by living among them for only a few days. The importance of water as a valued resource deserving our intentional care was enhanced by the experience. Every morsel of food we ate was from sources harvested, raised or caught, and prepared over open flame (even freshly-baked bread). Three times each day, men and women filled our plates with healthy, tasty, and delicious meals. Fresh fruit and vegetables abound, with hibiscus teas served as a featured beverage. The coffee, sweetened with raw sugar harvested by small-scale farmers, was divine. Any suspicion of pity for an impoverished population is dispelled by well-earned respect for the richness of simple living.

The decision by Agricultural Missions, Inc. to advocate and stand in solidarity with people oppressed by formidable adversaries is noble. A document recounting what was witnessed by our delegation is being sent to members of Congress, the United Nations, the U.S. Secretary of State, and faith-based organizations supporting AMI efforts – including the Presbyterian Church (USA). Great thanks to the APTS community for your prayers and support of my participation in this life-changing experience.
For this last issue of Kairos, I decided to do something a little bit different with my column. At the closing Manna each year, there is a segment for Senior Wills, during which the seniors bequeath things to other students. In honor of this tradition, I am giving the gift of words to our graduating class. I’ve compiled a list of all my favorite seminary words. You know what I mean. All those words you didn’t know existed before you started school, that your spell check still doesn’t recognize, and that make people beyond the seminary bubble say, “HUH?” So, my dear senior friends, these words are for you:

Pericope (noun) An extract from a text, esp. the Bible. What’s wrong with the word excerpt?

Ecclesiology (noun) Theology as applied to the nature and structure of the Christian Church. See also: fancy words to make you sound real smart and stuff

Ecclesiastical (adjective) Of or relating to the Christian Church or its clergy. Ok, so how is this different from the other one again?

Eschaton (noun) The final event in the divine plan; the end of the world. That thing that keeps coming up, but we never seem to get around to it.

Reformed (adjective) Not even the dictionary knows what this really means. The quintessential catch-all word.

Liturgical (adjective) Of or relating to liturgy or public worship. For everything there is a season... and an appropriate liturgical color.

Perichoresis (noun) Mutual indwelling of the Triune God. Whether it’s described by Cindy, Dave, or Bill, this is probably the most beautiful theological concept you’ve ever heard. Own it.

Self-Care (noun) The provision of what is necessary for the maintenance, health, welfare, and protection of someone or something. Also known as an excuse to go to the Local or binge watch Downton Abbey.

Exegesis (noun) Critical Interpretation or explanation of a text, esp. of Scripture. Ever heard that joke, “your epidermis is showing?” Well, don’t let your exegesis show!

Winsome (adjective) Attractive or appealing in appearance or character. Really, Ted? Stop trying to make “fetch” happen! It’s not going to happen
Brendon McQueen and Steve Pomerantz, co-founders of Tuition.io.com, were students who graduated college with significant student loan debt. McQueen had acquired $120,000 in debt for his education at Columbia University across 12 loans and seven different loan servicers. McQueen found no services that would help him coordinate repayment of his loans, so he and Pomerantz, a graduate of Northwestern University, established Tuition.io.

Tuition.io is a free service that quickly and easily imports information from student loan sources (government or private), and generates charts that help graduates decide how best to pay their loans. Tuition.io provides a breakdown on loans, showing students how much they will pay over time. It also displays the available payment options for each loan. A review of comments about the website shows a high amount of positive feedback for both the design and the overall organization of the site. “People also love our highly visual approach,” said Pomerantz. “Specifically, we get a lot of very positive feedback on our slider tool that lets you see how your situation would change if you added a little to your monthly payments.”

The popular website LifeHacker.com has featured tuition.io and said: “College tuition accounts for an enormous amount of debt, and getting out from under isn’t easy—especially when your loans come from a variety of different sources. Tuition.io solves that problem by consolidating them into a powerful web interface that helps you manage your debt and find the most effective plan to eliminate it.” (http://lifehacker.com/5992378/tuitionio-consolidates-all-your-student-loans-for-simple-easy-management) Life Hacker went on to say that one of the important features is the ability to utilize the service without having to manually enter data. Furthermore, Life Hacker gave high marks to tuition.io’s “incredibly versatile interface” that lets the user customize views for one or a combination of loans. Tuition.io allows you to view balances, interest rates, payments and the current status of a loan without having to leave the website. The website also informs the user about available options including regular repayment, loan consolidation, special grants and loan forgiveness programs, and payment postponement.

Overall, Tuition.io provides a very comprehensive set of tools for you to easily track and manage your student loan debt, all available for free. What’s not to like about that?
Sophie, our conductor, lifts her hands, but we keep on talking about the traffic, the weather, and our problems. Sophie points and Ibrahim, who left his parents in Iraq to chase hope for his unborn child and speaks little English – but trusts music plays our tuning A on the grand piano, first softly, then louder and louder, until finally we adjust our instruments. Sophie turns to our composer whom she has always loved – some foreigner whose name we can’t pronounce who sits and closes her eyes eager to hear this symphony she dreamed for us. Sophie lifts her hands again, and gracefully inaugurates the beat. Pete and Paul hit each other with their drum mallets, And giggle while they make their own noise with the cymbals. Half of us are flat; the other half are sharp We all stare at our particular notes – each playing our parts the way we imagined them alone. Not one of us follows Sophie. Finally, our composer weeps in disgust, yelling words we understand to be something about our utter disregard for music. She throws her score on the floor and heads for the exit, her back turned toward all of us. That shy, awkward boy who has never left the side of his brother and sister surprises all of us. He follows her. “Don’t take our music,” he pleads loudly – he does not stutter this time. We all feel grief we do not understand for this symphony unheard. Sophie points to Josh, our composer’s beloved son who sits in First Chair. Josh plays beauty, because he keeps his eyes on Sophie whose ears and heart know music. In that single moment we hear that Josh’s simple melody inspired each accent and rest. Our composer rejoins us, Her faith restored in music and ours begun. The youth takes his place with us again – grinning ear to ear. We lift our instruments and begin to be. Sophie sings music through us from these splendid pages. We know and love our composer now. We are musicians rehearsing our great spring concert.
CONGRATULATIONS SENIORS!

