A short while back, a colleague—a president of another Presbyterian seminary—sent me a note. In the note, he explained that he had preached the previous week at a Presbyterian church in Florida where two former parishioners of mine in Atlanta had been visiting while on vacation. Recalling how I used to encourage people to be sure to find a church in which to worship, even when on vacation, these good people had scrawled a note on the back of an offering envelope there in that church in Florida and had given it to my fellow seminary president—hoping, apparently, that a note from him to me, with their own note enclosed, would count as sufficient proof that they had taken my encouragement to heart. Their note—the note within the note—ended with words to this effect: “We will remember you, and we pray that you will remember us.”

I have been thinking about that note—not just as a welcome personal word from two former parishioners to a former pastor, but, in a larger sense, as a word from the church to the seminary. “We will remember you, and we pray that you will remember us.”

I sense that their commitment, that plea, is being profoundly spoken to the seminary in our time, and from throughout the church. And, Lord knows, we need to remember each other! In our tradition, the church and the seminary are two essential elements in an ecosystem, after all. It is in the local church, most often, that the pilgrimage toward the seminary begins. An encouraging word is spoken by a Sunday school teacher, or an elder sponsor in someone’s confirmation process, or a youth pastor, or any of a number of others; and something purposeful starts reverberating in a person’s heart that sends them, sooner or later, to seminary. Wherever this journey begins, and in whatever of a thousand routes this journey takes us, the point is that not one of us got to the seminary altogether by ourselves. Every one of us is indebted to somebody, or to a collection of somebodies, who have helped us discern a call from God.

The church remembers the seminary in multiple ways—through prayer, through encouragement, through disciplined financial gifts and planning; but, most significantly, through claiming its own role in that ongoing ecosystem whereby one generation of theological students after another gets help in hearing a call and figuring out what to do about it. Will you keep this in mind as you see someone in your midst whose destiny might depend, in part, upon your word of encouragement?

Meanwhile, know that we will remember you, and we pray that you will remember us.

Theodore J. Wardlaw
President
Cover: Inspired by the Chapel rose window and the celtic cross, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary’s new logo also symbolizes the interwoven-ness of our connectional church. Without the circle of support formed by the many churches and denominational bodies that are our partners in the work of theological education, this picture would be incomplete and our mission would be impossible. To paraphrase Paul’s letter to the Philippians, “we thank God every time we remember you because of your sharing in the gospel.”

Illustration by David Gambrell

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The theological schools of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) no longer receive funding from the basic mission budget of the General Assembly. Churches are asked to contribute 1% of their operating budgets to the fund, which is then distributed to the seminaries.
Echoes in the Temple
Called by God through the voice of the church
Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

—Isaiah 6:8

by David Gambrell

Isaiah was in the temple, attended by seraphs and hemmed in with the fabric of God’s robe. For Moses, it was a burning bush, perhaps the biblical equivalent of a neon sign. Abraham and Sarah were visited by strangers in the heat of the day. Hannah heard her call in a pastoral conversation with Eli. Paul saw the light on the road to Damascus.

How does God call leaders for the church today?

The liturgy for the service of ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reminds us that vocation begins with baptism, where we are chosen and claimed for the service of Jesus Christ. For most pastors, however, it’s a long journey from the font to the pulpit, with only the occasional neon sign for directions. Who supports them and guides them along the way? How do they continue to hear God’s voice through the din of competing claims and choices?

Another clue from the liturgy for ordination: we are “called by God through the voice of the church to enter upon ministry
of Word and Sacrament.” Today’s church leaders—lay people and pastors alike—shoulder the responsibility for identifying, encouraging, nurturing, and supporting the church leaders of tomorrow. To be sure, the call to ministry originates with God and God alone; but are we not called to echo God’s voice to the future ministers in our midst?

Austin Seminary President Emeritus Jack Stotts’s essay “A Theology of Vocation,” helps to clarify this point: “It is the people who are called, prior to the individual. The people who are called are a people who have been prepared to discern the call and to respond. That is what we mean by ‘providence.’ God has provided for the people to be ready to hear and to see, to discern God’s presence among them.”

Stotts explains how the church is a “mediating agent” for God’s call to individuals: “The church becomes God’s subordinate calling agent in the world, God’s mouthpiece. It calls all people to receive the gift and to participate in the ministry. The church does so, it is hoped, by its own life of worship, community, and world construction—its activities in the world. And one way is by calling leaders for its life.”

The community of faith that extends God’s claim through the water of baptism is called, over and over, to remind its members of God’s purpose for them, through worship, through Christian education, through mission, through fellowship and love. And when that community recognizes particular gifts for ministry, it is called to help its members cultivate those gifts for service to the church and world and seek creative and relevant ways to share those gifts with others.

You might compare Austin Seminary Director of Vocation and Admissions Sam Riccobene’s work to water divination. He’s looking for prospective seminarians, but more than that, he’s seeking springs, fountains, reservoirs—churches and communities with “living water”—the spiritual resources to sustain the candidates for ministry in their care. Riccobene compares life before and after seminary to a river: “Students flow out of churches and into churches, out of service and into service to others.”

A significant part of Riccobene’s vocation is helping people in congregations realize how influential they are in the lives of fellow members—particularly those with a call to ministry. In his travels to visit churches, colleges, presbyteries, and pastors around the country, Riccobene challenges them: “Have you ever thought, ‘That person would make a good pastor? Do you ever ask the question, ‘Have you considered seminary?”

Furthermore, Riccobene gives them specific guidance on identifying promising pastors, culled from the experience of leaders in the fields of theological education and preparation for ministry. These five identifying characteristics of good candidates for ministry were proposed by Melissa Wiginton, director of the Fund for Theological Education’s Partnership for Excellence: 1) an inner life, 2) a sense of wonder, 3) an appreciation of ritual, 4) “connectionality,” and 5) engagement for healing the world.

According to Evelyn Hwang, associate for resourcing committees on preparation for ministry with the National Ministries Division of the PC(USA), there are currently 164 Presbyterian congregations (out of 11,200) with three or more inquirers or candidates for ministry under care. The church with the largest group is University Presbyterian in Seattle, with a total of twenty-seven. Austin Seminary junior Crista Gregory spent fourteen years in that congregation before coming to seminary. “Even though it’s a large church,” she explains, “there is a kind of creed that every member is a minister. This empowers the laity to be involved in ministry. Everyone is significant and has gifts to contribute.”

No doubt this environment had a profound effect on Gregory. The church’s pastors also played an important role in cultivating her call. “I had a couple of pastors who were very influential in my decision. They said, ‘You have great gifts for ministry.’ They have affirmed that all along the way.”

Historically, it is the case that strong pastoral leader-
ship has been an important factor in identifying future pastors. When Prescott Williams, emeritus professor of Old Testament languages and archaeology, arrived in 1959, he discovered that, every fall, four pastors consistently sent students to Austin: Jack Bennett, Joe Brown, James Allen Smith, and Arch Tolbert. What was it about these four very different ministers that inspired people to consider following in their footsteps?

“All of them wore their pastoral identity comfortably, with integrity and conviction,” Williams remembers. “They had the same voice when they were preaching. The ministry wasn’t something they put on and took off with their robe.” The people with whom they came into contact couldn’t help being swayed by such an example, Williams concluded. “They didn’t know it, but they were being given opportunities to consider becoming ministers. The call is contagious.”

