

UNION NETWORK

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UNION NETWORK

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On the Cover

This Union crest rests on the wall above the doorway into the Refectory from the Quadrangle and is adjacent to one of the State University of New York. For more information on the crests in Union's stonework see the *Did you Know?* column on page 24.

Cover Photo by Ron Hester



Atlanta area alums met April 6 to organize their chapter of the Union Alumni/ae Network. L-R: Marvin Ellison '81, Jim Irwin '62, Letitia Campbell '03, Jill Lum '03, Liz Bounds '86, Oscar McCloud '61, Martin Lehfeldt '65, and Tom Mozley '72. Not pictured: David Lewicki '04 and Beth Waltemath '04.

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Facing each other across the Refectory doorway from the Quadrangle you'll see these two fellows. On the left is a worn, rumpled and sad fellow while the one opposite has neatly pressed trousers, a napkin on his lap, and is popping a morsel into his mouth. Is this a reminder to generations of Union students entering the Refectory that not everyone will enjoy a nice meal on this night? (See page 24.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Alumni/ae and Friends,

GREETINGS FROM OUR BELOVED UNION Theological Seminary in the City of New York where the spring term is in full swing. As our nation's highest elected leader and his allies make good on campaign promises that threaten the moral foundation of our democracy under a banner of religious hatred, bigotry, and exclusion, Union's work is more relevant now than ever.

Union has long embraced theological excellence, academic rigor, faithful practice, and social justice, so it should be no surprise that we remain outspoken. After the chaotic and heartbreaking fallout from the President's Executive Order banning travelers, immigrants, and refugees from seven Muslim-majority countries, the Union community sprang to action. In a striking act of solidarity, the faculty released a public statement unanimously condemning the Trump Administration. ([ONLINE: utsnyc.edu/immigration](https://utsnyc.edu/immigration)) And, at the urging of our students, the faculty, administration, and Trustees continue to demonstrate this commitment to dissent by declaring the Union campus a sanctuary seminary—not simply in name—but in action.

Episcopal Divinity School Aligns with Union

In late February, we learned that the Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) voted to pursue an affiliation with Union to create a dedicated EDS entity for Episcopal theological education on our campus. This is an historic announcement in the life of our Seminary, and we are honored that EDS has chosen to partner with Union for the stewardship of our shared mission.

Spurred by financial challenges that were depleting their endowment, EDS made the decision to cease granting degrees at the Seminary's Cambridge, MA location after May 2017. Since last summer, EDS has proactively explored ways to continue providing theological education within an accredited and degree-granting program. After a lengthy vetting process among possible candidates, Union was selected as the best positioned theological school to leverage EDS resources towards the creation of a dedicated Episcopal program. Negotiations are ongoing, and in the coming months we will work jointly to develop new structures, new curriculum, and an expanded community.

We extend our warmest welcome to EDS community members—faculty, staff, students, alums—whose sense of loss is no doubt painful. Union pledges to support a transition that respects the EDS ethos. We are confident that the deepest commitments of Union and EDS will be honored in the years ahead.

Eunice C. Jackson & Ella P. Mitchell Chair Established

With your generous support, we have reached our funding goal for the new Eunice C. Jackson & Ella P. Mitchell Chair, named in honor of the first two African American women to graduate from Union Theological Seminary. These women are the definition of trailblazers, paving the way for Union's strong tradition in both Womanist and Liberation theologies.

The Jackson-Mitchell Chair has the literal buy-in of the Union community; nearly \$500,000 of the Chair's endowment was raised from more than 300 generous donors. That's the greatest number of individual gifts given to a single chair at Union and offers clear testimony to the chair's importance and our shared belief in its enduring value.

Union leadership has selected Womanist and Systematics theologian Rev. Dr. Andrea C. White to fill the Jackson-Mitchell Chair, an outstanding scholar who embodies the ethical, socio-political, and ecclesial traditions so identified with the Chair's namesakes. Her investiture will take place in 2018 after the publication of her two monographs *Scandal of Flesh: Black Women's Bodies and God Politics*, and *The Back of God: A Theology of Otherness in Karl Barth and Paul Ricoeur*, as well as a third volume that she is editing: *Feminist and Womanist Theologies* (Fortress Press, *Shapers of Modern Theology* book series).

