

AUSTIN PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

WIND OWS

WINTER 2001

politics



religion

shhh ... this issue NOT intended for polite company

LOOKING OUTWARD



We have all heard it said many times, “You should never mix religion and politics.” In other words, a person’s faith and a person’s political involvement in society should always remain separate, never consciously interconnecting. But a friend of mine, a Presbyterian pastor, once remarked to me: “Anyone who thinks you can separate politics and religion has never been seriously involved with either.” I am inclined to agree. Indeed, you can make the case that politics is fundamental to any social group or organization. So, any leader in the church, whether laity or clergy, had best be politically astute if she or he is to be an effective leader. In this regard, a topic worth exploring is what effect a person’s faith has (or should have) on the way that individual participates in the politics in the church. Likewise, any political leader would be well advised to understand the power and influence which religious beliefs and convictions (or anti-religious beliefs and convictions) exert upon people’s behavior and commitments.

Still, that hardly settles all issues related to religion and politics, for they are legion. Should one intermingle religion and politics? How do we determine or preserve appropriate goals, the common good, and the rights of others who disagree with us? Gladstone, the 19th-century British statesman, is reported to have said: “Statesmanship is finding out what God is doing in the next 100 years.” But what about those in our society who believe there is no God? And how do you work in the political arena with people whose God instructs them regarding the world in ways quite different from the way the God we worship instructs or directs us?

This issue of *Windows* presents an unrehearsed conversation among six of our professors on the topic of religion and politics. The discussion is more open-ended than definitive, more about exploring ideas than establishing principles. Related articles include a reflection by one of our administrators, David Miles, on his experiences of serving as pastor for New Jersey’s governor, and a condensed version of a Bible study on politics by Professor Kathryn Roberts. Another article is authored by someone intimately acquainted with both religion and politics, Max Sherman, former state senator and current trustee of Austin Seminary.

We trust that you will find these materials useful and thought-provoking as you seek to integrate faith and politics in your own life, church, and community.

Robert M. Shelton
President



COVER: *We can't keep this issue of Windows under wraps any longer! Everybody knows the topics of religion and politics are off-limits in polite company. The relationship between God and government, Congress and congregations, is complicated—sometimes brittle and fragile as glass, sometimes strong and flexible as a tightly woven fabric. Our cover image juxtaposes symbols of church and state; stained glass and Old Glory. What happens when we bring them under one roof?*

Photograph by David Gambrell.

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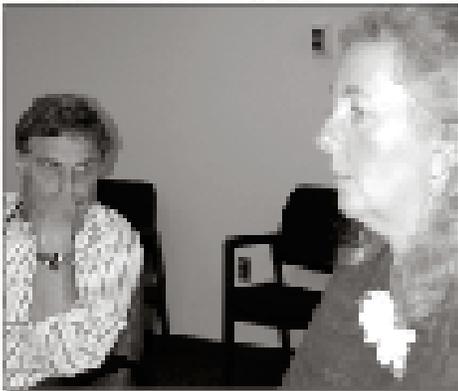
Ismael Garcia and Andy Dearman



Cindy Rigby



Michael Jenkins



Lewis Donelson and Kathryn Roberts

On Speaking

I remember as a child being told that if you want to avoid disagreement, you should avoid talking about politics and religion. In my family that was always impossible advice to follow. Our dinner conversations were generally seasoned with lively critiques of all things political and faithful.

Christianity, in fact, has historically concerned itself with politics and public affairs. Philosopher Charles Taylor sees the modern democratic process as an outgrowth of Christian faith and practice, observing that the “very term secular was originally part of the Christian vocabulary” And Nobel Prize laureate Robert William Fogel, in his new study, *The Fourth Great Awakening and the Future of Egalitarianism*, says that American public policy is inevitably grounded in the cycles of religious revival that punctuate our national history.

Maybe it is safer not to speak of politics and religion, but Christianity seldom plays it safe.

—Michael Jenkins

On the eve of this country's most unusual presidential election to date, Austin Seminary professors spoke about faith and public life. Participants included: Kathryn Roberts, assistant professor of Old Testament; Cynthia Rigby, associate professor of theology; Ismael García, professor of Christian ethics; Lewis Donelson, professor of New Testament; and Andrew Dearman, academic dean and professor of Old Testament. The conversation was moderated by Michael Jinkins, associate professor of pastoral theology.

Michael Jinkins: *Some time ago, a well-known professional golfer responded in an interview to the question of whether he belonged to a political party with the statement, "I'm a Christian, so of course I'm a Republican." At one time it was said that the official policy positions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) were simply an adaptation of the platform of the Democratic Party. What should be the relationship between Christian faith and politics? And what are God's politics?*

Kathryn Roberts: I think we must first ask how we picture ourselves as a community of faith. There's a huge difference between thinking that we're supposed to dominate, legislate, and correct the world around us and thinking that we're supposed to be an influence on the culture that changes things from within.

Cindy Rigby: Paul Lehmann has said that the politics of God are wherever the Holy Spirit is present and active in the community—the *koinonia*—and as Christians our job is to be looking out for where God is at work and go there, not to assume that God goes to wherever we are.

MJ: *Can you give me an example of a biblical mandate for particular political policies?*

CR: I would say there are some fundamentals, if you will, that are very specific. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked. Those seem consistent in the biblical witness.

KR: You could get everybody to agree to feed the hungry. It would be how to do it—that's where the policies would come out of it, and those could be very, very different.

MJ: *And who's to do it, and who pays for it? And on what scale?*

KR: And who are the hungry?

Lewis Donelson: Jesus said, You'll always have the poor with you. So quit worrying about that.

CR: So there's the biblical excuse.



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—Kathryn Roberts



It seems to me that a strong theological argument for the separation of church and state begins with the Trinity. If we believe we reflect the image of the triune God only as we exist in relationship to those who are different from us, we should resist homogeneity. The separation of church and state helps to ensure that we will not become homogenous, because the state cannot dictate our religious practices, and the church cannot determine our politics.
—Cindy Rigby

LD: As we know, that little saying has often been used that way. But I think that's a very funny reading of it. Not just I, but almost anyone who's ever done any work on it thinks it's a funny reading. It's a lament, it's not a release.

MJ: *Ismael, I have heard you remark that just saying something is biblical doesn't settle it—even for Christians.*

Ismael García: Scripture sometimes gives us parameters under which we can work. Two classic cases that come up consistently in political discourse are Scripture's attitude toward slavery and women. You can say that there's been within Scripture a kind of passive acceptance of the institution of slavery. Our moral sensibilities today would not allow for that.

KR: But there are places in Scripture—particularly in the wisdom literature—that critique, through experience, the common revelation or understanding of how the world works. And there are things in our own experience that come up against that and force a reevaluation of Scripture.