Carl McCormack (MDiv’95), pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Harrison, Arkansas, and former president of the Austin Seminary Association, was one of the many people Jack Bennett influenced. “I was number twenty-five,” McCormack is quick to say. “He was a companion, helping me through the discernment of my call. I told him I wanted to do more in the church, and he said ‘Let’s see what God has in store for you.’ Next thing I knew I was in Austin at a Prospectus Weekend.”

McCormack has passed on Bennett’s legacy, by identifying and nurturing pastoral candidates in his own congregation. He got to know Brett Hendrickson when the young church member was a junior at Columbia University. “Brett was already thinking about vocation,” McCormack remembers. “I tried to talk to him about what it meant—and what it meant to me.” Hendrickson graduated from Austin Seminary last year with the class of 2002, and is now co-pastor, with his wife, Alex, of a church in Lebanon, Kentucky.

Of course, the work of churches in supporting a candidate for ministry does not end with that person’s first day of seminary. “If the church calls a leader,” Stotts writes, “and says to this person, ‘I think you should consider the ministry,’ that person must understand that she or he can depend on the calling community.” Being supported and surrounded by the community of faith is, for the ministerial candidate, perhaps even more important during the years of seminary and through the ordination process.

Senior Matt Miller knows what a difference that kind of relationship can make in a student’s seminary experience. “We miss our church terribly,” he says. Miller and his wife, Marie, are members of Central Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado, where Seminary Trustee Hugh Williamson is a member. “My home church has been incredibly supportive. They’ve been so generous—I’ve had as much financial assistance as anyone could ask. I got to preach there, and our daughter Grace was baptized when we were home for the summer after Greek.” Miller will graduate this May, but Central Presbyterian Church has already identified another candidate for ministry among its members who will begin in Austin Seminary’s Master of Divinity program in the fall of 2003.

Strong relationships between churches and seminaries are essential for keeping this vital connection. “The seminary needs the church,” says Austin Seminary President Theodore J. Wardlaw, “certainly to do all the things the church has done in the past, to be generous and to help fund what happens here, but maybe more than anything else, the church needs to get really involved again in the vocationally imaginative work of inspiring, encouraging, and supporting the people whom the church discerns to have the gifts and talents and skills for ministry.”

God’s call—the same voice that has, through the ages, summoned men and women for service and leadership—will continue to summon people for ministry in the church and world. We the people of the church must continue to respond to that call, watching for the work of the Spirit, discerning and affirming God’s gifts, and echoing God’s voice to those who will lead us into the future.
A new voice for a new century
Even before taking office on November 9, Austin Seminary’s ninth president, Theodore J. Wardlaw, was hard at work getting to know faculty, students, and other constituents. As he prepares for his inaugural on March 28, Wardlaw reflects on the journey from pew to pulpit to the presidency.

What role did the church play in helping define your personal identity?
I grew up in a family in which church was the center of our lives. My whole family, as far back as I can go tracing the connection with my ancestors, have all been either Presbyterian ministers or Presbyterian elders. So there is this strong sense of church being part of not just my immediate family, but there in my gene pool, and I am encouraged to see that it’s the same way with my children—they think that church is just something we do.

How did the church guide and support you as you followed the call to become a Presbyterian pastor?
When I was growing up, every Sunday morning at Rock Spring Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, there was a man named Frank Oerting whose job it was to give a stick of chewing gum to every child who came in the front door of that church. And what that stick of chewing gum said to me was, “As you are, you are accepted and loved and welcome here.” So that’s my first experience with church, just to feel celebrated. And not as a child of the minister, but just as a child. Period. And it was also in numerous places and from the lips of numerous people the encouragement, “You know, you ought to think of being a minister.” I can recall an unbroken line of people who said that to me, and, again, not because I was that special, but because these churches, I think the church at a certain time in the past, must have felt more invested with the enterprise of ministry. It knew that its job was, in part, to be thinking about the next generation of pastoral leadership and to encourage people who felt led to be that. So, I got that kind of message. And when I, indeed, felt called to investigate seminary, it was from the same church where that fellow had stood in the narthex handing out chewing gum, that the Fellowship Class committed for the four years I was in school to send $100 a quarter to Union Seminary toward my education. So in ways like that there was this powerful sense of investment on the part of a number of people. The support that I felt in the church was financial, it was encouragement, it was prayer, the sense that you are a part of us and we are investing in you. And I just wish that would be the experience for every soul who goes to seminary. To have somebody to be serving, in a sense as the “balcony people,” who watch and cheer. And now, in a real sense in my life most of those folks are literally in the balcony; they’ve died and have become part of the communion of saints.

You considered becoming an academic, going to Yale for another degree after seminary. What changed?
There was a lot of anxiety and fear around the whole sense of the unknown. I was leaving a form of ministry that I knew something about and moving toward a paradigm where everything would be new and different. But the enduring thing was to be a representative to the seminary on behalf of the church and to the church on behalf of the seminary. I think it’s worth noting that Presbyterian seminaries seem less reluctant than they have been at other times to look for their leadership to people who are not necessarily academicians but who are practitioners, and I think there must be some unspoken sense on the part of theological education, at least in the Presbyterian Church, that it wants to establish more profound connections with the life of the church. So being able to come and help that happen is one of the exciting things about this job.

What is similar about the two jobs?
In both you leave at the end of the day just begging forgiveness from God for all you didn’t get done. They both require leadership, whether that gets done in a faculty meeting or a session meeting, from the pulpit in the Chapel or on a Sunday morning in the sanctuary. Both require you to be an ambassador to different arenas. To me they both require a certain amount of courage and they both have a certain amount of lonelines. I think that in both places I am essentially a pastor. People in this setting don’t expect exactly the same contract that they do in the parish, but I’m already discovering that so much of what I’m getting into here turns around trying to understand and love and relate to people.

How would you describe the relationship between the seminary and the church? What does each need from the other?
They are part of the same ecosystem, and a lot of that ecosystem is under serious renegotiation right now. The...
the whole phenomenon of denominationalism as we have known it is up for grabs in a way that hasn’t been in memory. There’s a greater sense in our polity that a lot of it is broken and needs fixing. And there are all kinds of solutions for how to fix it: Some people would say let’s try harder to make it the way it used to be. Other folks say let’s reinvent it from the ground up. Some say let’s do away with the judicatories, what we need are healthy congregations. So a lot of that system is broken, but what to me is clearly not broken is the church as it’s expressed in general at the congregational level and as it’s expressed in the seminary. Whatever happens ultimately to our structures, what is still needed is educated leadership for the churches. Leadership that is both educated, in the best sense of that word, and trained, in the best sense of that word, to provide direction to the churches in a new era. And in return, there is the sense that if the churches don’t continue to encourage people in the way that I felt encouraged into the ministry, then who in the world is going to do that?

How will you try to convince the churches?
The thing that I enjoy doing the most when I go out and preach is, whatever else they may have planned while I’m there, I ask the host pastor, “Would you please find some time for me to meet with people whom you can identify who either have an interest in seminary, or who, in your sense, ought to be thinking about it.” I preached in December at St. Stephen’s in Fort Worth, for example, and I asked one of the pastors to set up that kind of meeting. And in the hour between the first service and the second service there were eleven people in a classroom ready to meet with me and talk about seminary. Two of them were sixth graders and one of them was a guy in his early sixties, and everything in between. We had a great conversation and I considered, even for those sixth graders, that I’m playing a role in funding their theological imagination for serving the church.