Judith & Bill Moyers Chair Established

The Union Board has voted to name Union's world-renowned theologian Rev. Dr. James H. Cone as the inaugural professor holding the Judith and Bill Moyers Distinguished Chair in Systematic Theology, established through a generous \$3 million gift by Union Trustee Chang K. Park.

Bill and Judith Moyers are longstanding friends of Union who embody the spirit of creative leadership and unwavering advocacy that is the hallmark of our mission. For more than four decades, Bill and Judith have posed critical questions in the public square, invigorating the moral commitments of people around the world with their groundbreaking journalism. Together, they hold over 30 Emmys, a dozen Peabody Awards, and numerous honorary degrees.

The Moyers Chair will be held by James Cone, Union's most senior theologian and the pioneer of Black Liberation Theology. An esteemed scholar, a formidable writer, a much beloved teacher, and a powerful public presence, Dr. Cone began his illustrious tenure at Union in 1970. He is the author of many acclaimed books, including *A Black Theology of Liberation*, *God of the Oppressed*, and *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*.

M.Div. Degree Program Adds Interreligious Engagement Concentrations in Buddhism & Islam

Beginning this fall, the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program will expand to include students preparing for interfaith ministry in either Islam or Buddhism.

Though grounded in the Christian tradition, Union has long benefitted from the insights of other faiths' teachings. Formalizing ministerial training in Buddhism and Islam is an exciting milestone in Union's ongoing efforts to promote robust dialogue with other traditions and worldviews.

Dr. Jerusha T. Lamprey, Assistant Professor of Islam and Ministry, has been instrumental in the creation of the field of Interreligious Engagement at Union and will continue to provide direction and oversight for students seeking certification as Muslim chaplains. Dr. Greg Snyder, an ordained Zen Buddhist priest and dharma-transmitted teacher, will lead Buddhist M.Div. students as Senior Director of Buddhist Studies.

Faith in America Series Launched

Union's public programs continue to be supportive of theology, positive social change, and unfettered dialogue. Our monthly *Faith in America* series of free public discussions, launched in fall 2016, has gathered luminaries from the spiritual, political, and intellectual worlds to constructively tackle challenging topics and current events. The program has offered a dynamic forum for engaging Union's visiting professors Michelle Alexander and the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, its esteemed faculty and public intellectuals such as Professor Gary Dorrien

and Professor Emeritus Cornel West, accomplished alumni/ae, and current students.

Faith in America provided a timely gathering on the day after the November election when Bill Moyers offered guidance as those assembled and via live stream reflected on the shock and trauma of the 2016 Presidential race.

Union's reaction to the federal immigration ban yielded a February *Faith in America* with Anthony Romero, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, who delivered a keynote talk exploring how faith communities and civil liberties may align to oppose wholesale discrimination and fear mongering ([ONLINE: utsnyc.edu/faithinamerica](https://online.utsnyc.edu/faithinamerica)).

Encore Transition Program

In January, Union welcomed the inaugural class of the new Encore Transition Program. This four-month course is specifically designed for people 55 and older who are poised for retirement or a career change and have an interest in religion and social justice. The program is facilitated by Ruth A. Wooden, a recent graduate of Union, who enrolled in the M.A. program as an "encore" to her own 2011 retirement. Encore is modeled on a university-style seminar and combines theological tutorials with real-world praxis.

Rebirth

In this season of rebirth and revival, the literal and metaphoric seeds lying dormant through the cold days of winter unerringly break through the warming earth and push tentative new beginnings into full awakening. Now is the time to ask ourselves: "What is waiting to be born? How can we draw upon the power of life's never ceasing cycle of renewal and find in it the energy we need for the work ahead?"

Each of us at Union is a stakeholder in a vibrant and historic community where students, alums, faculty, administration, trustees, and fellow seekers of all denominations and many religions, come together to wrestle with the theological and social challenges of our times and to receive inspiration and enlightenment from the wellspring of our common humanity and the Divine we worship and follow.