My Favorite Seminary Moment

Chris Dunn is an M.Div, Senior from Baltimore Presbytery in the PCUSA.

It is extremely hard to pick just one moment. The "Great Tie Off" between Whit and Ted during our junior year at manna was pretty epic. KC Ptomey calling out a student (who will remain nameless) in "Pastoral Celebrations" for having all masculine pronouns in the Psalm that was read and in the sermon that was preached was a teaching moment that I’ll never forget. The fire alarms going off during the Polity Ball because of the smoke machine in Stotts and waiting 20 minutes for the fire department to show up and turn off the alarm was pretty memorable and hysterical.

But the moments that I will miss most are those times when I was stuck in a classroom for hours studying with my friends. We would be delirious from the amount of information that we were trying to cram in our heads and just about everything seemed funny after a while. The next day sitting in a quiet room writing essays I could hear the jokes and laughter in my head and I couldn’t help but smile to myself as the information came pouring out of my head and through my fingers to the page thanks to the silly mnemonic devices and crude jokes of my classmates. Love and thanks to each of you for being a part of this journey.

Laureen Suba and Chris Dunn dress up for Tacky Day during Spirit Week.

President Wardlaw enters Stotts with an entourage during the Great Tie-Off in 2011.

The class of 2013 work together on the ropes course at new student orientation in 2010.
One of My Favorite Seniors...

I would say that Alex Cornell is one of my favorite Senior...why you ask...well early on Sunday morning I go to the computer lab in McCord to finish getting my stuff ready to go do my Children’s gig over at St John/San Juan...and who is there finishing up his sermon...Alex! A future pastor after my own heart...writing, working, waiting on the Spirit to move all the way up to the last minute...I will miss our early Sunday morning conversations.

JoAnne Sharp began at APTS in fall of 2012. She is currently on a leave of absence.

What Did You Learn in Seminary, Cam?

What did I learn in seminary? I learned that the simplest answers are always the best. And cake always and still makes everything better. – Cam Burton, graduating senior
Seniors Lindsay Conrad and Meagan Ludwig.

Chris Dunn, Stephen Robinson, Sheila Sidberry, Suzette Johnson, and Jo Kretzler getting baptized in the Jordan River.

Shan Bagwell started as a student at APTS in 2010 and would have graduated this year. Shan passed away tragically in December of 2010.

Lauren Vernon, Becca Weaver, Meagan Ludwig, Kristy Click, and APTS alum, Sudie Neisen, at Becca Weaver’s wedding.

A cohort of former and current APTS students and Vice President for Student Affairs and Vocation, Jackie Saxon, at APTS alum Bart Smith’s wedding.
Michelle Ruiz’s APTS Memory Map!

Michelle Ruiz is a senior, M.Div student and from Plains and Peaks Presbytery in the PCUSA.

My Memory Map
By Michelle Ruiz
# Table of Contents*

IT to Reveal New Laser Disc Player ................................................................. 1

Suzie Park: Great Flood “Definitely” Happened ............................................... 1

Barton Creek Mall Santa Waits 2 Hours To Sit on John Alsup’s Lap .................... 2

Bill Greenway Doing “Surprisingly Okay” After Running Over Squirrel ............... 3

David Johnson’s Latest Sermon Just A Series of Facebook Updates ....................... 3

Layton Williams on Facebook statuses: “You Mean Other People Read Those?” .......... 4

Chris Dunn Tattoos Clerical Collar on Own Throat ............................................ 4

Ruth Elswood Tired of Being Called a “Redcoat” .............................................. 5

Confused Parker Zimmerman Upset ‘50 shades’ Isn’t Feminist Theology ............... 5

“You mean I read all that for nothing?!”

Paul Hooker To Narrate PCUSA Book of Order on Tape .................................... 6

Laura Westerlage Lifts Flipped Car to Save Trapped Child ................................. 6

Then goes ahead and does four more reps “Just to Get a Pump”

Jen Lord Spends Entire Sermon Texting ........................................................... 7

Barrett Abernethy Contemplates Untucked Shirt ................................................ 7

Kurt Gabbard To Announce New “Neo-Polka” Solo Album titled, Security Alert .... 8

Jensen Spends Entire Sabbatical Practicing Stand-Up Routine ............................... 8

Dean Cole Approves New Class on Defense Against the Dark Arts ..................... 9

SSW Head Football Coach Pleads No Contest to Burning ................................. 10

Performance Enhancing Incense at Last Year’s Polity Bowl

From Pulpit, Alex Cornell Requests Extension From Local Congregation ............ 11

“Can The Organist Play Like a 20 Minute Voluntary?”

Zoe Eschliman Recruits Other Seminary Pets into Local Gang .......................... 12

Students Afraid to Venture Outdoors

* These headlines are parody headlines meant to be funny (a la The Onion). No offense is intended, but if you are offended please accept the editor’s deepest apologies and feel free to blame Alex Cornell.
Inside: letter from the editor, words for friends, heaps of pictures from seminary life, reflections from students on what they’ve learned in seminary and favorite moments, and so much more!