IG: What I don't want to fall into—what I think is a very dangerous political trap—is, If it's not in Scripture, or if Scripture does not justify it, we cannot do it.

KR: Exactly.

MJ: *Recently I heard a reporter make the statement that religious faith is, by very definition, a private matter and should not be brought into the public realm. What do you think?*

Andy Dearman: I think that's one of the biggest problems of our own society, because it traps religious people into arguing about values only in the private sphere, and that's unhealthy.

KR: It's also against the Bible, because the Bible is contextual and it's very political. Who you are means how you live.

CR: The question really is not, Should religion be private? but—given that it really *is* public—What do we as religious people have to say publicly and politically? I recently read an editorial by Peter Steinfelds about a conference where religious journalists referred to the Christian Coalition as the 900-lb. gorilla. They said it's about time mainline folks stood up and said something about their religion and what impact it has in the public sphere.

MJ: *How do we do that?*

IG: I think we express it differently with different issues. For an issue like apartheid, you had the Presbyterian Church making declarations against it along with the Roman Catholic Church. And that was proper, because there was a consensus among an infinite number of Christians that apartheid was wrong, and it was safe to speak as a whole. In other issues we speak either as denominations or as segments within denominations. Today we're dealing

with questions of lifestyle and sexual preferences. Churches are split, so we can't speak as a whole there; instead we have sections within the church that are saying there ought be a certain openness and others saying, no, we ought to hold on to traditional values. In other issues it comes down to individuals speaking alone as persons of faith.

LD: When I went to seminary in the early '70s, I was more or less a member of five Christian coalition groups working on various political causes. We would go up to the state capitol and knock on legislators' doors, and there was money for that, there was energy for that. Sometimes you had more people volunteering than you had space for, and it's interesting to me how all of that just dried up. But my hunch is, that seems to be a reemerging option. For example, I might put together a group on capital punishment. It's going to be Roman Catholic, and Baptist, and Presbyterian, and Methodist, and we're going to be religious, we'll give ourselves a religious name, and we'll gather around this one cause.

MJ: *And you might not unite on some other cause.*

LD: We might not.

CR: *The New York Times* has full page ads now that are bought by groups that say, We don't agree on everything, but we're all right-to-life.

IG: Which tells us about the new way we are understanding politics. It's not a melting pot but multi-issue questions, and you have alliances according to what issues you can work with. And you press those politically in different ways.

MJ: *One of the most divisive issues in recent years has surrounded the Supreme Court's decisions related to the sponsorship of prayer and other religious activities by government agencies. Is the separation of church and state a theological formula or a social contract?*

CR: It seems to me that a strong theological argument for the separation of church and state begins with reflection on the Trinity. If we believe we reflect the image of the triune God only as we exist in relationship to those who are different from us, we should resist homogeneity. The separation of church and state helps to ensure that we will not become homogenous, because the state cannot dictate our religious practices, and the church cannot determine our politics.

MJ: *What could that mean for Christians?*

CR: If we honor the diversity inherent in that separation—being in relationship with those who are different from ourselves—we are submitting to the possibility that God is not automatically on our side or agrees with our politics. We are recognizing that God, through the work of the Holy Spirit, is present and active elsewhere. So, diversity keeps us on our toes, if you will, in looking for where God is at work and in what context.

LD: I don't think you can absolutize it. Christians love the argument that



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—Andy Dearman



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is a bit tricky.
—Lewis Donelson*

what you need to do is just be a good Christian in whatever political situation you find yourself. In other words—excuse me for stating it this way—What I need to be is an honest and true, hard-working and faithful and obedient Nazi. And I've met my duty. But there are certain kinds of critiques that your faith offers to the system itself.

IG: John Courtney Murray was once asked, Do Roman Catholics abide by the U.S. Constitution or by the church? And he answered, The important thing for Catholics is that the Constitution abides by Catholic principles. And I think what he meant is that religious people cannot but say that. And that doesn't show disloyalty. What it shows is that the state can never be ultimate. That the church ought not to be taken for granted. That there ought to be an uneasy existence between the church and the state precisely because they have to talk to one another in truth, and both of them talk truth to power in ways that are always uncomfortable. And in that sense, the separation of church and state fits who we are as a people. The danger is not to emphasize that, because then we might fall into different forms of idolatry.

MJ: *Ah, that's very interesting.*

LD: Ten years ago I was at a Christian-Muslim conference and the Muslims were talking about the incredible impossibility, almost, of being a Muslim in the United States. And the example they gave was that, to follow Islam, it means that you follow certain inheritance laws, which were simply incompatible with the United States federal inheritance laws. So, what do you do? They said, We're trying to change the laws—not the Muslim laws, but the government's.

IG: Well, that's the right thing to do. Under our system of government, we have always had religious exceptions built into the law because in our liberal society there is a recognition that the religious values could trump political values and laws.

AD: I think the same dynamic works in politics and government in our denomination. Think of the debate you have in the Presbyterian Church over people who do not want their contributions toward their medical insurance to go also to pay for abortions. And so the General Assembly has worked very hard to try to accommodate people in the governance of the church who don't want their common contributions to go for something for which they are theologically opposed.

IG: What I like about your comment, Andy, is that it does help us see that political life takes place in different places and different ways. Churches are political communities themselves that are parallel, as to questions of conflict and antagonism, to secular politics.

MJ: *Where does the line between church and state blur?*

IG: I cannot think of any period of North American history in which religion didn't have some role to play in the public sphere. It entered into the public school debate. It entered into civil rights. It entered into slavery issues and

issues of the right of women to vote.

AD: The so-called founding fathers made it very clear that was their view. Ethics and values cannot exist in the public realm apart from religious underpinnings.

LD: For a lot of people I know, to put a line between Christian faith and politics is almost an impossible thing, because for them the primary image they have is of God's Kingdom: God's Kingdom is arriving, and my task in life is to participate in that, to anticipate that, to assist that. There is, in our tradition, this notion that God's going to rule here, and it's going to be a very, very political presence. And if you are a follower of this God you need to be working for that. And so to say, I'm going to just leave this up to the state, is a bit tricky.

IG: Well, if you go back to Cindy's sense of Trinity, maybe you can make the claim that even the sphere of the secular state—even in spite of itself—is an instrument of God. Therefore the state could instruct the church in many other things.

MJ: *That can double back on us in really prophetic ways. A friend was recently visiting a church and they were showing him the changes they'd made to the sanctuary. A member of the congregation was complaining that it had cost them a lot more because they had had to make it wheelchair accessible, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Now, that's really interesting, because in many ways this is a law that reflects Christian views and principles of access for all people, and yet the church felt pushed in the direction of doing this because of civil laws.*

KR: But the church often responds as the taillight rather than the headlight. It lets the society make the decisions and then joins in.