In my nine years as Union's President, I have never been prouder to lead this great institution, and I have never been more confident that its greatest days are ahead.

Peace,



The Rev. Dr. Serene Jones
President and Johnston Family Professor for Religion & Democracy

Union Making News *leadership to positively transform the world*



← FALL 2016

Faith in America

This fall Union launched *Faith in America*, a free yearlong series of monthly public discussions. The goal of Faith in America is to help sustain public dialogue on matters of critical importance that tend to rise, and quickly fall, from the public view in today's 24-hour news cycle.

Each public conversation focuses on important national issues related to faith and social justice. Among the topics addressed are the critical need for faith and the political process, economic inequity, racial injustice, mass incarceration, criminal justice reform, police-community relations, the environment, the longevity revolution, and global interfaith and social issues. Our distinguished speakers include Michelle Alexander, Bill Moyers, Cornel West, Anthony Romero, and Rev. William Barber.

We are very proud that Union Theological Seminary, which is dedicated to academic excellence and social justice, is bringing these important conversations to our students and the New York community.



↑ OCTOBER 7-10, 2016

Union Students at the Border Wall

Nine Union students traveled with Dr. Daisy Machado '81, Professor of Church History, to Nogales, Arizona to protest the border wall that Donald Trump praised throughout the Presidential campaign and now, as President, hopes to fortify. Our students joined a broad coalition of more than 1,000 activists to raise public awareness about the challenges relating to the U.S./Mexico border and to fight against U.S. militarization at home and abroad. During the three-day gathering, the students participated in workshops and events on both sides of the U.S./Mexico border, as well as engaged in art, music, and resistance. The Students for Peace and Justice Caucus at Union sponsored this trip.



↑ DECEMBER 6, 2016

Union on the Hill

During the last year, Union has worked with a wide array of religious leaders from around the country to express support from within faith communities for LGBTQ rights and equality. On December 2, Union convened a press conference in Washington, DC at the National Press Club with evangelical and other faith leaders to promote a pro-LGBTQ public policy agenda for the Trump Administration and new Congress. After the press conference, Union leadership met with government officials to voice their support for the LGBTQ community.

The press conference was co-sponsored by the Metropolitan Community of Churches; the Human Rights Campaign; the National LGBTQ Task Force; Auburn Seminary; SAGE; Cathedral of Hope; The Center for African American Religion, Sexual Politics, and Social Justice at Columbia University; Covenant Baptist UCC; and the Tyler Clementi Foundation.



↑ **DECEMBER 17, 2016**

African Religions in the Americas

During the fall semester, Dr. Samuel Cruz, Assistant Professor of Church and Society, convened his “African Religions in the Americas” course at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, New York State’s only maximum-security prison for women. He was joined by six current Union students along with two students from the Jewish Theological Seminary. The other ten enrollees were prisoners completing degrees from Marymount Manhattan College’s Bedford Hills College Program. Cruz’s syllabus was primarily designed as a 16-week exploration into Spiritism, Santería, Voodoo, and Rastafarianism, but the course was also a shared experiment in the formation of kinship between the two very different student groups.

The New York Times published a feature article about the class that appeared in the Saturday, December 17, 2016, New York section of the *Times*.

↓ **JANUARY 23–25, 2017**

Muslim Women Leadership Program

Dr. Jerusha Lamptey, Assistant Professor of Islam and Ministry, convened a cohort of 20 Muslim women for a three-day leadership conference before the beginning of the spring semester. This program was designed to nurture a dialogue among diverse Muslim women leaders and provide opportunities for networking. Participants examined Islamic thought and practice as well as developed practical skills for public engagement and communication. Speakers at the conference included Aisha Al-Adawiya, founder and chair of Women in Islam, Inc.; Dr. Sarah Sayeed, Senior Advisor, New York City Mayor’s Office; Iman Boukadoum, Director of Community Partnership, Interfaith Center of New York; and Linda Sarsour, Director, Arab American Association of New York, and co-founder, MPOWER Change.