You’ve been described as a “bridge builder.” What sort of role should the seminary take in the struggles of the denomination?
I don’t think the seminary needs to be identified as carrying water for a party of the church. I do think that the seminary can have a role in laying out kind of a playing field within the bounds of which a conversation before the church ought to take place, and inviting, from time to time, the players of that conversation together into a context that is prayerful and generous and hopeful and is not partisan nor confrontational. Sometimes I think the toxicity of some of the conversations in the church today may, in great measure, be a result of the seminary’s abdicating that role.

Do you have some specific examples of how that might happen in this seminary?
Take one of the issues that is a source of new anxiety in the church, that is the issue of the person and work of Jesus Christ. I think we’ll make more headway on this issue if seminaries can, as some of them have already been doing, have a colloquium on Christology and invite people who have contributions to make to that discussion from a wide variety of starting points. Let us play the role that academic institutions have played in the church at their best, of setting a table and giving people a chance to come to that table and struggle with each other and, hopefully, come to higher ground with each other. I would hate to see a seminary become captive to a more partisan take on these issues because then its sense-making redemptive power is diminished.

OK, first impressions: how would you characterize this seminary you find yourself leading?
I think it is fundamentally healthy. It has a strong financial foundation, laid brick by brick for over a hundred years by multiple generations of people. It has a strong sense of commitment to its original charter of training and supplying ministers to the Southwest. It has a fabulous faculty who are great scholars and who deeply love
the church and it shows. There are places where people probably fuss, and with some good cause, about how detached seminaries are from the life of the church, but that’s not the case here. And I can tell as I start knowing them, that we have a very fine student body—how talented they are and what wonderful experiences and contexts they come from, how much they care about the church and about being servants of the church. And on top of that, the campus is so pretty. I love the live oak trees, about as wide as they are tall. I love the St. Augustine grass. I love the way in which this place is positioned at the edge of the largest residential university campus in the country. And the way it’s positioned in this very exciting city. All those things I was initially struck by and the more I get around, the more that’s confirmed.

**Considering the number of preaching engagements on your calendar, it appears that the biggest difference between your being a seminary president and a pastor is the frequent flyer miles. What’s your agenda for the first year?**

Simply to be in front of as many of this seminary’s traditional constituency as possible. And to listen. And to represent.

**What will you be looking for in new faculty hires?**

I’ll be looking for excellence in scholarship. And for a commitment to the church. I’m not interested in faculty who don’t have an appreciation for, in terms of their own personal commitment, the life of the church. And the sense that they really love what they do, the whole teaching/learning covenant with students.

**This spring you’re co-teaching the “Introduction to Preaching” course with Carol Miles and Scott Black Johnston. How do you like it?**

I really love it. It is thrilling. I agree with my friend Tom Long—here’s a guy who’s been teaching preaching all of his adult life, and apparently he has never tired of being in on that first moment when that first-year student stands in the pulpit and struggles for the word of gospel to say aloud. What a privilege it is to be in on that.

**You were head of alumni giving for a successful capital fund drive for Union Seminary and benevolent giving was up when you left Central. What is your “theology of stewardship”?**

I really do love the role of asking for money for things that I believe in. And there are people out there in the church who have on their hearts every day the importance of continuing to give of their bounty, providing back to the church. For instance, I never will forget one of my members in Atlanta, someone of means, to whom I went one day with a significant need—to buy a new bus I think—and I took him to lunch and I had this carefully planned speech, and I said something to the effect of, “Would you be willing to think about prayerfully considering the possibility of examining what you could do to help in the task of...” I had all the qualifiers. Finally I got around to the thing I was asking him for and he just looked at me and said, “Sure.” And he wrote me a check for $50,000 right on the spot. And then he went on to say, “I feel that I have been blessed with far greater abundance than I ever expected, and in my mind, none of this belongs to me. It’s all God’s. I don’t even mind paying taxes. Because I believe I’m part of a larger civil contract, and part of my job is to be a player in that because of the means I’ve been given. So, I’m always happy to entertain a request like this, because I believe it’s a privilege to give.”

I’ve found that here, people whom I meet, even when I’m not asking them for money, tend to tell me something about their gratitude to the One who has given them so much and this obligation and deep joy they feel in giving to something like Austin Seminary.

**Austin is known as the live music capital of the world. What’s in your personal record collection?**

First off the Dixie Chicks (my women—all three of them—have turned me on to the Dixie Chicks) and the acoustic heroes of my youth like Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young, Joan Baez, and Joni Mitchell; then Bruce Springsteen—the Boss. I like McCoy Tyner and Miles Davis. I love Bach and Handel and Mozart, organ and choral music; while in Atlanta I gained an appreciation for black gospel music. Kay and I got introduced last summer to the Flatlanders, who opened for a Keb Mo concert. Someday soon, I want to scope out whoever’s playing in Luckenbach!
Where in the church ...

Sleep in on Sunday? Not likely. The scholars of the Austin Seminary faculty are also pastors, elders, preachers, and teachers on the Sabbath. According to Timothy Lincoln, director of Institutional Effectiveness and official keeper of Seminary statistics, during the 2001-2002 academic year, the faculty preached and led worship off campus two hundred twenty-seven times; they taught in congregational settings an additional three hundred nineteen. In a show of solidarity with the faculty he now leads, President Wardlaw has already accepted thirty-four invitations to preach.

In addition to their full-time Seminary teaching responsibilities, Professors John Alsup, D. Thomason Professor of New Testament Studies, and Salatiel Palomino-López, director of the Hispanic Theological Institute, weekly tend their flock of parishioners at Sunrise Beach and El Buen Pastor Presbyterian Churches, respectively. Professor of Church History Ellen Babinsky and Associate Professor of Liturgics Stanley Hall are parish associates at Genesis Presbyterian Church. And every week, Lewis Donelson, professor of New Testament, and William Greenway, assistant professor of philosophical theology, lead their long-standing Sunday school classes at Central and University Presbyterian Churches.

Turn the page to find out where the Austin Seminary faculty will be this spring.
JANUARY

5 Teach, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Cindy Rigby
6-9 Teach, Princeton Theological Seminary Institute for Youth Ministry, Mt. Hermon, California, Carol Miles
11-12 Teach, First Presbyterian Church Annual Seminar, Granbury, Texas, Kathryn Roberts
12 Teach, Austin Mennonite Church, Whit Bodman
13 Teach, “The Church in Asia, Africa, and Latin America,” University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Arun Jones
15 Teach “Pluralism in America,” St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Denton, Texas, Whit Bodman
19 Attend dedication of the new sanctuary, First Presbyterian Church, Kerrville, Texas, Ted Wardlaw
22 Teach, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Arun Jones
22 Teach, General Assembly Redevelopment Conference, Dallas, Texas, Cindy Rigby
23 Speak, Wednesday night gathering, First Presbyterian Church, Midland, Texas, Ted Wardlaw
23 Teach, Pastors’ School, Wichita, Kansas, Cindy Rigby
23 Lead a colloquium of pastors and elders, Tres Rios Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church, Big Spring, Texas, Ted Wardlaw
26 Teach, United Christian Church, Austin, Whit Bodman
30-February 2 Attend annual meeting of Presbyterian seminary presidents and board chairs, Santa Barbara, California, Ted Wardlaw