CR: So then, are we the church if we're the taillight? [Gustavo] Gutiérrez—in liberation theology—would say the church is where, as Lehmann says, humanization is occurring. We are presuming we know better, but really the church is wherever the Spirit is at work. So the church is in that law, not in what we're doing as the taillight.

MJ: *Any final thoughts?*

IG: Politics is an essentially human activity in which people try to figure out what kind of risk they are willing to take in order to realize the possibilities they aim at. Now religious people want to do that with the reference of what would be fitting with their convictions about God's nature and purpose. So one can say that there are elements in the Christian ethos—of love, compassion, inclusiveness, care for others—that ought to play a role in whatever politics Christian people get involved in. No matter what political party you belong to, those will be concerns that you will have to bring into the mix of political perspectives, because they are part of your underlying religious sensibilities. 🙏



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—Ismael García



BY KATHRYN ROBERTS

God's Politics

Which side are you on?

The once-barren Hannah's grateful song in I Samuel 2 not only foreshadows what is to come in the books of Samuel, but encapsulates the biblical ideal of God's "politics." Hannah is the barren wife of a godly man, Elkanah, whose other wife provides him with children. Though her husband loves her unconditionally, she feels the societal pressure and lack in her life and prays to God at the shrine at Shiloh for a child. God answers her prayers, she is given a son, and she names him Samuel. In grateful response to God's miraculous activities in her life, Hannah sings her song.

Hannah's Song is more than merely the thankful outpourings of a pious woman. It has great political implications. Her personal experience with God is universalized as she assures the listener that how God delivered in her life is but a microcosm of God's interests in the world at large. Sung at a time when Israel was in grave danger of being annihilated by the Philistines, it offers confidence in the ultimate power and sovereignty of Israel's God. Hannah's religious claims about God in her personal life epitomize God's political activities. For her they are inseparable, because they are an expression of the nature of God.

Though living in a world of competing powers, in which the gods of the nations—and especially the mighty Philistines—seem to have the upper hand, this young woman asserts that Israel's God is the incomparable ruler of the political scene. "There is no Holy One like the Lord, no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God" (v. 2). Because Israel's God is unrivaled, Hannah goes on to profess that it is the Lord who raises

up the lowly and brings low the arrogant (v. 6-8). The personal is political for her. She knows that what God has done in her life translates into the geopolitical sphere. The Lord honors the humbled of society and shames the proud, breaking the military weapons of the mighty, giving strength to the weak.

Hannah's Song does not merely echo the claim of Israel that God personally fights for them under any and all circumstances. Israel's experience of God demonstrates that God does not play into Israel's or any nation's, person's, or party's imperialistic program. The prophetic claims of the 8th through 7th centuries B.C.E. make it clear that the Lord can be Israel's enemy as readily as its defender. The warnings were clear that when God's people lapse into injustice and oppression of others, God moves against the unjust, even if they are the chosen people. Hannah knows this too, for she affirms that the Lord "will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might does one prevail" (v. 9). God judges the whole earth.

Over a thousand years later, another young woman sang a song remarkably similar to Hannah's. This young woman wasn't barren; she was an unmarried, pregnant virgin (Luke 1:46-55). She had the confidence that God's concern for the lowly and hungry and downtrodden would be addressed once and for all in the birth of her child. God's politics were "filled full" in Jesus Christ who not only preached that the last would be first and the lost would be found, but demonstrated this in his life, death, resurrection, and triumphal reign as the sovereign of this world and the world to come. ❧



During the election season, Professor Kathryn Roberts taught a five-week adult Sunday school course on power and politics at Tarrytown United Methodist Church in Austin, where Governor George W. Bush worships. The following is an excerpt from that series.

Pastor *to the* Elect(ed)

Parish ministry with parishioners in politics

BY DAVID D. MILES



I remember the moment when I first understood what it would mean for me to be the pastor to the governor. There I was, sitting at a table at the Inaugural Ball, wearing the tuxedo that I had just purchased for the evening and all the black-tie events that would follow, when the husband of the governor's best friend came and sat down next to me. We had met previously on a few occasions, and I knew that he was a lobbyist in Washington and that he was also a person of faith. As we sat there late in the evening, watching the governor and her family on the dance floor, he leaned over and said to me, "Well, David, you are going to be a very important person to the governor." I looked at him and asked, "How so?" He replied, "From now on, you are going to be the only person in her life who is not lobbying her for something."

David Miles is interim seminary pastor and dean of student life at Austin Seminary. Prior to his appointment, he served as senior pastor to Lamington Presbyterian Church in Bedminster, New Jersey, where he found himself at the center of New Jersey political life, with Governor Christine Todd Whitman in the pew. He preached at both of the governor's inaugural celebrations.

So many thoughts come to mind when one of your parishioners suddenly becomes the highest-ranking political figure in the state. However, those simple words spoken to me that night helped bring into focus my sense of call and guided me as I served as Governor Christine Todd Whitman's pastor for the next seven years. Amid all the challenges and responsibilities that came with this unique opportunity, I tried always to remember that Christie remained a person who needed someone who would simply be her pastor and nothing else.

Ironically, my relationship with the governor began with an unneeded attempt at pastoral care. My first six months as pastor of the Lamington Presbyterian Church did not provide much opportunity to get to know her personally, as they were the final six months of her campaign for governor. Though she had given Senator Bill Bradley a surprisingly close race for his seat in the Senate a few years earlier, she remained a clear underdog against incumbent Governor Jim Florio. In fact, she was distinctly behind in the polls in the final days prior to the election. When election night came around I felt that I should attend the gathering as a show of support for my parishioner who, it appeared, was going to lose.

My wife, Carol, and I found ourselves wandering aimlessly among the hundreds of supporters who had gathered at the Princeton Marriott when Christie's cousin, another member of our congregation, spotted us and brought us upstairs to the governor's suite. There I was, standing around with former Governor Tom Kean and future presidential candidate Steve Forbes (who was painfully shy), watching the results come in and wondering what my pastoral responsibilities were in such a situation.

As the evening wore on, it became evident that the race was closer than expected. Suddenly, several serious looking men came into the room and took Christie and her husband aside. A few moments later the phone rang, the room went silent, and we all listened to Christie thank Governor Florio as he conceded the election to her. As soon as she hung up, the room erupted and we found ourselves being herded out of the suite, down service elevators, through the hotel kitchen, and onto the stage

where delirious supporters, blinding television lights, and pounding music welcomed the new governor-elect. Carol and I looked at each other wondering what in the world we had gotten ourselves into.