↑ **2017**

Doctor of Ministry Program Launched

Union has added a new Doctor of Ministry program to its degree offerings in an effort to better enhance the practice of ministry among supervisory clinical spiritual care educators. The D.Min. program builds upon Union’s renowned interdisciplinary curriculum, which has long blended theology, psychology, and clinical training while also venturing into exciting new territory with the addition of online coursework. The 42-credit degree combines theology, systems and group theory, interreligious engagement, social justice, and adult education to prepare students for service in multicultural and interreligious contexts, in alignment with the requirements for certification as a supervisor in Clinical Pastoral Education.



Union to Train Muslim and Buddhist Leaders

Updated M.Div. Complements M.Div.—M.S.S.W. Dual Degree and M.A. Programs

BEGINNING IN FALL 2017, with the enthusiastic support of the faculty, Union will offer students three pathways to its Master of Divinity degree: the Master of Divinity Oriented Toward Ministerial Leadership, the Master of Divinity in Islam, Social Justice, and Interreligious Engagement, and the Master of Divinity in Socially Engaged Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement.

“These curricular developments underscore the fact that preparation for ministry remains our core academic mission,” observes Dr. Mary C. Boys ’75, ’78, Dean of Academic Affairs and Skinner and McAlpin Professor of Practical Theology, “but how and for whom we offer that preparation is changing in some exciting and educationally rich ways. Union’s mission summons us to meet the changing needs of faith communities and to prepare our graduates to contribute to a religiously pluralistic world. Muslim and Buddhist communities are increasingly

“These curricular developments underscore the fact that preparation for ministry remains our core academic mission.”

—Dr. Mary C. Boys ’75, ’78

seeking seminary-trained leaders and have turned to Union to help meet that need. Christian ministers are also asking for more and more resources so that they can offer effective leadership in interreligious as well as ecumenical settings.” As Boys notes, “Union’s updated curriculum promises to enhance the school’s

longstanding tradition of academic excellence and commitment to social justice while expanding its capacity to educate leaders in multiple faith traditions.”

For all M.Div. candidates, the Master of Divinity remains a full-time program that requires 78 credit hours, including 40–44 credits in core distribution requirements in the fields of Bible, Church History, Theology, Practical Theology, and Interreligious Engagement. In the revised curriculum to begin September 2017, students will choose one of three possible pathways to fulfill degree requirements.


The Master of Divinity Oriented Toward Ministerial Leadership, the most flexible of the pathways, offers different options in required courses and numerous concentrations. Persons interested in preparing for Christian ordination or other credentialed ministry within a church or a vocation of service will find the requisite courses for those vocations.

Those interested in preparing for non-credentialed ministry, non-profit leadership, or vocations in contexts outside of or beyond a church will find alternative courses that will prepare them for their own calling.

The Master of Divinity in Islam, Social Justice, and Interreligious Engagement is designed for those interested in specific preparation for diverse leadership roles working with and in Muslim communities. These roles include religious and spiritual leadership; chaplaincy at universities, hospitals, or prisons; professional counseling; teaching; and careers in interreligious cooperation, policy making, social justice advocacy, journalism, nonprofits, and government. The curriculum engages students in sustained and probing study of sacred texts, history, systematic theology and Islamic religious sciences, practical theology, and field education. This pathway to the Master of Divinity has three distinctive features: a focus on Islamic tradition and Muslim practice, a focus on interreligious engagement, and a focus on social disparities based on gender, race, class, sexuality, and other marginalizing forces. In keeping with Union’s broader curricula, the goal of this focus, which is integrated into many courses, is to cultivate an ability to respond to these disparities with analytic rigor, historical consciousness, sensitivity to tradition, and spiritual compassion.

The Master of Divinity in Socially Engaged Buddhism and Interreligious Engagement equips persons for diverse leadership roles with and in Buddhist communities, as well as bringing Buddhist practices and principles to communities that may not identify as Buddhist. This pathway prepares students for various vocations, as outlined above in the Islamic concentration, and also keeps a focus on Buddhist traditions and practice, on interreligious engagement, and on addressing social disparities with analytic rigor, historical consciousness, sensitivity to tradition, and equanimity and compassion. All three M.Div. options provide significant opportunities for students’ personal, professional, and spiritual development.

