

On campus

Jarvis Christian College announces new president

Dr. Cornell Thomas is the new president of Jarvis Christian College.

Formerly the System Vice President for Institutional Diversity at Oklahoma State University, Thomas was responsible for institutional initiatives related to increasing and maintaining diversity within the university community and system, and fostering equal opportunity for all students, faculty and staff. He was also responsible for assessing, developing, implementing, and monitoring university-wide goals and activities designed to improve and promote educational equity and diversity, including the recruitment and retention of minority undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and personnel at all levels.



Thomas also served on the faculty at Texas Christian University, as an assistant professor of educational foundations and administration, and a dozen years in the Dallas Independent School District.

Thomas received his bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, his master's degree in music education from Jackson State University, and his doctorate in educational administration from Texas A&M University, Commerce.

Thomas and his wife are the parents of three daughters and six grandchildren.

Chapman, Bethany add new church relations directors

Bethany College and Chapman University have introduced church relations directors, key positions linking Disciples and our educational heritage.

Rev. Nancy Brink is the new Director of Church Relations at Chapman University. Reverend Brink comes to us from Omaha, Neb., where for the past twenty years she has been pastor of



BRINK

Lexington Seminary to reinvent in face of economic turmoil

Trustees of Lexington Theological Seminary have declared the school is in a state of financial emergency and will use this as an opportunity to boldly reinvent itself by developing a curriculum that stresses effective parish ministry as its primary focus.

Declaring financial exigency – the technical term for determining a financial crisis exists that threatens the survival of an institution – allows the trustees among other things to end faculty tenure. It also recognizes the loss of corpus on its restricted endowment.

LTS President James P. Johnson said the Seminary will focus on creating a new curriculum that will better prepare divinity students for careers as parish pastors. Faculty will develop courses that will merge theological thinking with practical skills in such

areas as money management, use of technology and conflict resolution. Many course offerings will be available online and taught at remote locations.

The school's financial situation has been compounded by "a tsunami of economic disasters that we have not seen in our lifetimes," Johnson told trustees. An endowment that once stood at about \$25 million in July 2007 is about \$16 million today, Johnson said.

The Seminary, founded in 1865 as the first seminary of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), had a fall enrollment of 120 students, most of whom are seeking their master's or doctorate degrees. It is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, and Johnson said the association is working with the Seminary to make sure accreditation is maintained during the transition.



North Side Christian Church. She has taught World Religions at the college level and is the founder of Connections, a Christian coalition of congregations devoted to social justice. She also brings to the Chapman educational mission her extensive global travel and long experience with youth ministry and as spiritual mentor for college students. She holds a BA in Religion from Texas Christian University and an M.Div. from the Divinity School of Vanderbilt University.

At Bethany, Dr. Larry Grimes will serve as the Director of Church Relations. Retiring after 38 years of teaching at Bethany, Dr. Grimes will begin his new role July 1.

An ordained minister of the church, Dr. Grimes graduated magna cum laude from Bethany in 1964 with a major in English and a minor in Religion. He earned his B.D. from Yale Divinity School in 1967. Prior to joining the Bethany faculty in 1970, he spent three years as associate minister of the Sandy Springs (Ga.) Christian Church while he began working toward his doctorate at Emory University in Atlanta. Emory awarded Dr. Grimes his Ph.D. in Litera-



GRIMES

ture and Religion in 1974.

"The Arts of Leading across Diversity" inaugurated

A three-part forum during the 2008-09 academic year will bring Disciples leaders, especially young adult and emerging leaders, to the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago to discuss "the arts of leading across diversity."

The series is planned and hosted by Ayanna Johnson, DDH's Minister-in-Residence, the current First Vice Moderator of the Christian Church and a new church pastor. Sandhya Jha was the first guest on November 17. She has recently completed "Room at the Table: Struggle for Unity and Equality in Disciples History", which surveys the history of Disciples of nonwhite ethnic backgrounds in the United States. Jha is the Minister of the First Christian Church of Oakland, California, and the Minister of Transformation for the Northern California-Nevada region.

More Campus News
is online at
www.helmdisciples.org.



Tomorrow's Leaders Today

The good news from HELM and higher education institutions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Produced by Higher Education and Leadership Ministries

March 2009



Nine members of the Disciples Leadership Institute met in Chicago to brainstorm DLI's next phase of ministry. Financial conditions have forced the cancellation of a 2009 event, but the 2010 event will invite observers to see how DLI creates open and trusting dialogue across traditional dividing lines. Above, Chesla Nickelson and Earle Fisher listen to Christian Piatt during December's discussion.

In memory of Jenny Faenza

A future pastor with a gentle sense of humor, unbelievably positive attitude, and an amazingly large share of tenacity lost her battle with scleroderma while at home for Thanksgiving break.

HELM Leadership Fellow Jenny Faenza, 19, was a sophomore at Georgetown University. In her year-and-a-half in the program, the Tennessee native made a lasting impression as she

See JENNY, page 3



Jenny Faenza discusses her call to ministry at the HELM Leadership Fellows Conference in November 2008. Jenny passed away three weeks later.