FEBRUARY

1 Teach course on worship, Mission Presbytery Lay Leadership Institute, Agape Dome, David Johnson
2 Teach course on Islamic theology, University Presbyterian Church, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Whit Bodman
2 Teach “The Church in India,” Northwest Hills United Methodist Church, Austin, Arun Jones
2 Teach “A Theological and Sociological Slant on Marriage,” Peace Lutheran Church, Austin, Tim Lincoln
3 Teach, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Cindy Rigby
7-9 Deliver keynote addresses, “Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Call to Discipleship,” Synod of Mid America’s Youth Vocation Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, Michael Jinkins
8-9 Keynote Speaker/Preacher, Faith Presbyterian Church’s 30th year anniversary celebration, Sun City, Arizona, Cindy Rigby
9 Teach, Faith Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ted Wardlaw
10 Teach, “Comparing Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,” Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Whit Bodman
16 Teach, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Cindy Rigby
17 Lead Mission Presbytery Educators’ and Pastors’ Retreat, Mo-Ranch, Cindy Rigby
23 Teach, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ted Wardlaw
24-26 Teach, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Cindy Rigby
26 Lead weekend retreat, First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas, Lewis Donelson
26 Lead workshop on Islam for the Lay Licensed Ministers of the United Church of Christ, Burton, Texas, Whit Bodman
27 Speak at a gathering of clergy and educators, University Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Ted Wardlaw
28 Deliver charge at installation service: Mission Presbytery Meeting, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Austin, Michael Jinkins

MARCH

1 Lead pastors’ workshop on Islam, New Covenant Presbytery, Houston, Texas, Whit Bodman
1-2 Attend Mission Presbytery meeting, Mike Miller
2 Teach, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ellen Bakinsky
2 Speak at Christian Educators’ Appreciation Banquet, First Presbyterian Church, Georgetown, Texas, Andy Dearman
2 Teach, “You Shall Utterly Destroy Them: Violence in the Old Testament,” Westlake United Methodist Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
2 Teach, Canyon Lake Presbyterian Church, Canyon Lake, Texas, Whit Bodman
2 Teach, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Stan Hall
2 Teach, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Cindy Rigby
5 Teach, Austin Mennonite Church, Steve Reid
5 Teach, Ash Wednesday Service, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
6 Teach, Ecumenical Lenten Luncheon series, First Presbyterian Church, Blanco, Texas, Mike Miller
7 Teach, Pines Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church, Texarkana, Arkansas, Ted Wardlaw
7-9 Teach and teach “Praying the Psalms,” Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church, Spanish Fort, Alabama, Steve Reid
8-10 Teach and teach Sunday School, University Presbyterian Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Meet with Presbytery of South Louisiana Committee on Higher Education, Mike Miller
9 Teach, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ellen Bakinsky
9 Lead Lenten series, “Wisdom’s Musings: Qoheleth’s Questions for When Life is Out of Control,” Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
11 Teach, St. John’s United Methodist Church, Austin, Arun Jones
12 Teach, Lenten Service, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, David Johnson
12 Teach, Lenten series, “Life from Death, Order from Chaos,” Parkway Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi, Texas, Kathryn Roberts
13 Lead pastors’ workshop on Islam, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, Whitt Bodman
Teach “Pastor/Scholar” program, Center for Theological Inquiry, Baltimore, Maryland, Cindy Rigby

13-15 Meet with Board, campus minister, and students, University of Texas, El Paso, Mike Miller

16 Catechist, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ellen Babinsky
Lead Lenten series, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts

19-21 Attend Annual Board Meeting of Presbytery For Renewal, First Presbyterian Church, Douglasville, Georgia, Andy Dearman

20 Teach on Book of Revelation, St. Mark Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Missouri, John Alsup

23 Lead series “Christian Faith in a Pluralistic Age,” St. David’s Episcopal Church, Austin, Dave Jensen
Lead Lenten series, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
Catechist, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin, Ellen Babinsky
Preach, Genesis Presbyterian Church, Austin, David Johnson

25 Retreat for Committee Chairs of Higher Education Division, Synod of the Sun, Austin Seminary campus, Mike Miller

27 Host Convention of Hispanic Presbyterian Churches of the Central Texas Cluster, Austin, Salatiel Palomino-López
Teach, Oak Hills Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas, Stan Hall

29 Preach, Elim Church of God Seventh Day, Salatiel Palomino-López
Lead Encuentro Workshop on the Psalms, Alamo Heights United Methodist Church, San Antonio, Steve Reid

28-30 Lecture, teach Montview Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado, Cindy Rigby

30 Teach, St. David’s Episcopal Church, Austin, Dave Jensen
Lead Lenten series, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
Preach, First Presbyterian Church, Blanco, Texas, Mike Miller

APRIL
2-3 Speak and lead retreat, “Time Out in the Trenches: The Emotional, Physical, Spiritual, and Family Health of a Church Executive,” Executive Presbyters Forum, Dallas, Texas, Mike Miller

4-5 Mission Presbytery Committee on the Preparation for Ministry, Austin, Mike Miller

5-6 Preach, lead workshop, First Presbyterian Church, Le Claire, Iowa, Cindy Rigby

6 Teach Sunday School, Highland Park Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, Andy Dearman
Lead Lenten series, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
Teach, Westlake United Methodist Church, Steve Reid

9 Teach Lenten series, Parkway Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi, Texas, Kathryn Roberts

10 Participate in colloquium of Houston-area pastors, Ted Wardlaw

10-12 Participate in a Sacraments Study mandated by General Assembly 2003-2006, Louisville, Kentucky, Stan Hall

13 Preach, First Presbyterian Church, Brenham, Texas, Ted Wardlaw
Lead Lenten series, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Kathryn Roberts
Teach, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Cindy Rigby

16-27 Lead workshop and preach, Central Presbyterian Church, Longmont, Colorado, Cindy Rigby

22-29 Attend, Presbytery’s Cooperative Committee for the Standard Ordination Examinations annual meeting, Jacksonville, Florida, Stan Hall

27 Lead a series, “The Child in Christian Thought,” Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Dave Jensen
Teach “Introduction to New Testament,” Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Andy Dearman
Teach, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Arun Jones

27-29 Retreat, preaching and teaching, First Presbyterian Church, Camden, Arkansas, Lewis Donelson

MAY
1 Preach, Synod of the Sun, Waxahatchie, Texas, Ted Wardlaw
Attend Synod of the Sun Meeting, Mike Miller

2-4 Lead Bible Study for the annual Mo-Ranch Men’s Conference, Ted Wardlaw

4 Teach, Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Andy Dearman

11 Teach, Round Rock Presbyterian Church, Michael Jinkins
Teach, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Dave Jensen
Teach, Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Andy Dearman
Teach, First Presbyterian Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Cindy Rigby

14 Lead discussion with retired United Methodist clergy, Tarrytown United Methodist Church, Austin, Arun Jones

18 Teach, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, Dave Jensen
Teach, Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Andy Dearman

25 Teach, Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin, Andy Dearman
Moderator, General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical Relations, PCUSA General Assembly, Denver, Colorado, Ellen Babinsky
Teach, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Dave Jensen

31-June 2 Attend, Covenant Group Retreat, Evergreen, Colorado, Andy Dearman

JUNE

23 Preach, Ordination Service, Grundy, Virginia, Kathryn Roberts
Senior fellowships announced at ASA Banquet

Each year Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary awards four major fellowships to graduating seniors in recognition of their outstanding academic achievement and promise for ministry. This year’s fellowships were announced at the Austin Seminary Association Annual Meeting and Banquet on Wednesday, January 29, 2003.