A fourth option for M.Div. students is to pursue a dual degree by seeking both a Master of Divinity and a Master of Science in Social Work. Currently, Union offers a dual degree with the Columbia School of Social Work, and it anticipates offering this same dual degree option, beginning in fall 2018, with the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College.

In addition to the M.Div. program, students pursue theological studies in the Master of Arts program, which is a two-year, 51-credit degree program that provides students with a foundational understanding of theological disciplines in preparation of further graduate study or for general educational purposes. 

Union Launches Doctor of Ministry

IN AUGUST 2017, Union will launch its first Doctor of Ministry program. Its distinctive focus will be on supervisory clinical spiritual care education, and the program's goal is to offer additional depth and breadth to those enrolled in programs preparing them to become supervisors in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The first of its kind in the U.S., the Union D.Min. program aims to enhance the practice of ministry among spiritual care practitioners serving in multicultural and interreligious health care contexts. Building on the strength of Union's interreligious engagement focus, as well as its highly regarded department in Psychology and Religion, the program is recruiting an initial cohort of twelve students.

This 42-credit degree is a hybrid that includes intensive residency courses in August, online courses in the fall and spring terms, and a thesis or project. Courses constitute a total of 36 credit hours, and a project or thesis will constitute the final six credits. Rev. A. Meigs Ross, a psychotherapist who served as a consultant on the design of Union's new D. Min., reflected: "I wish that this degree had been available twenty years ago when I was in supervisory education or even ten years ago when I first began overseeing supervisory education students. It provides the in-depth academic education and support needed to complement the experiential mentoring model of clinical supervisory education."

Union alumnus Anton Boisen (Class of 1911) was instrumental in the development of hospital chaplaincy and clinical pastoral education. In the 1960s Union pioneered a program in psychiatry and religion, and now Union is building upon this legacy with this Doctor of Ministry program. As Dr. Trace Haythorn, Executive Director of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), says: "Union Theological Seminary has been the leader in public theology for many years. This new program builds on that rich tradition in ways that capture the strengths of both organizations in service to the larger community."

Union's D. Min. program will provide supervisory education students with an array of resources, including courses led by faculty specialists within a collaborative learning community. The course work will provide ample opportunity for the supervisory education students to "present" in varied modes and interact with their peers. Moreover, Union's strength in interreligious engagement and in theological-cultural studies will contribute significantly to the skill level of supervisors to respond in learned ways to the complex diversities that are increasingly characteristic of clinical pastoral education groups.

This program is intended to develop a theologically informed, contextually attuned, and integrated understanding of the nature, purposes, theories, and practices of ministry in the specialized area of Supervisory Clinical Spiritual Care Education; develop analytical, pastoral, and practical

ministerial competencies and skills within multicultural, interreligious, and clinical contexts; and develop a personal and professional ethic in keeping with sound organizational principles, high ethical standards, and mature conduct in the profession. The program design aligns with the requirements for certification as a supervisor in Clinical Pastoral Education.

The director of Union's inaugural D.Min. program is Rabbi Jeffery M. Silberman, a chaplain, educator, and seasoned CPE supervisor, who will remain at the Bridgeport, CT hospital where he has been Director of Spiritual Care and Education



“I am very pleased to become part of the team at Union, whose reputation I admire and whose social justice values are essential in this world today.”

while overseeing the launch of Union's program. Trained at the University of Dayton, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, and Andover Newton Theological School, Rabbi Silberman has also earned a Black-Red Belt in Tae Kwon Do and a Black-Brown Belt in Kuk Sool Wan martial arts. A member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCARE), he is a board certified chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), the first rabbi to be certified as full supervisor with the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), and the first and founding president of the National Association of Jewish Chaplains. "I am very pleased to become part of the team at Union, whose reputation I admire and whose social justice values are essential in this world today," Rabbi Silberman remarked recently. "This new D.Min. program, in my mind, fills a large gap in the conceptual education of future CPE supervisors. I am convinced that we can set a standard by combining outstanding academics with social, cultural and interreligious awareness in this unique hybrid training program." **!**

For further information about Union's D.Min. program or to apply, go to utsnyc.edu/newdegree.