Seminarians keep learning in the late hours

After 14 hours in stuffy classrooms learning about life as a minister and the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)...

On a warm, early spring evening in Nashville, a city known for its night-life...

Knowing Daylight Savings would steal an hour of sleep...

At an optional Q-and-A session with general ministry leaders that began a 9 o'clock...

Despite all that, a roomful of seminarians was eager to talk about social justice and denominational priorities. It was yet another hint of the great leadership coming soon to Disciples congregations.

The Disciples Seminarians Conference drew 67 M.Div. students from across the country, representing 19 seminaries, plus two dozen general ministry staff. Open to Disciples students who have completed their first year of Master of Divinity studies, the conference is sponsored by the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and coordinated by HELM.

"The Seminarians Conference was an incredible opportunity to meet both current and potential leaders in the



Seminarians the "Beginning a Pastoral Ministry" class

church," said Stasia Krivanek, a student at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. "It was a gift to be able to see the breadth of what it means to be a Disciple of Christ and then to experience a depth of relationship with our colleagues and denominational leaders."

Seminarians had opportunities to learn in small groups about 14 general

ministries. Three workshops on pastoral life provided practical knowledge on:

- Beginning a pastoral ministry, led by Rick Spleth, regional minister from Indiana, and Cara Gilger, resident minister at Geist Christian Church in Indianapolis;
- Search and Call, led by Warren Lynn

See SEMINARIANS, page 3

Higher Education and Leadership Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
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How HELM is dealing with the slumping economy

HELM funds its ministries through a variety of sources, with 62% of our funding derived from investments. Because we are heavily dependent on invested funds, the current financial climate has reduced the resources available for ministry. We are holding our own so far in 2009 by:

- Delaying some events and meetings.
- Curtailing staff travel
- Not enlarging any programs, and
- Looking for every other opportunity to reduce expenses.

Our goal hasn't changed: Continue our ministry of nurturing leaders while exercising good stewardship.

In hard times, we truly appreciate the support we have received over the decades. Thank you!

Councils on student ministries, theological education meet

Two councils integral to HELM's ministries met in February.

Meeting in California, the Council on Theological Education, comprised of the presidents and deans of Disciples theological institutions, discussed matters related to education for immigrant pastors, new delivery methods for ministerial education, the work of the Mission Alignment Coordinating Council, and the new Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry document.

The Council on Ministries in Higher Education met in St. Louis over Valentine's Day weekend, adding an extra day to consider new priorities for working with student ministries and campus ministers in 2009 and beyond. Comprised of pastors, students and laypeople involved in campus ministries, the council encouraged HELM to create a "best practices" guide to campus ministries and to continue work broadening a network of campus ministries.

"Both councils are a valuable part of our ministry," says HELM's Dennis Landon. "We share their goals – strengthening the church and preaching the gospel – and we learn a lot every time we're with them."

Marshall Dunn, José Morales added to HELM Board of Directors

HELM's board has a pair of new directors who are well acquainted with HELM's mission and programming.

Marshall Dunn served University Christian Church in Hyattsville, Md., for 31 years. A graduate of Hiram College and the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago, he also served four months in 2006 as the temporary associate general minister and vice president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and later as the acting regional minister of the Capital Area. He is currently the minister of transition at First Christian Church in Falls Church, Va. Dunn and his wife, Barbara, have two children and two grandchildren.



DUNN

José Morales is currently the Associate Pastor of Iglesia del Pueblo Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Hammond, Ind., with a pastoral focus is on youth and young adult ministries, teaching, and preaching. José was born in Puerto Rico in 1978. As a son of Pentecostal missionaries, he has lived in Venezuela, Ohio, and currently, in Chicago. José graduated from Judson College and McCormick Theological Seminary, where



MORALES

Pacific Southwest Region names Payuyo Disciple of the Year

Cisa Payuyo, the Associate Director of Church Relations at Chapman University and a member of the HELM Board of Directors, was recognized by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Pacific Southwest Region as the 2009 Disciple of the Year.

A tradition dating back to 1974, The Disciple of the Year Award is conferred upon an individual or individuals who faithfully serve and express the movement of God's Spirit

he now serves as an adjunct professor and a member of the Board of Trustees. Morales has participated in several HELM programs, including the Disciples Leadership Institute, and he is one of the featured speakers for this summer's General Assembly in Indianapolis.

Both Morales and Dunn have met with the HELM Leadership Fellows in the past two years, both earning praise from students following the conference.

Joining Morales and Dunn on the HELM board are two members elected to second terms.

Sylvia Barr, a member of Palm Lake Christian Church in St. Petersburg, Fla.,

through leadership, according to an announcement by the region. "Payuyo's deep faith and sincere compassion for others transforms ministry and mission into work that uplifts and encourages. Through one-on-one pastoral care and work trips with Disciples of Christ students, ministry unfolds. Payuyo's involvement in regional and national church work as well as women's ministries confirms her passion and love for Christ."