The alumni association of Austin Seminary honored the Seminary’s fourth president by establishing the David L. Stitt Fellowship for continued study in 1971. The winner of the 2003 Stitt Fellowship, which carries a stipend of $10,000, is Dhawn Bristol Martin. A member of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, Helotes, Texas, Martin earned a B.A. degree from Wellesley College and an M.A. from the University of Durham, England, where she studied on a Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholarship. She also received a Ford Research Grant to study, at Harvard University, the media’s impact on presidential elections. While at Austin Seminary, Martin has served as a member of the Admissions and Program of Study Committees. She completed her Supervised Practice of Ministry requirement at Madison Square Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1984 an endowment was established in honor of Leo V. Pile, Helen Porter Pile, and Edmond Holland Morgan of Haringen, Texas, and Estella Martin Morgan of Dallas, Texas. The 2003 recipient of the $8,000 Pile-Morgan Fellowship believed she was called to service in the church, co-preaching her first sermon at a children’s service in the sixth grade. At Austin Seminary she has served as president of the Student Senate. Hunt completed one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Christus Schumpert Hospital in Shreveport, Louisiana, and a summer internship at First Presbyterian Church in Fort Worth, Texas. She is married to Glen Hunt.

In 1946 an endowment was established by Mrs. W. P. Newell of Albany, Texas, as a memorial to her husband. Tracey Elizabeth Huff is the 2003 recipient of the W. P. Newell Memorial Fellowship, which carries a stipend of $3,000. A member of University Presbyterian Church, Seattle, Washington, Tracey was born in Carthage, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from Seattle Pacific University and spent two years working with high school youth from University Presbyterian Church and at Children’s Hospital Regional Medical Center in Seattle. Huff completed a Clinical Pastoral Education unit at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, Washington, and a nine-month teaching church internship at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Austin, Texas. Huff is engaged to the Reverend Dan Cravy.

The Janie Maxwell Morris Fellowship was established in 1953 by a bequest from Mrs. Milton Morris of Austin, Texas. The recipient of this year’s Maxwell Morris Fellowship, which carries a grant of $2,000, is Matthew Ernest Miller. A member of Central Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado, Miller received his bachelor’s degree in creative writing from the University of Colorado. Before coming to seminary, he had careers in musical theater and facilities management and was active in the life of Central Presbyterian Church in Denver, where he was an elder. Miller completed one month of pastoral care in a hospital setting at St. David’s Hospital in Austin, and a summer internship at First Presbyterian Church in Elgin, Texas. He is married to Marie Miller, and they have two children: Miranda and Grace.
Lectures, reunions spark interest

The 2003 MidWinter Lectures were held January 27-29 on the Austin Seminary campus. Presenting the Thomas White Currie lectures, “Grace and Money,” was Kathryn Tanner, professor of theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She is the author of *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* and *The Politics of God*. Delivering the Westervelt Lectures, “Creative Adventures in Biblical Preaching,” was Paul Scott Wilson, professor of homiletics at Emmanuel College in the University of Toronto. His books include *God Sense: Reading the Bible for Preaching* and *The Practice of Preaching*. Brett Webb-Mitchell, assistant professor of Christian nurture at Duke Divinity School, gave the Robert F. Jones Lectures, “The School of the Pilgrim.” His books include *God Plays Piano, Too: The Spiritual Lives of Disabled Children*, and his lectures are part of a manuscript he is preparing for publication.

**Currie Lecturer**

Kathryn Tanner

—lecture review by Reno Lauro, MATS student

“For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating ... no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit ... for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord.”—Isaiah 65:17-18a, 19-21, 23b NRSV

**FACT:** Thirty-three million people—including thirteen million children—live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents one in ten households in the United States (10 percent).¹

**FACT:** Poverty is the principal cause of hunger. There are 1.2 billion poor people in developing countries that live on $1 a day or less. Of these, 780 million suffer from chronic hunger, which means that their daily intake of calories is insufficient for them to lead active and healthy lives.²

There was a point during the 2003 Currie Lectures where I couldn’t help but notice the audience in Shelton Chapel. As Dr. Kathryn Tanner spoke of theology and economics, people were shifting in their seats, faces were getting flushed—some from discomfort over the topic—and others were following the dizzying pace with wonder. It was then I realized that I was listening to theology at its best. This was theology making bold statements, theology taking risks, prophetically challenging sacred cows and daring to dream. The thesis was direct; what does theology
have to do with money?

Tanner says that the Scriptures challenge the present notion of a competitive market-based economy. The grace of God is not distributed in a competitive manner—although it has been interpreted that way—where a minority of the population can successfully accumulate spiritual capital leaving a majority of the population fighting to become their own spiritual virtuoso one day. In actuality, the Kingdom of God is based on a non-competitive model (a principle central to Tanner’s Christological theology) where grace is freely given to all people elevating them to the richess of the giver. Significantly, this kenotic giving by the Creator is done without loss to the Creator’s being. While self emptying in nature, good Christology will remind us that nothing is lost in God’s essential being during God’s act of love for us in the person of Jesus Christ.

As the disparagement between the prophetic words of Isaiah and the current facts show, the non-competitive model of grace as revealed in Jesus Christ was used by Tanner to challenge our assumptions about the validity of modern capitalist theories in light of the Gospel message. This theological economy, as proposed by Tanner, would not venerate super-profits at the expense of many, but would allow for the free distribution of wealth—as in God’s Kingdom—without loss by the giver. The closest present economic theory would come to modeling this principle is in the public good. The public good is a good or service that has two characteristics: non-rivalry in consumption and non-excludability. Unfortunately, this is never reached with our present economic system because it is an incidental issue. In the theological economy, says Tanner, the public good would be the goal.

In the end, my words cannot do justice to the complexity of Tanner’s presentation; however, I implore you to examine this topic further. Karl Barth reminds us that we have been called by God to be ambassadors of a “strange new world;” the world of God that is breaking forth into a creation (humanity, animals, vegetation, etc.) groaning for redemption. Trusting only in the revelation of who God is in Jesus Christ, we are called to bear witness to that revelation before the princes and idols of this world. The words in the book of Isaiah bear witness to an eschatological promise that, if we are to believe lays claim on us in this very day, lies in dramatic juxtaposition to this world’s present economic principle. The revelation of God tells us that God’s principles lay in dramatic juxtaposition to everything that is not given witness to in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. What does theology have to do with money?—Everything.

1 http://www.bread.org/hungerbasics/domestic.htm
2 http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%2Ohunger%20facts%202002.htm
4 This is America’s sacred cow, and since the fall of communist Russia, the world’s. In 1989 Francis Fukuyama, in his book, The End of History and the Last Man, went as far as to say that with the fall of the Soviet Union, and with it the hopes of the communist ideal, history had come to an end. Capitalism had proven itself to be the apex of human civilization.
5 http://college.hmcc.com/economics/taylor/econ/3e/micro/students/glossary/ch15.html
7 Romans 8:22 NIV
Westervelt Lecturer
Paul Scott Wilson

For Professor Paul Scott Wilson, the essential question for the preacher is always, “Where is God in, or behind, the biblical text?” His lectures, “Creative Adventures in Biblical Preaching,” helped define the process of forming and responding to that question.