Samoa and Standing Rock: Making the Connections

KAIO THOMPSON, M.DIV. STUDENT



Transitioning from the small island nation of Samoa with a population of 55,000 to New York City with over 8 million people was a challenge to say the least. I wasn't so sure where, and even whether, there would be room for a Samoan to lend his voice in the big city. However, as the journey began, it was comforting to know that others at Union shared similar interests,

especially indigenous and environmental issues.

Although many of my classmates and faculty had limited knowledge of these issues as they pertained to the context of the Pacific islands, Union's legacy of social justice provided ample opportunities to inform people in various settings of the issues in the South Pacific and how they relate to the global struggle for justice. I found common ground with Union's Climate Justice movement under the direction of Victoria Furio and with the Center for Earth Ethics and its director Karenni Gore.

On November 7, 2016, the Center for Earth Ethics sponsored a trip to Cannonball, ND that included colleague Mindahi Bastida and me. We joined over 500 clergy from across the nation to stand in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and their allies. I also represented the Union community, which had collected various monetary contributions through individual student caucuses. In two days we collected close to \$1,000, which we presented to the Oceti Sakowin Council of Elders, who expressed their heartfelt gratitude to their "relatives" in New York.

The clergy action at Standing Rock was organized by the Cannonball Episcopal Church. We stood together with Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Unitarian Universalists, and faith leaders from other traditions in solidarity with the indigenous people of America. On a more personal note, Standing Rock represented the struggle of all indigenous communities, including my islands of the South Pacific, specifically the struggle for full autonomy by the indigenous people of West Papua New Guinea under the illegal occupation of Indonesia, now for over 50 years. The concerns of Native Americans reminded me of the illegal seizure of sacred lands and exploitation of natural resources that many indigenous communities like West Papua struggle to oppose daily.

Behind many of these projects are the interests of major fossil fuel corporations who are relentless in ensuring that their investments are protected at all costs. The brutal and inhumane tactics of the Dakota Access Pipeline Company (DAPL) are a prime example. Ironically, local law enforcement agencies, which have sworn to protect the rights of the Standing Rock Sioux and other citizens, have instead provided private security for fossil fuel companies in North Dakota, in other parts of America, and throughout the world where similar projects undermine indigenous rights.

Additionally, the ecological implications of a possible oil leak in the region inspired our journey to stand in solidarity with indigenous people who, in my opinion, have become the moral compass of a morally bankrupt nation. Not long after returning from Standing Rock, I contributed an essay addressing the growing threat of climate change to a collection entitled *Light for a New Day: Faith and Energy Ethics*, edited by Catholic theologian Erin Lothes and published by Greenfaith. These essays were first given in Marrakech, Morocco as presentations to the 22nd Conference of the Parties (COP 22) and to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). My response to ecological decay was a call to action demonstrating the multitude of ways that island people are simultaneously adapting to climate change while also exploring options for cleaner energy. It offered a theological response to climate change by calling for a "radical transformation of values," as indicated by Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si*. As people living on this earth, all



Mindahi Bastida (LEFT), director of the Original Caretakers program of the Center for Earth Ethics at Union, and Kaio Thompson, current M.A. student, attending the Standing Rock clergy action in November, 2016.

communities are called to respond and claim responsibility for the level of destruction humanity has caused our common home.

I am particularly mindful of the growing reality of climate refugees, especially among the Pacific islands of Tuvalu and the Solomon Islands, where many families have had to relocate due to rising sea levels. Clearly, the concerns of my people in the Pacific have had little effect on larger countries that continue to view a transition to clean energy as unrealistic, but I would argue that we must listen with great care to the distant cries of people who contribute the least to climate change because in as little as 50 years, according to some scientists, climate change will become an immediate threat to the livelihood of people on all continents. Any response to climate change should be handled as urgently as any threat to national security, without compromise.