Though pastoral care was not necessary that night in the way I had expected, that was the first of many times I found myself standing behind the governor of New Jersey, not so much as a political supporter, but as one who would be there for her on the bad days as well as the good. I came to see very quickly that living every day in the scrutiny of the public eye would require much, not only of Christie, but of her family as well. Not only did she need a pastor who would provide a safe place for her, but her husband and two children would need someone they could trust with their concerns, frustrations, and fears.

In many ways Christie was just another parishioner, and the church, for the most part, treated her that way. Since she had grown up in the community, most of the older members still thought of her as "little Christie" more than they thought of her as the most powerful person in the state. Likewise, the Secret Service agents who attended worship with her became a part of the church family. I remember the deacons asking one of them to help take the offering one morning when one of the ushers did not show. We joked about how the collection always improved when the usher was

"packing a little heat."

One of the most challenging questions before me as a preacher was whether or not I should intentionally aim my sermons at her. While some of my parishioners and many of my pastoral colleagues urged me to use the pulpit to preach her a sermon about this issue or that, I tried my best to resist the temptation. Those of us who preach always have our congregation in mind when composing a sermon, and certainly particular people appear in our mind's eye as we imagine how they might react to a particular thing we might say. While Christie often came to mind when I was preparing to preach, I would inevitably zoom out in my imagination and remind myself that it was my responsibility to preach to the entire congregation.

I believe that the gospel itself is politically charged.



The pastor and the governor at a church function.

My philosophy about preaching on political issues is that one must begin, not with the political issue, but with the gospel. I know that if I am faithful to the gospel, it will inevitably lead to particular political issues relevant to the day. And given the generally conservative, affluent, and politically powerful nature of my congregation at Lamington, I know that my preaching—to the extent that I remained faithful to the gospel—challenged their social and political convictions, by and large.

When preaching with the governor in the pew there were times when, out of deep theological conviction, I found myself directly questioning things like the death penalty, a topic on which she and I disagree. But there were also many times when I chose not to take a clear side on an issue, but rather to let the gospel lead us to the heart of the matter and then allow people to wrestle with the ramifications for themselves. My primary objective was to preach the gospel to that particular congregation, governor and all, and trust the Spirit of God to speak to her as to everyone else.

There was one time, however, when I did preach a sermon directed to her. It was on the occasion of her second inauguration and, as was the case four years earlier, she asked me to preach at the interfaith worship service the morning of her swearing-in. While it was somewhat intimidating to serve as preacher among various bishops and other religious dignitaries ranking high enough to wear clerical hats, having been through the last four years with her, I knew that my task that morning was to charge her as her pastor.

Like many pastors, I believe that the most valuable thing we can do for our parishioners is not to simply tell them what to think, do, or believe, but to help them learn to listen for God's voice in their own lives and then have the courage to put their trust in following that word they have heard. My text was the story of Jesus healing the masses in Capernaum found in the first chapter of Mark's Gospel. After a very long

day of healing an endless line of sick and possessed people, Jesus rose early the next morning, went to a deserted place, and prayed. When the disciples eventually found him they were in a panic because the sick back in Capernaum were looking for him. Then the shocking twist comes as Jesus stands up and announces that he is moving on to the next town.

People in political office always have so many people lined up at their door, so many voices to listen to. But I believe that there is no more important voice for leaders to hear than God's, even though following God's direction sometimes leads to surprising, controversial, and even unpopular positions. My charge to Christie that day was to keep that image of Christ before her—a leader, away from the crowds seeking his attention, down on his knees listening for God's voice, heading for a new place no one, not even *his* own party, expected him to go.

Finding yourself close to people in power can be dangerously intoxicating when you feel the possibility of exerting influence over important decisions being made. While Christie did not regularly call on me to advise her on policy issues, occasionally our conversations would turn toward something going on in the state as she would rehearse with me her perspective on the issue and would either ask for my opinion or watch for my reaction.

While I felt honored when she would provide an opportunity for me to express my opinion on issues, the words spoken to me on the night of her inauguration always brought me back to the heart of my calling as her pastor. They would remind me that regardless of the position a parish-

ioner holds in society, every member of the church needs a pastor. And of all people, those who occupy the often lonely position of chief executive may need, more than anyone else, a pastor: someone they know will not be lobbying them for anything. 🙏



David Miles was senior pastor at Lamington Presbyterian Church in Bedminster, New Jersey, for seven years before moving to Austin.

BY MAX SHERMAN

In the early 1960s I was invited to attend a United Presbyterian Church synod-sponsored Impact Conference to discuss the explosive, hot-button issues of that time. Bob Nickles, another member of my home church, attended the weekend event. Bob was a distinguished Southerner who came to Amarillo to manage the Coca-Cola operation in that region. Because of his deep roots in the South, Bob disagreed with many of the positions taken by the General Assembly on these issues.

Bob was in a small minority, often a minority of one, on most of the issues we debated for a full weekend. When the meeting was over and we were all preparing to return to our respective states, Bob asked us to wait for a moment. I do not remember all that he said, but he acknowledged that he disagreed with most of the positions taken by the group and that we had had a vigorous debate. He concluded by saying, "Where else but in the church can we disagree so strongly and yet leave as friends?"

For me, a good symbol of the church is an equilateral triangle: "We the people," with all of our differences, are at the base; as we move up the two axes toward the apex, which is God, the closer we come to each other. My friend Bob Nickles personified that symbol.

If there is another arena where it is possible to have deep differences of opinion on complex and emotional issues, it is the American political system. Every four years we elect a president of the United States and every two years we elect governors of our states. If a new person is elected, the mantle of leadership is exchanged, and for the next two to four years we come together as one



Ye May Be Mistaken

Compromise in politics and polity

As dean emeritus of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin and trustee of Austin Seminary, Max Sherman stands between church and state.

people. For the most part, those who take opposing views on the candidates remain friends and often sit down over a cup of coffee to discuss their differences—until the next election. Politics has been defined as “a way of ruling in divided societies without undue violence.”

Most of the issues that come to legislative bodies are those that do not have easy answers, and they are issues upon which “we the people” seldom agree. The elected officials can debate at length, and even postpone, but eventually the roll will be called and a “yea” or “nay” will be cast. Even if the division is only by one vote, the matter will be decided for the moment.

Lincoln well described such a political dilemma in a speech of October 15, 1858, when he set out to define the position of the new Republican Party on the question of slavery:

The real issue in this controversy—the one pressing upon every mind—is the sentiment on the part of one class that looks upon the institution of slavery as a wrong, and of another class that does not look upon it as a wrong . . . The Republican Party . . . look upon it as being a moral, social, and political wrong, and while they contemplate it as such, they nevertheless have due regard for its actual existence among us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations thrown about it . . . I repeat it here, that if there be a man amongst us who does not think that the institution of slavery is wrong in any one of the aspects of which I have spoken, he is misplaced, and ought not to be with us. And if there be a man amongst us who is so impatient of it as a wrong as to disregard its actual presence among us and the difficulty of getting rid of it suddenly in a satisfactory way, and to disregard the constitutional obligations thrown about it, that man is misplaced if he is on our platform. We disclaim sympathy with him in practical action.