In his first lecture, “Historicizing: The Fluid Text,” Wilson analyzed some of the changes within the discipline of homiletics in recent years. He likened the old style of sermon preparation to a preacher who boards three separate buses to “Sermon City.” First, she grabs her commentaries and climbs aboard the exegesis bus which carries her deep into the heart of the biblical text itself. Next, she transfers to the homiletics bus where she begins to discern the meaning of the text as it might apply to the life and work of her congregation. Finally, she catches the hermeneutics bus which ambles forward, enabling her to craft a message appropriate to the present context.

But, said Wilson, as boundaries between the elements of exegesis and interpretation have blurred, sermon preparation is more art than science. “The process,” he asserted, “is more like one bus with three groups of conversations going on simultaneously, and the preacher moves freely among them all.” The destination is the same, indeed, the route is identical, but the journey is a different one altogether.

Preachers, Wilson argued, need to be thinking about the congregation from the very first reading of the text; interpretation and composition need to happen alongside research. “Going to notes is like going to a used tea bag,” said Wilson, “The energy that comes from the reading should go directly into the sermon.”

In his second lecture, “Theologizing: The Gracious Text,” Wilson contended that every sermon should contain both a word of trouble and of grace, and that a sufficient reading of the text will reveal both. These two theological categories, formalized as Law and Gospel, are essential for good preaching. The Law, what we must do, “addresses conscience, discloses original sin.” Gospel, what God does, “transforms people, plants love in their hearts, equips them for good works.” Trouble, or Law, puts the burden on us, while grace, or Gospel, puts the burden on God, who has already accepted the burden in Christ.

Wilson cited two formulae for moving from Law to Gospel: vertical, from God down to “the accused,” and horizontal, in which the preacher “holds the mirror up to us describing the judgment that has already befallen us. It demands identification with the problem.”

More than a rhetorical form for the sermon, this movement from Law to Gospel becomes an underlying theological structure for any model of sermon. Wilson described it as a “deep grammar” that enables preachers to become better theologians. This is critical, he said, for sermons to avoid becoming anthropocentric. The theological reflection reminds hearers that “this is what you are doing, and this is what God is doing to enable you to work through your ministry.”

Wilson then described a process, contained in his book, The Four Pages of the Sermon (Nashville, 1999), of incorporating these theological reflections into an interchangeable page a day of sermon preparation: 1) trouble in the biblical text, 2) trouble in our world, 3) grace in the biblical text, and 4) grace in our world.

In his third lecture, “Moralizing: The Conflicted Text,” Wilson began by describing the postmodern influence on preaching—with its excess of meanings and competing claims—especially as practiced by the Radical Postmodern School. The proponents of this movement: 1) seek to avoid any hierarchy in preaching, 2) are radically for the marginalized, 3) deny transcendence (for them language is non-referential and truth, always conditional), 4) espouse a theology from below (with radical evil as the pervasive worldview), and 5) hold that theology is metaphorical in nature. Their influence, said Wilson, could represent a significant shift in homiletics.

In the second part of the lecture, Wilson contrasted the pejorative “moralizing” with the more useful concept of ethical instruction. “Sermons,” believes Wilson, “tend to deal less with ethics and more often with moralizing, because the former demands more preparation, more nuanced thought.” He compelled preachers to stretch to teach a theological lesson, with an action in mind for the congregation. Ethical action, he said, normally will arise naturally from a moral principle in the text. He cited Proverbs 11:25 as an example: “A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water.” A literal interpretation endorses generosity as a means to get rich. A moral interpretation implies that we must be generous. A theological interpretation looks at the surrounding texts as well as how the moral action relates to God’s action. The conclusion: only God, in Christ, is the perfect giver. We cannot become poor if we are rich in our
relationship with God and others.

Marcie D. Brown (MDiv’98), who participated in the “Conversation with the Lecturers” session said, “Paul Scott Wilson’s urging for preachers to find both the ‘trouble’ and the ‘grace’ in each text is immensely helpful. For all who try each week to preach faithfully and with creativity, his approach honors the biblical message and asks us to seek imagination in bringing God’s word of hope into the present.”

JONES LECTURER
Brett Webb Mitchell

I am a Christian pilgrim.

With these words, Brett Webb-Mitchell invited his listeners into a journey of growing into the life and body of Christ. By learning the gestures and rituals of pilgrimage—the synthesis of spirit, body, and mind—we remember Christ’s call to action:

Eat this... Drink this... Do this in remembrance of me.

Peppered with narrative from his own pilgrimages, Webb-Mitchells lectures outlined the ten variables that are critical for understanding his concept of “The School of the Pilgrim.”

1. The gestures of Christian pilgrimage. The education of a pilgrim begins with the simplest movement or gesture forward.

2. Discovering the whole person on Christian pilgrimage: body, mind, and spirit. Gestures of pilgrimage recover what has been diminished, if not lost, in the way we educate Christians in the modern church: the importance of the body.

One of the places I learned about the marks on the body of Christian pilgrimage was in the old elementary school gymnasium on the way to El Santuario de Chimayo in northern New Mexico. The dusty floors creaked loudly with each stumbling footstep made by the pilgrims when we arrived to our daily stopping places. The gym was turned into a community of the foot at the end of each day as we all took stock of our main form of transportation: the foot, or among those in wheelchairs, the hands and arms. In the evenings, the gym were infirmaries, if not triage units, where we would take care of our wounded feet, legs, arms, tired spirits, and exhausted thoughts. There the young boys massage the old men’s feet and calves, the sweet smell of Ben Gay mingling with witch hazel ointment permeating the entire gym. I watch as a young boy washes down the varicose-laced veined leg of an old man with rubbing alcohol... Amid the elements of foot powder and Ace bandages, sewing needles and foot sprays, scissors and moleskin, the needs of Christian community are sown in the body, as well as the mind and spirit of each pilgrim, every day.

3. The rituals of the pilgrimage: remembering whose we are. It is in rituals that we are literally re-membered, re-connected, with a body of people, of knowledge, of beliefs, of traditions, of ideas, of the God who was, who is, and who is to come.

4. The building of love of Christ among companions along the way. Relationships are central to pilgrimage. Such friendship is possible because Jesus called us “friends,” bringing us closer to the God of creation.

5. The role and place of the pilgrim guide and becoming a guide.

It seems that God in Christ brings us together with people who are our guides. Likewise, God as Spirit also lets us know when it is time for us to lead others.

6. Presence of the communion of saints.

I came face to face with the witness of the saints when I was on Lindisfarne, the Holy Isle in northern England... home to Saints Aidan and Cuthbert, real-life characters and saints that the Venerable Bede wrote of...

One evening, after taking a warm bath on a cold night I followed a strange impulse to go to the Holy Isle’s graveyard. The rickety wooden fenced gate that is usually open in the daytime is closed tonight and locked. I sit on the gate itself, swinging my legs to and fro like a small child, and peer deeply into the dark cemetery until my eyes are used to the light, a dim light given by a cloudy milky moon. A small blue search light from a fishing boat in the harbor swings and casts a steady beam around the grounds every twenty seconds or so, glancing off the cemetery’s inhabitants and their respective tombstones... I began, with no reason at all, to talk to the saints: “Thanks for bringing me here, Aidan, Cuthbert, Oswald,” I say matter of factly, assuming all the while they were listening and hearing my voice, sensing my nervous presence. A friend among friends who know my name, I thought it only fair to start off with a note of gratitude to their saintly presence. No response. So I turned my words into a questioning, an interrogation, because of the nagging feeling that I had wasted my time in coming all the way up here. I mean, why on this rocky shoal, in the middle of a bay, would you saints bring me here? My voice began to rise in the darkness. I started to spit out my anger, and my anguish, believing that someone, some-
where, was listening and will answer. Silence. Quiet. Space of time.