It is important for the world to understand that “there can be no compromise, for it is compromise that has led us to this disturbing reality, endangering our future generations, as well as the life of our planet.” As Pacific theologian Leslie Boseto said, “The land and seas are the life-blood of our people, and our long-term prosperity is integrally linked to the health of our small island home.” Therefore, to overlook the concerns of these small Pacific islands in relation to climate change ultimately means compromising the safety of the greater global community. In other words, the future and lives of my people rely heavily on how larger, more economically developed countries address climate change as a growing threat to all of humanity.

Therefore, I believe I had no choice but to use the opportunity to speak on behalf of Pacific people who have limited platforms to voice their concerns. Indigenous rights and ecological justice are some of the fine threads woven into the very fabric of my identity as a Samoan, Christian, and member of the clergy. These commitments are why I chose to study at Union. My Union experience has been enriched by the people and by the multitude of experiences that each individual brings to the table. What I have found here is a community willing to engage and struggle together to change and inspire change in the world.

Personally speaking, I have to admit that in the beginning, the transition from island to city life was not a smooth one. It had its challenges. But it was and continues to be the Union community that has made even the difficulties of that transition worthwhile. I found fertile ground to continue advocating for the issues within my own context, but also to become an ally to many others experiencing similar modes of injustice. As we continue to work towards a more just and free world, together we must seek new ways to persevere and hold on to hope. Soifua: May peace guide your journey. 🙏

Findings from the Alumni/ae Survey on Communications

More than **1,000 alumni/ae** participated in a recent survey about communications at Union. One-third submitted the survey electronically, and two-thirds sent back a printed version of the survey that had been distributed through the mail. Some alums filled out the survey while they were on campus last October for ReUnion 2016 or while they were attending the fall meeting of the Alumni/ae Council.

Participants were asked how they currently receive information from Union, how they prefer to stay in touch, and how they rate the *Union Network* magazine among other modes of communication. Here is a summary of findings:

67% of the respondents graduated in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s.

65% received the M.Div. degree.

87% receive email communications from Union; **84%** receive print mailings.

The majority (**67%**) prefers receiving news about Union via email, but in contrast, only **44%** open and read Union emails on a consistent basis. When asked about the frequency of email messages received from Union, three-quarters of the respondents said that they hear from Union “the correct amount.”

When asked how often they visit the Union website, **80%** reported “never” or “seldom.” Only **11%** use the Union website three or more times monthly. Only a small percentage of alumni/ae reads Union’s Facebook page or Twitter feed.

Nine out of ten alumni/ae rate the *Union Network* magazine “excellent” or “good.” High marks were given for the contents, especially the President’s Message, feature articles, Class Notes, and profiles of faculty, students, and alums.

Four out of five prefer receiving the magazine as a print publication rather than in digital form. Many commented that they like something they can hold in their hands, read at their leisure, and share with friends and colleagues.

Our thanks to all who participated in the survey, added numerous comments, and offered many helpful suggestions about improving communication between Union and its valued alums. 🙏

Thriving in Place: Community Ministry in Dallas

REV. BRUCE A. BUCHANAN, M.DIV. '76

EDITOR'S NOTE: In February 2016, Tom Finley Brown '65 and I co-hosted a reception in Dallas for Union alumni/ae and friends, and during my stay I was able to visit with Bruce Buchanan and his wife Carol Adams, who gave me a tour of The Stewpot, a ministry with and for the homeless with extensive programming that Bruce has directed for three decades.

THIRTY YEARS AGO THIS YEAR I arrived in Dallas to become the Associate Minister for Community Ministries at First Presbyterian Church Dallas. During my interview that February, I mentioned that I had been head of security at Union while a student there. Several eyebrows went up. It turns out working in security was one of the many ways Union prepared me for this new ministry. After Union, I was a minister at First United Presbyterian Church of Dunkirk, New York for a decade, during which my spouse, Carol Adams, and I worked for integrated housing. I ended up being appointed to the Dunkirk Housing Authority, became President, and as a result oversaw the building of almost 100 housing units. It was this experience that brought me to the attention of FPC Dallas.