PAYUYO

is an attorney. Cisa Payuyo is a member of All Peoples Christian Church in Los Angeles and serves as the Associate Director of Church Relations at Chapman University.

The new chair of HELM's board is Tom Wood, a member of Webster Groves Christian Church in St. Louis and a retired newspaper publisher. The departing board chair is Paul Rivera, an engineer from Cove Neck, NY.

Leaving HELM's board are a pair of Texans: Tim Lee, Assistant Professor of Church History at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, and Madge Vasquez, a banker in Austin.



BARR

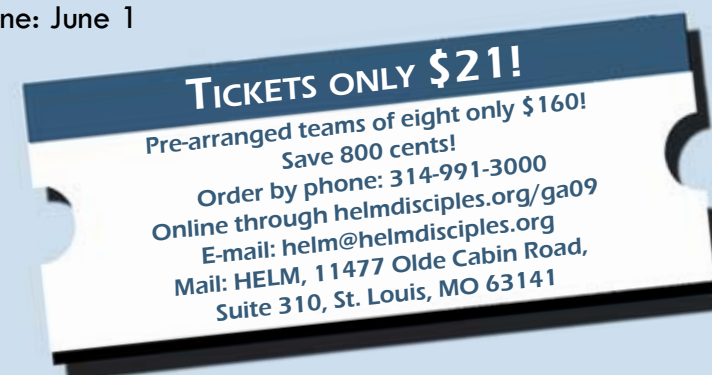


WOOD

Q: Who comes up with questions for HELM's Great Disciples Leadership Quiz, anyway?

A: You!

Do you know something trivial - or important - about Disciples history and leadership? Send HELM your question and the correct answer. If we use your entry, you could help decide the next Disciples Trivia Champion! You'll also be entered in our drawing to win two free tickets to the Quiz. See rules and past questions at helmdisciples.org/ga09. Deadline: June 1



THURSDAY, JULY 30 - 5 P.M.
INDIANA CONVENTION CENTER - WABASH BALLROOM 3

SEMINARIANS

from Disciples Home Missions and Glen Stewart, regional minister from Tennessee; and

- Stewardship and personal finance, led by Sandra Michael-Bowers of the Pension Fund, Gary Kidwell of the Christian Church Foundation, and John Davidson of Church Extension.

After General Minister and President Sharon Watkins' opening-night presentation, plenary sessions were structured with the denomination's four priorities in mind.

- Gay Reese, author of the acclaimed "Unbinding the Gospel," addressed the skills needed to revitalize congregations.
- Rick Morse and Nadine Burton of New Church Ministries provided the background for the Disciples' drive to establish 1,000 new congregations by 2020.
- April Johnson, Minister of Reconciliation, updated seminarians on our progress toward a pro-reconciliation and anti-racism church.
- Dan Moseley, a professor at Chris-

tian Theological Seminary, compared leadership to jazz – knowing when to take the lead and when to yield to others.

"I feel like the people who work in general ministries are available to me in a way I didn't know they were before," said Megan Ammann, a seminarian at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. "They are available, accessible, and helpful and will be throughout my ministry as needs and questions arise."

While there is a lot of learning, the conference also helps seminarians build community, particularly students at seminaries with few Disciples, such as Gay Behrensmeyer, a student at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in Iowa. "Since I've only been a part of the Disciples denomination for a few years and don't attend a Disciples seminary, it was a blessing for me to be able to be in community with fellow

JENNY

fought the disease that hardens organ tissue. In the spring of 2007, she nearly had a double-lung transplant.

Through her ordeal, her faith bolstered her spirit. Jenny wrote about her health battle in a pair of essays she wrote for HELM. "I really felt God's calling to be a light of hope and inspiration for those around me," she wrote in November 2007. "Every day I prayed for God to do great things with my life so that my heartbreak could become hope and strength for others. I knew that would give me strength and hope, though I never lost faith throughout the whole journey."

Her faith permeated her calling, too. During her freshman year at Georgetown, she accepted a call to ministry. Her covenants at Georgetown involved working with low-income immigrant youth learning English and then with the youth group of a nearby church. "Jenny blessed us, and we thank God for her life," said HELM's Dennis Landon. "We continue to grieve with her family and friends and others whose lives she touched."

To read Jenny's HELM essays, or to learn more about her fight, visit www.helmdisciples.org and click on "In memory of Jenny Faenza" on the right side of the page.



Monique Spells blesses the cup as Thomas Bierovic and Diana Batzka prepare to serve communion during the Sunday morning closing worship.

Disciples and learn more about this wonderful denomination."

The conference also brings leadership opportunities. Monique Spells and Chesla Nickelson, students at Christian Theological Seminary, organized each day's worship; two dozen seminarians volunteered to help lead worship.

The next Seminarians Conference will be in the spring of 2011. M.Div. students who have completed at least one year of studies are eligible to attend. Visit www.helmdisciples.org for more information.