Suddenly, like doors on a dam welded shut but now free, I sense the movement from the inside looking out, of water gushing forward, pushing me, flooding over me, benign inquisition and stagnant creativity giving way to revelation and uncontrolled discovery. Christian pilgrimage is not something we create, or have to re-create. Pilgrimage is a repertoire of gestures we are to perform, that we inherit from those who are traveling with us, before us, and following us. The way of the pilgrim was already tred by Jesus himself, whose birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven is done in order that the Paraclete may descend and walk with us now, showing us the pilgrim’s way to the glorious reign of God.

7. The land. Tending to the earth, sky, and water is part and parcel of being a pilgrim, for this is the context of the School of the Pilgrim: earth.

8. The shaping of character amid the spontaneous moments of pilgrimage. Our very character is nurtured with an increased love of God and one another.


10. The destination of the pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is a place where God resides.

What would Christian education be like, mused Webb-Mitchell, if we embraced the art of pilgrimage? If, for instance, we propped a bucket of walking sticks next to the baptismal font to remind us of the journey that begins with remembering who and whose we are. He ended his lectures with the words that seem to start all pilgrimages:

Leave… Follow… Come.
Congregations’ gifts advance Seminary’s mission

Wealth, wisdom, and work. That’s the shorthand we sometimes use when we talk about the gifts brought to Austin Seminary, in varying degrees, by trustees and other volunteers. The same maxim, when applied to churches, helps describe the important corporate relationships that have developed, and that continue to grow, between Austin Seminary and the congregations it serves.

**Wealth.** Austin Seminary received $286,000 from 131 congregations in 2001-02. All but about $50,000 of that was earmarked specifically for scholarships and direct aid to seminary students.

The gifts range from a monthly contribution of $25 from a church of about 125 members to a $20,000 gift from a large urban church with its own foundation. In comparison, Austin Seminary’s share of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s Theological Education Fund, the only denomination-wide source of funding for theological education, was $211,000 for the year.

**Wisdom.** Since the mid-1970s, every M.Div. graduate at Austin Seminary has completed a Supervised Practice of Ministry experience. Ordained ministers, serving in a parish setting and trained by Austin Seminary faculty, guide students through at least three months of “real world” experiences. Classroom knowledge transforms into wisdom as the congregation and the pastor-to-be share this invaluable learning experience. Austin Seminary has thirty-two pastors (and congregations) currently active in the Supervised Practice of Ministry program.

**Work.** Hearing, recognizing, and acting on a call to ordained ministry can be a joyous experience, but is not always an easy one. Seminarians cite “encouragement from pastors, elders, and the congregation” as the single most influential factor in discerning their call. The congregation’s work in identifying and nurturing candidates for ministry is vital to the call process.

If your church is involved with Austin Seminary in some way right now—and there is a good chance that it is—you have our deep gratitude. Austin Seminary could not have come this far without you. If your church is not participating somehow in the life of Austin Seminary through its students or faculty, let’s talk. Wherever you are, know that you are not too far away, or too large, or too small for us to work as partners toward the “great ends of the church.”

Either way, we pledge to work hard in the coming months and years to provide opportunities for you to get to know Austin Seminary better, and to help us prepare people for ordained ministry and other leadership positions in the church.

—Timothy Kubatzky
Vice President of Institutional Advancement

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**Full-Tuition Scholarship.** With an eye toward the future of pastoral ministry, Margaret J. Lowdon, a lifetime member of First Presbyterian Church of Fort Worth, Texas, has pledged $125,000 over two years toward endowing a full-tuition scholarship. The Margaret J. Lowdon Endowed Scholarship will help Austin Seminary attract the best and brightest candidates for ministry. Annual income from the Lowdon Endowed Scholarship will provide a full-tuition grant for a seminary student with strong promise vocationally for the ministry of the church.

**Child Care Center.** The Trull Foundation of Palacios, Texas, has pledged $125,000 over five years toward construction of an on-campus child care center. This $500,000 campaign objective will address one of the most pressing needs for students. Seminary families will benefit greatly from child care that is safe, nearby, and affordable. Currently, thirteen children are enrolled in the popular after-school program in the Hicks Community Center. The new center is designed to serve fifty children, including full-day care for preschoolers.
The Reverend Dr. David L. Jones has been appointed the director of Austin Seminary’s Doctor of Ministry program. Jones is currently the pastor of Amagansett Presbyterian Church in Amagansett, New York (Long Island). His appointment is effective May 1.

Jones earned a B.A. degree from Messiah College, an M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, an A.A.S. from Sullivan County Community College (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counseling), and a Th.D. in pastoral counseling from Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Before going to Amagansett, Jones served as pastor of Jackson Presbyterian Church in Jackson, Georgia; Kelley Presbyterian Church in McDonough, Georgia; and First Presbyterian Church in Jeffersonville, New York. Greater Atlanta Presbytery named him Small Church Pastor of the Year for his work in Jackson. He also has experience as an emergency services clinician, a police chaplain, and a community-based pastoral counselor. For seven years he served as director of the Harmony Grove Counseling Center in Lilburn, Georgia. In Long Island Presbytery, he served on the Committee on Ministry.

Academic Dean Andrew Dearman describes Jones as a skilled pastor with excellent credentials and a distinguished record of community service. “Since May of 2002 I have served as the acting director of the D.Min. program,” says Dearman, “so obviously I’m thrilled that David will be in place for the June D.Min. term. I am also grateful for the contributions of Professors David Johnson and Cynthia Rigby and other faculty members who worked hard to maintain the program in the absence of a full-time director.”

David Jones is married to Jennifer, a pediatrician, and they have a two-year-old daughter, Faith.

Austin Seminary students excel on 2002 ordination exams

Austin Seminary students scored well above the national average in all areas of the ordination exams given last fall. The exams, required for ordination into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), are given twice each year in the areas of biblical exegesis, theology, worship and sacraments, and church polity. In the chart at left, Austin Seminary students’ averages are shown in black and the national average in gray. Dolly Hunt, president of the Student Senate, said, “The students felt well prepared for the tests.”
**Welcome**

**Paul Hernandez** joined the Computing Services staff in December as technical associate. He brings a wealth of knowledge from his previous experience working for Dell Computers. When he's not examining a desktop system, Paul enjoys golf, mountain biking, and his dogs, Jinx and Felix.

**Donald Frampton**, senior pastor of St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church in New Orleans has joined Austin Seminary’s Board of Trustees. A former moderator of the Presbytery of South Louisiana, Frampton currently serves on the Mission and Direction Task Force. He and his wife, Colleen, have three children.

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**The Goddess(es)...** This Nike, Goddess of Victory, once adorned a public building in Ephesus in Greece. Surrounding the stone goddess are members of the Austin Seminary community and friends who travelled to Turkey and Greece this January with Professors Andy Dearman and John Alsup: Brenda Stegner, Harvey Gresham, Carole Alsup, Amanda Ayers (junior, Fresno, California), Nancy Profit, Sabelyn Pussman (middler, Austin), **Timberly Eckelmann** (middler, San Antonio), Tamara Strehli (MATS, Austin), **Heather Williamsen**, (middler, Kilgore, Texas), Joyce Kelly (MATS, Austin), Reyna Mairena, and Sarah Melton (middler, Vicksburg, Mississippi).