During my years in the Texas Senate, I represented the Panhandle and South Plains. Barbara Jordan represented the Fifth Ward in Houston. My people probably did not understand and appreciate the problems of the Fifth Ward; Barbara’s people probably did not understand and appreciate the problems of a rural area larger than forty of the states. But I could not solve the problems of my district without the help of Barbara and other urban senators. Barbara and her urban colleagues could not solve the problems of the city without the help of

rural senators like me. We compromised on some issues and achieved solutions to many of the problems from both of our districts. I am convinced that the people of Texas are well served by this process.

Those in the political arena not only have to contend with thorny issues, but must also deal with the “true believers” of society. In this regard, I think of one of my favorite judges. Judge Learned Hand of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was invited to testify before a committee of the United States Senate in 1951 on the subject of public morals. Here is part of what he said:

In legislation, often the best is that compromise between the two which will result in the least friction in application and execution . . . That approach to political thinking is very offensive to many people, but I can only answer that a number of accredited heroes of the past seem to me to have agreed . . . Let me give you, as an instance, one utterance of [Oliver Cromwell’s] which has always hung in my mind. It was just before the Battle of Dunbar . . . he beat the Scots in the end, as you know, after a very tough fight; but he wrote them before the battle, trying to get them to accept a reasonable composition. These were his words: “I beseech ye in the bowels of Christ, think that ye may be mistaken.” I should like to have that written over the portals of every church, every school, and every court house, and, may I say, of every legislative body in the United States. I should like to have every court begin, “I beseech ye in the bowels of Christ, think ye may be mistaken.”

Judge Hand concluded his testimony with his own statement of faith in our democratic process:

. . . when the men who met in 1787 to make a Constitution made the best political document ever made, they did it very largely because they were great compromisers. Do not forget that. They did put in a Bill of Rights afterwards, but the thing that made it stick was that they were great compromisers as to the immediate issues which were before them.

Elections and legislation are compromises. Voters and politicians (legislators) bring issues to decision. My faith in the church and in our democratic institutions makes me believe that we can have our differences and still be friends. 

MidWinter Lectures

January 29-31, 2001

▲ **Dr. Dorothy Bass**, *Professor of Theology and Director of the Valparaiso Project on the Education and Formation of People of Faith, Valparaiso University, and author of Practicing Our Faith.*

▲ **Dr. James F. Childress**, *Kyle Professor of Religious Studies and Professor of Medical Education, University of Virginia.*

▲ **Dr. Robert W. Jensen**, *Senior Scholar for Research, Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey.*

Reunion events for members of the **Classes of 1951 and 1961** are being planned. The annual **Austin Seminary Association (ASA) Banquet** will be held Wednesday, January 31, at noon, in Stotts Fellowship Hall. Reservations are required; tickets cost \$10. Call Georgia Smith, 512-472-6736, for more information.

Continuing Education

Jan. 2-5	Religious Education Theory & Practice
Feb. 1-4	Immersion Weekend
Feb. 8	Lenten Lessons
Feb. 11-16	Immersion Week
Mar. 4-9	Daniel: Spirituality for the Fiery Furnace and the Lion's Den
Mar. 22	Stewardship: The Art of Asking
Apr. 2-4	Faithful Worship, Faithful Living
Apr. 16-18	Intertextuality: The Bible is Full of Itself
Apr. 26-29	Spiritual Theology



Prescott Williams preached for Debra Latture's installation at Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church in Snowhill, Maryland.

Fifty years later, Seminary grad follows professor into the pulpit

A wise person once said that if you truly want to know a person you should walk a mile in their shoes. If this is true, **Debra Latture** (MDiv'00) is getting to know **Prescott Williams**, professor emeritus of Old Testament languages and archaeology, more and more each day.

On September 17, 2000, she was installed as pastor of Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church in Snowhill, Maryland; the same church that—fifty years ago—became Williams's first pastorate. He was a recent seminary graduate who had been married for just eleven days when he and Jane arrived at Makemie Church. Throughout the following two years, Williams believes the congregation taught him more than he could have ever taught them.

Perhaps most importantly, he remembers that they showed him what a gift it is to be a pastor. "If you truly listen to people and go where they are," he explains, "you are very privileged in the way you can be in their lives."

Though the Williams family has been away from Snowhill and

Makemie for many years now, the place and the people are never far from their minds. In fact, when Williams learned that the Makemie Church was searching for a pastor he immediately recommended the opportunity to Latture. Though she had not considered the Maryland area, she had heard of the historic Makemie Church and even taught classes on its founder, Francis Makemie, this country's first ordained Presbyterian minister.

When Latture arrived to meet the people of Makemie she immediately felt called to the place. "I had looked at other churches but they just hadn't seemed right," she says. "So I flew to Snowhill and I had this amazing feeling that this was where I was supposed to be. I just knew that it was right."

Upon her installation, Latture—the church's forty-eighth pastor and the first woman—became a participant in a long and deep history spanning more than three hundred years. Heralding Williams as one of her mentors and heroes, Latture knows that she has some big shoes to fill . . . and is thrilled at the opportunity.

After thirty-two years, respite for librarian overdue

For more than thirty years, **Genevieve Luna** has been Stitt Library's face and voice, the front line for dispensing information to inquiring seminary students, pastors, professors, and others. When she retired at the end of the 1999-2000 term as assistant librarian for circulation and reader services, Gene left with the appreciation of hundreds of library patrons whom she has guided toward the resources of the library.

When Gene was hired as the Stitt Library secretary in February of 1968 she joined a staff of four. The library housed approximately 50,000 volumes. There was no security system nor copy machines for the students. But there were row after row of card catalogs. Now, thirty-two years later, the staff of six oversees a collection of 160,000. There is tighter security and copy machines aplenty. As for that monolith of yesteryear—the card catalog—it has been replaced by computer search engines.

When Gene reminisces on all of the positive changes, she begins to smile. "As the school grew," she explains, "I felt like its growth allowed me to develop professionally as well."

And grow she did. Throughout her three decades with the Seminary she worked with three different library directors and, when the Stitt Library was between directors, she and the rest of the staff took the reins and led the library through those transitions.

Gene's help has been invaluable to anyone in search of that hard-to-find periodical, and she has been a beacon of hope for those procrastinating students frantically seeking



Lila Parrish, new public services librarian, receives the "torch"—well, actually, the library policy manual, from Gene Luna, right.

resources for their next class. Whatever the need, Gene saw the highlight of her job as that moment when someone finds the material they have been seeking and she has been able to assist them in their search.