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**Martin Luther King Jr. Worship Service**

The Reverend Dr. Larry A. Earvin, president of Huston-Tillotson College in Austin, was the 2003 Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Preacher. The Huston-Tillotson College Choir sang the anthem during the worship service on February 11. The event was planned by Austin Seminary’s Multicultural Student Association.
**In Brief**

*Ellen Babinsky*, professor of church history will be inaugurated as a full professor on April 9. Her inaugural address, “Christological Transformation in Marguerite Porete’s ‘Mirror of Simple Souls,’” will be published in the April issue of *Theology Today*.

*Whit Bodman*, assistant professor of world religions, is leading a six-week course on Islam at the Lifetime Learning Institute in Austin in February and March.

*Dave Jensen*, assistant professor of Reformed theology, has written an article, “Religionless Christianity and Vulnerable Discipleship: The Interfaith Promise of Bonhoeffer’s Theology,” for the most recent edition of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Summer ‘01). Jensen will participate in a conference of Presbyterian seminary professors on “Facing Racism” in Louisville, Kentucky, April 4-6.

*Michael Jinkins*, associate professor of pastoral theology, will attend the annual conference on Church Leadership, sponsored by the Academy of Religious Leadership, April 25-27. The academy is also launching its new journal this spring, *The Journal of Religious Leadership*, with Jinkins serving as associate editor.

*David Johnson*, director of Supervised Practice of Ministry, is teaching the course, “Reformed Theology,” for Philips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, Oklahoma.


*Laura Lewis*, professor of Christian education, was selected to participate in the Association of Theological Schools “Women in Leadership” program in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in October 2002. The seminar focused on “Women Charting the Future for Theological Education.” Lewis also attended the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education, “Leading with Hope: The Vocation of the Religious Educator,” in October in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In January, she was among 1,200 participants at the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Annual Meeting in Denver.


Abbott, Huser, and Zbinden honored by ASA Board

The Austin Seminary Association (ASA), at its Annual Meeting and Banquet, recognized Priscilla Abbott, G. Thomas Huser, and Louis H. Zbinden Jr. for their extraordinary contributions to the church and to Austin Seminary.

Since 1968, Priscilla Abbott (MDiv’88) has served the church in Japan, first as a teacher of English, then as a district missionary, then, after receiving her degree from Austin Seminary, as the pastor of the Tarami Mission Church in Nagasaki. She is currently the chaplain in a retirement complex and nursing center, preaching in chapel three times a week to a community of nearly 300 residents and staff members. A native of Brownsville, Texas, and a graduate of Austin College and Texas Christian University, Abbott was a public school teacher for seven years before being commissioned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a missionary.

After graduating from Austin Seminary, G. Thomas “Tom” Huser (MDiv’62) served as pastor or interim pastor in many churches in Texas, including Quanah, Midland, Sweetwater, Houston, Orange, Lake Jackson, Corpus Christi, and College Station. He has served as a member of the Committee on Ministry, a Synod commissioner, and a board member for the Presbyterian Pan American School for twelve years. Huser was the organizing pastor of Northwoods Presbyterian Church in Houston, which grew to a membership of more than eight hundred in six years. In his last pastorate at College Station, he merged two struggling congregations to form Covenant Presbyterian Church.

After earning a bachelor’s degree from Southwestern at Memphis (now Rhodes College), Louis H. Zbinden Jr. graduated with honors from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, where he was a Perkins Fellow. He later received his doctorate, also with honors, from Princeton Theological Seminary. Zbinden has dedicated his life in service to the church, both his current congregation and the larger church through its institutions. The list of boards on which he has served includes: Austin College, Trinity University, Mo-Ranch, the Presbyterian Pan American School, the Texas Presbyterian Foundation, and the Presbyterian Outlook. He has served as a pastor in many churches and is currently in his 32nd year at First Presbyterian Church in San Antonio, Texas. In his nine years as an Austin Seminary trustee, the last three as chair, Zbinden worked behind the scenes to strengthen the role and focus of the board and administration. He helped raise funds to build the McCord Community Center, and has brought in millions of dollars of leadership gifts for the Seminary’s Centennial Campaign.

ASA elects officers and expands board

During the annual meeting of the Austin Seminary Association (ASA) on January 29, 2003, Robert S. Rice (MDiv’89), pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Norman, Oklahoma, was elected president, and Mary Currie (MDiv’79, DMin’90), pastor of St. James United Presbyterian Church, LaPorte, Texas, vice president, of the ASA Board for 2003. Outgoing President Ilene Dunn (MDiv’80, DMin’97), pastor of Madison Square Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, presided over the meeting.

The ASA unanimously approved the board’s recommendation to expand the size of the board by adding a new member to each class, beginning with the Class of 2004. While the existing board has representatives from many of the presbyteries in the Synod of the Sun, this new configuration offers the opportunity to involve alumni/ae from beyond the Synod. In addition to geographical diversity, a larger board also will allow for representation from denominations other than Presbyterian and from all three degree types.

Elected to the Class of 2004 were: David O’Neal (MDiv’81), pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Tyler, Texas, Lemuel García Arroyo (MDiv’95), associate executive for multicultural ministries, Synod of the Sun, Jackie Saxon (MDiv’00), associate pastor, University Baptist Church, Austin, Lori Beer (MDiv’97), pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Rockport, Texas, and Tammy Brown (MDiv’94), pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Charleston, South Carolina.
CLASS NOTES

1980s

David Leslie (MDiv’88) was a guest preacher at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., on Sunday, January 19, 2003, in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Leslie is currently the executive director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

1990s

A hymn text by David Gambrell (MDiv’98) has been chosen as a co-winner of a national competition sponsored by Macalester-Plymouth United Church in St. Paul, Minnesota.

WELCOME

To Austin Sink, son of Jennifer and Paul Sink (MDiv’00), born November 19, 2002, in Statesville, North Carolina.

To Edwyn Lowry Brock, son of Margaret “Maggie” and Brian Brock (MDiv’02), born December 27, 2002.

NECROLOGY

Fleet G. Cook (MDiv’54) Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, January 19, 2003

John E. Martin (MDiv’66) Montgomery, Alabama, July 19, 2002

Please join us for

Luncheon at General Assembly

Denver, Colorado
Wednesday, May 28
11:30-1:30
Convention Center Room C103
$26

Speaker: President Theodore J. Wardlaw

Back on campus to enjoy the MidWinter Lectures were classmates celebrating fifty- and sixty-year reunions. Representing the Class of 1953 (above) are: Joe B. Donaho, Fran Gibbs, and Charles R. Gibbs III. Representing the Class of 1943 (below) are: Martha Crossman, Linington Crossman, William Gould, Marilyn Moore, and F. Otis Moore.

😊 Your friends would love to hear from you. 😊

Please e-mail your “Class Notes” to alum@austinseminary.edu.
The Reverend Theodore J. Wardlaw

Inauguration

Friday, March 28, 2003

Service of Word and Sacrament at 10:00 AM
with the Reverend Thomas G. Long, preaching

Brunch at 11:30 AM

Inauguration Ceremony at 1:00 PM

University Presbyterian Church

2203 San Antonio Street, Austin

The public is welcome; reservations are required