"Ms. Luna has been a vital part of the Seminary and particularly Stitt Library for these many years," said President Shelton. "Students, faculty, pastors, and others have benefitted from her commitment to serve and her eagerness to help. Many students over the years have expressed their appreciation for the variety of ways she has helped them and contributed to their lives, not only as a librarian but as a caring person." Symbolic of that appreciation, the alumni/ae association gave her its Award for Service in 1989.

As she prepared to leave the

Stitt Library, Gene recognized that she was leaving some of her best friends and one of her favorite places: the library's reference room. "I just love to go in there and sit," she admitted. "It is so beautiful and peaceful." The room does exude a sense of peace and timelessness with its calligraphed ceiling, stone walls, and handless clock.

Though she is entering a new phase of her life, she will always remember the years she spent among the high stacks of Stitt. "I loved my work here and will miss what I've been doing," she says. As she looks forward to a time when she can travel more and perhaps even get back to her gardening, the community looks back at Gene's constancy through the many changes and offers her its gratitude and good wishes.

Speaking of information . . .

Be sure to visit Austin Seminary's revised website at www.austinseminary.edu, featuring occasional discussions with faculty; links to lectionary resources; and online versions of the academic Catalogue, *Windows*, and *Insights*. Coming to a computer near you, January 1!

FACULTY NEWS

On the occasion of University of Erlangen Professor Juergen Roloff's 70th birthday, **John Alsup**, D. Thomason Professor of New Testament Studies, presented a "Resolution of Recognition" on behalf of Austin Seminary and its board of trustees. The highlight of the occasion was the presentation of a "Festschrift"

(collected essays written by colleagues) on the theme of "the church," which included an essay on "The Church as Oikos (Household)" by Alsup. No stranger to our campus, Dr. Roloff delivered lectures at Austin Seminary in 1977 and 1987,

helping to cultivate a relationship with the University of Erlangen that Austin Seminary has enjoyed for several decades. And, yes, the timing for the celebration was perfect—enabling Alsup to enjoy Oktoberfest!

Associate Professor of Mission and Evangelism **Sherron George** was a plenary speaker at the Western National Leadership Training Event in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, October 4-6. George traveled to more tropical climes in November to teach a course on "Gospel, Culture, and Mission" at the seminary of the Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil. This past summer she taught a three-week introduction to the New Testament in Lithuania at Lithuanian Christian College. Addi-

tionally, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has recently published George's book, *Meeting Your Neighbor: Multiculturalism in Luke and Acts*.

Garnering growing renown as a leader in Christian approaches to nature and the ecology, Assistant Professor of Philosophical Theology

Bill Greenway

has recently published articles in the *Houston Chronicle* and *Christian Century*. The *Chronicle* article, co-authored with Houston United Methodist pastor Milton Jordan, exhorted Texas voters to reconsider the serious environmental threats associated with

global warming. In his *Christian Century* contribution, Greenway explored the place of animals in the created order, and humankind's responsibility to care for them.

Michael Jinkins, associate professor of pastoral theology, presented the paper, "Mutuality and Difference: Trinity, Creation, and the Theological Ground of the Church's Unity," for the session, "Theology for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)," at the American Academy of Religion (A.A.R.) meeting in November. Jinkins will discuss his work on the Psalms of lament in an upcoming Abingdon Press Disciple Bible Study videocassette. And in his continuing tradition of writing books faster than most people can read them, Jinkins has completed *Invitation to Theology: A Guide to Study, Conver-*

sation, and Practice, available from InterVarsity Press in February 2001.

Timothy Lincoln, in addition to his responsibilities as director of the David and Jane Stitt Library, has recently become the new director of institutional effectiveness for Austin Seminary.

Assistant Professor of Hermeneutics **Carol Miles** preached at the October 13 meeting of the Presbytery of the Pines in Monroe, Louisiana. Later that month Austin Seminary's newest professor attended the Association of Theological Schools conference for recently appointed faculty in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Additionally, Miles had a sermon published in a new book by Mark Barger Elliott, *Creative Styles of Preaching* (Westminster/John Knox Press); her sermon illustrates the chapter on biblical preaching.

Michael Miller, research professor in the church and higher education, has been appointed to the Task Force on Higher Education of the PC(USA). As director of the Seminary's Center for the Church and Higher Education, Miller coordinated the annual meeting of presidents and chaplains of the Synod of the Sun's seven institutions of higher education, in October at the University of Tulsa.

Last spring, **Cynthia Rigby**, associate professor of theology, delivered lectures at three institutions in Denmark, developing relationships with theologians from two Danish universities and the University of Lundt, in Sweden. She also served on the faculty of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation's Pastor School, held annually at Hastings College. This year's school was attended by ninety-four pastors from throughout the nation.



On the way to Oktoberfest: John Alsup (center) and colleagues Paul Kuebel and Hans Bald.

Coming and going

Several new employees have joined the staff and others are completing extended lengths of service to Austin Seminary:



Hannah Beck, gift records assistant, and her husband, Chad, moved to Austin this fall from Indiana. Hannah has a B.A.

from Indiana University and enjoys camping, reading, and listening to music.

"If you would like to speak to a *real person*, press: 512-472-6736." **Rachel Goree**, call director, will cheerfully assist you. She would like to study someday in the medical field and specialize in geriatrics.



Hilda Harnden, secretary to the SPM office, graduated from the



University of Houston with a degree in history. She previously served as an office manager in a day care center. Hilda and her husband,

David, have a 16-year old son, Clint.

Terri Howe, assistant to the director of vocation and admissions, has worked in the area of financial aid and placement for Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and Austin Community College. She and her husband, Bob, have two sons, Max and Spencer.



Lila Parrish, public services librarian, moved to Austin from Minnesota, where she lived for fifteen years. She has a degree in library science and an M.A. in human development with an emphasis on Spirituality in the Expressive Arts. Lila has taught sacred circle dance for ten years and has her own labyrinth.



Kris Toma, library archivist and records manager, has a B.S. in photography and an M.L.I.S. in library and information sciences from The University of Texas, with a special-

ization in archives and records management. Her timely arrival coincides with the Seminary's preparation for its approaching Centennial.

James Lee (MDiv'00) has joined the Office of Vocation and Admissions as interim student services assistant.

Alison Riemersma, having successfully organized the SPM Office, now takes on the rest of the faculty! She replaces **Jeanne French** as faculty secretary. Jeanne has been on extended medical leave since early summer. She plans to retire in December after seventeen years on the Seminary staff.

Elizabeth Stinson, accounting assistant, retired in November after thirteen years in the Office of Business Affairs.

¡Bienvenidos A.E.T.H.!



In August, President Shelton led the community in welcoming A.E.T.H., the Asociación para la Educación Teológica Hispana, which has moved its headquarters from Atlanta to the Austin Seminary campus. Founded in 1991, A.E.T.H. has a number of programs supporting Hispanic theological education, including the Hispanic Summer Program, of which Ismael García, Austin Seminary professor of Christian ethics, is associate director.

Centennial Campaign on the horizon



The Austin Seminary Centennial Campaign, the Seminary's first multi-year fund-raising effort to encompass endowments, capital projects, and general operations, received a green light in November.

Austin Seminary trustees voted at their fall meeting to approve a steering committee and an operating budget for a five-year comprehensive campaign as part of the Seminary's Centennial observation. Trustees **Diane Buchanan** and **Jim Miller** will co-chair the steering committee, which is charged with planning the campaign and securing leadership gifts toward a \$15 million working goal.

Buchanan, who has served on the board since 1996, is an elder at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas. She chairs the board's Educational Policies and Personnel Committee. Miller, senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma, has been a board member since 1993 and currently serves as vice chair of the board.

"I'm thrilled to be involved with Austin Seminary at this critical point in its history," said Buchanan, "and I'm honored to have the opportunity to serve the institution through the Centennial Campaign. It's important to me that the Seminary continue to provide an excellent education to people who will devote their lives and careers to

the church, and this campaign will help ensure that we build upon the strengths of our first century as we move into the next."

Others who have agreed to serve on the Campaign Steering Committee include: **Bessie Lou Doelling**, First Presbyterian Church, Odessa, Texas; **Judye Hartman**, Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas; **Bruce Herlin**, First Presbyterian Church, Palacios, Texas; **Jerry Hilton**, First Presbyterian Church, Midland, Texas; **Jack Lancaster**, First Presbyterian Church, Houston; **Giles McCrary**, First Presbyterian

Church, Post, Texas; **Max Sherman**, University Presbyterian Church, Austin, Texas; **Jerry Jay Smith**, Southwest Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church, Canyon Lake, Texas; **Hugh Williamson**, Central Presbyterian Church, Denver, Colorado; and **Louis Zbinden**, First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas.

Funding priorities identified for the campaign include: new endowed faculty chairs, endowed scholarships, additional on-campus student housing, an endowed center for preaching and worship, new child-care facilities, computer technology for students and for distance learning, and general operations.

"Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary is well positioned to address the current needs of the church," said Louis Zbinden, chair of the board of trustees. "Gifts to the Centennial Campaign will have an immediate impact on the church by strengthening our ability to train more intelligent, winsome candidates for ministry and church leadership."



Seminary trustee Lee Power, right, enjoys dessert and a chat with students Darin Sanders (senior from Austin), Nolipher Moyo (ecumenical student from Zambia), and Patty Schaller (junior from Virginia, Illinois) after the trustee's fall meeting.

Money talks

What subject besides religion and politics isn't fit for polite conversation? Why, money, of course! But putting our money where our commitments are can speak volumes.

The film *Pay It Forward*, highlights the profound impact a few significant acts of kindness can have—a geometric progression, really—on the lives of many people. The young protagonist is shouted down when he presents his idea. Too corny. Too idealistic. Too scary. The play on words has me thinking about not only the impact of our giving but how we talk about it.

What phrases do you use when you think about giving? Do you give money *away*? Do you give *to* something? Do you give *back*? Maybe you give *up* (think about the theological implications of that phrase!) In all cases, I think the ripple effect in *Pay It Forward* occurs with all t rue giving.

There is a wonderful recent example of generosity at Austin Seminary. Students with families have had a tough time finding affordable, dependable supervision near campus for their children. An alumnus who struggled with the issue during his family's four years here provided a solution: a very significant anonymous gift to fund a pilot program for on-campus after-school care. The donor's intent was to help seminary students devote full attention to afternoon classes instead of worrying about

supervision for their school-aged kids.

The gift has done that, and more. Parents of pre-school children also jumped at the opportunity for on-campus care. The program quickly reached capacity. It also provides the perfect opportunity for Leslie Little—spouse of Trey, who enrolled as an M.Div. student this fall—to use her time and consider-

able skills in early childhood education to direct the program.

So, this anonymous gift has solved the after-school dilemma, eased the time crunch for parents of pre-schoolers, and made good use of talent that was close at hand. It may generate additional gifts, as others (who sometimes wait for results before buying into an idea) chip in. But the largest ripple in this geometric progression of giving comes when these parents become pastors, and begin their important work ministering to all of us. They will touch countless lives.

This is giving that deserves to be talked up. It is giving that makes a difference, that changes lives, and that takes the giver outside of him- or herself and warms the heart. Someone has called it charismatic giving. Charismatic giving changes both the recipients and the giver's lives.

Housing, child care, and excessive debt from student loans are mundane issues that have the potential to keep people from answering a call to ministry. It is both a privilege and an important responsibility to work to make sure that this is *not* the case at Austin Seminary. I hope you feel the same way!

In future issues of *Windows*, we will focus on a variety of priorities determined through careful long-range planning at Austin Seminary. These funding opportunities will enable the Seminary to address critical needs of the church, especially through the development of caring and intelligent leadership.

—Timothy Kubatzky



Tim Kubatzky and friends check out the play equipment at the Seminary's new after-school program.

CHARISMATIC GIVING IS
GIVING THAT DESERVES TO
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THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE,
THAT CHANGES BOTH THE
RECIPIENT'S AND THE
GIVER'S LIVES.

Tim Kubatzky joined the Seminary in July as vice president for institutional advancement, taking over much of the work previously done by the Rev. John R. Evans (M.Div.'68). This is his introductory message to the Austin Seminary community.

ALUMNI/AE NEWS

BIRTHS

To Brenda and **Robert G. Spratt** (MDiv'89) a daughter, Piper Rane, May 15, 2000.

To **Pat Felter** (MDiv'94) and **Shane Whisler** (MDiv'95) a daughter, Mattie, February 1, 2000. They plan to travel to China to adopt her before the end of the year.

To Krisztine and **Elöd Takats** (Ecum'96) a daughter, Mirjam, January 24, 2000.

To Amy and **Stephen D. Phillips** (MDiv'98) a daughter, Kaylene Sidney, June 10, 2000.

To Bai and **W. Stephen Beatty** (MDiv'99) a daughter, Elizabeth MaeLee, September 30, 2000.

To Amy and **Joshua M. Rowley** (MDiv'00) a daughter, Sydney Nicole, October 5, 2000.

CLASS NOTES

1970s

Ray A. King (ThM'71) has been named professor emeritus at Erskine Theological Seminary in Due West, South Carolina, having served on that faculty for thirty-eight years.

Ernest S. Dean (MDiv'78) was elected Association Minister for Brazos Association South Coastal Conference, United Church of Christ.

1980s

Karen H. Stocks (MDiv'85) has been promoted to Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force, Office of the Chief of the Chaplain Service.

1990s

Dennis K. Kitterman (DMin'92) has been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force.

Shannon L. Dill (MDiv'92) has been elected to the Board of Directors of Honduras Outreach, Inc., a multi-denominational mission organization serving the people

of Honduras. She is the first Presbyterian representative to the board.

Susan I. Abold (MDiv'97) will serve as a delegate to the World Methodist Council in Brighton, England, in July 2001.

David Gambrell (MDiv'98) has produced a CD, *The Psalms of David*, composed of fifteen original songs inspired by the Book of Psalms. Another CD on the Book of Genesis is in the final stages of production.

Read what's new? *ONLINE!*

Share your news with other Austin Seminary alumni/ae by sending an e-mail to alum@austinseminary.edu. Class Notes will be posted on www.austinseminary.edu beginning January 1, 2001.

NECROLOGY

Roy L. McCown (MDiv'46) Sulfur, Louisiana, September 1, 2000.

Henry E. Acklen (Diploma'48) Orange Grove, Texas, May 23, 2000.

Harry L. Johnson (MDiv'55) Tyler, Texas, July 28, 2000.

Arthur Hughes (Diploma'60) Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 8, 2000.

Maurice A. Weed (MDiv'74) Austin, Texas, August 21, 2000.

Robert W. Graham (MDiv'82) Little Rock, Arkansas, September 17, 2000.

Phonathon phigures

Members of the Austin Seminary Association Board lead the charge September 18 to another successful Phonathon campaign. On six evenings this fall, middler and senior students joined alumni/ae, faculty, and staff to call on former students across the nation in support of the Annual Fund. Combined with the proceeds from the pre-Phonathon brochure and a follow-up appeal to former students not contacted during the campaign, alumni/ae have pledged gifts totaling \$76,144, exceeding this year's goal of \$71,000.

Alumni/ae support helps to subsidize the cost of current students' seminary education by providing the critical resources for the operating budget. Gifts are used for scholarships, faculty salaries, library resources, and new classroom technology, among other needs.

Once again our outstanding alumni/ae have shown their support in record numbers!



Laura Mendenhall



Carlos Ham

Graduates lead church institutions

Two Austin Seminary Doctor of Ministry graduates have recently been called to serve in distinguished church positions.

Laura S. Mendenhall (DMin'97) became the eighth president of Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, on August 22. Mendenhall, who served on Austin Seminary's Centennial Committee prior to her appointment, has been senior pastor and head of staff of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Austin, since 1991. "She connects very well with young people and enables them to be open to the possibility that God is calling them," said Catherine Gonzalez, a member of Columbia's search committee.

Carlos Emilio Ham (DMin'99) has been elected to the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.) Executive Committee as secretary for evangelism, beginning January 2001. Ham, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba, has been serving on the W.C.C. Joint Consultative Group with Pentecostals. He is also vice president of the Caribbean and North America Council for Mission and president of the Caribbean Conference of Churches. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the W.C.C., praises Ham's appointment, saying he will "introduce some of the exciting dynamics of the 'evangelical celebration' that are presently taking place among the W.C.C. member churches in Cuba into the W.C.C.'s work on evangelism."

prank recalled . . .

There was a student from east Tennessee who had this little commuter bicycle. It was lavender and he named her Petunia. We managed to keep Petunia hidden for most of the year. She'd just appear in strange places and at strange times. One time he was giving a library tour and there was Petunia in the stacks. —Margaret Hill (MDiv'88)

One of the students sent a fake letter to Norman Dow, the librarian, about some books a family had given to the library in memory of their father. The letter said the family was coming into Austin so they could see what the library had done with the collection they'd given. Of course there were no books, but Dow didn't know that and he searched that entire library! Finally the day came when the family was supposed to arrive, and there were Norman Dow and President Stitt out in the front of the library with their suits on, pacing back and forth waiting for the family so they could apologize for the missing books. By this time I think all of the faculty and staff knew about it and we're all standing at the windows of Sampson Hall watching these two men sweat it out. The family, of course, never came. I don't think they ever knew what had happened. —Ed Robertson (MDiv'52)



Dean McCord was in Scotland at the time of the great theft of the "Stone of Scone," thought to have been taken by Scottish nationalists. Soon thereafter, I surreptitiously put a large rock in the foyer of the dorm with a note signed by McCord that said, "I thought this rightfully belonged at Austin Seminary." —Pete Hendrick (MDiv'52)

Bill Hedrick's dorm room was a few doors down from the pay phone so he would always answer it. A few of us came in late one night and called him, pretending to be [business manager] John Smiley and said that the house mother from Scottish Rite dorm had called to say the male students were disturbing the girls with their behavior. Bill apologized and said he didn't know anything about it. We demanded that he wake everyone up and have them sit on the front steps because John Smiley and David Stitt were coming over to get to the bottom of this. So Bill went through the whole dorm and woke everyone up. It was probably about 2:30 a.m. by then. We were all sitting on the front steps of the dorm and, when Smiley didn't come, I told Bill I thought he must be playing a trick on us and I wanted to hear it with my own ears that John Smiley was coming over. So we went up to my room and got on the speaker phone and had Bill call Smiley. Of course Smiley had no idea why he was being called in the middle of the night! —Joe Sheeler (MDiv'65)

Convocation 2000



It was hotter than (well, you know) . . . and they showed up smiling!

With temperatures outside soaring toward 112°, Austin, Texas, was the hottest place on earth during Austin Seminary's Opening Convocation, Tuesday, September 3, 2000. Was it merely coincidental that Dr. **Scott Black Johnston** chose that occasion to invoke fire and brimstone imagery in his convocation address, "As it is in Heaven"?

Preparing for a new academic year were forty new students and two ecumenical scholars from Rumania and Zambia. The ages of new students range from twenty-two to sixty-one; sixty-five percent are married; and sixty-three percent are Presbyterian.

Black Johnston, associate professor of homiletics, is returning from a year's sabbatical during which he served First Presbyterian Church, Dallas, as theologian-in-residence and worked on three books: *Preaching Time*, *Speaking Christ* with Professor **Stan Hall**; *Preaching and the Gospel of John* with

Professor **Lewis Donelson**; and *Proclamation Postmortem: Christian Preaching on the Afterlife*. A graduate of St. Olaf College, Yale Divinity School, and Princeton Theological Seminary, Black Johnston has been a member of the faculty of Austin Seminary since 1993.

In his academic announcements, President **Robert Shelton** welcomed returning students, faculty, and staff, and introduced new members of the community. A fall banquet, followed by a service of worship including the ritual Signing of the Declaration of Intent, was held Tuesday evening.

Discovery Weekend
February 23-25, 2001

Explore your call to
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WINDOWS

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