In 1975 the church had started The Stewpot, a day resource center for homeless individuals that served lunch and offered social work. Because they had been searching for a Community Minister for over two years, they took to calling around the country to Presbytery executives looking for a minister who had expertise in housing. And so in May 1987, Carol and I found ourselves in Dallas.

One of my first tasks when I arrived was to secure liability protection for a volunteer dental clinic The Stewpot wanted to operate. It had been held up for two years. It's a telling symbol of social justice ministry—red tape will always be with us, but also you cannot feed those who cannot eat. After several days of non-stop telephoning to various agencies, the insurance coverage was in place, and we began to offer dental care through volunteer dentists. Now, 29 years and 27,000 patients later, we have a dental clinic with four full dental operatories and offer not just primary but secondary care including dentures.

Back in 1987, The Stewpot's tables and chairs were those that had been cast off from the church. The first week I arrived, I was told to "cull the line" of those waiting for the noonday meal by looking for anyone wearing Nikes or Reeboks. The presumption was that anyone wearing those kinds of sneakers did not need assistance. I was then to ask for their ID, and if they had a Dallas address, tell them, "well, you aren't homeless."

As I stood outside, surveying the line for Nikes and Reeboks, a young man was hauled outside by one of the policemen who



“I’ve found long-range planning isn’t the key to program planning when working with the vulnerable: staying ahead of needs is something we need to do weekly, not according to a five-year plan.”

worked off-duty at The Stewpot. The policemen threw the man against the church’s wall and held a gun to his head. I returned to my office and thought, “What am I doing here?” and then “How can I change this?”

I realized we had created an institution that replicated other institutions that encouraged anonymity and violence. People sat on beat-up chairs eating on beat-up rectangular tables. We weren’t putting our best foot forward. We weren’t being hospitable. To remedy this, we purchased round tables.

It reduced seating capacity, but it began to build a sense of community and create a feeling of hospitality. Now every weekday morning, we offer coffee, make vitamins available, and distribute hygiene items. Five full-time social workers are on staff, and we aim to provide trauma-informed care.

In the early 1990s, we moved across the street from the church into a large building donated by a church member. This gave us a greater flexibility in developing new programming, but the church lost a certain degree of intimacy with our day-to-day programming. I regretted not being “under the cross,” but realize how much we have been able to do with all the additional space.

I've found long-range planning isn't the key to program planning when working with the vulnerable: staying ahead of needs is something we need to do weekly, not according to a five-year plan. The Stewpot also encourages experimentation to discover if needs exist. An artist offered to teach art at one of the round tables. This program turned into such a success that when we rehabilitated the second floor, the art program gained one and then another room, and now we have a full-time staff person coordinating the art program. More than \$200,000 of their art has been sold, and members of the art program receive ninety percent of the proceeds from the sale and the other ten percent goes to buying more materials. Some of the artists have earned sufficient funds so that they are no longer homeless.

One day, early in my ministry, when The Stewpot meal was late, nearly 300 people began to grow restless. I asked if anyone knew how to play the old upright piano in the corner. Several people at one table pointed to an older man, who came forward and played. I asked myself, "How many other talents are present in The Stewpot just waiting for expression?" We created The Stewpot Talent Contest, which is held yearly around Halloween to offer opportunities for talents to shine and award monetary prizes for singing, performance, poetry, art, and essays. And Jim Anderson, the man who played that day, became a pianist at a local bar.

Early on I learned that people experiencing homelessness were unable to get other services because they lacked an ID. To remedy this, we started two programs: we offer our own Stewpot ID and have created a database with next-of-kin information. Medical examiners from around the country call us when one of our Stewpot friends has died to get information. The other program helps individuals obtain a Texas ID by aiding them in requesting birth certificates, school records, marriage licenses, and other documents. We help about 5,000 a year; it's a time-consuming process and yet essential. Several of our staff serve as notaries (including yours truly) to help streamline this process that involves applications for vital records throughout the states. There is no other comparable program in Dallas.

As we know, restrictions on voting have been allowed, and without an ID the homeless are effectively disenfranchised. And through our database, we learned that the majority of those experiencing homelessness were from Dallas. They were homeless at home. Now we offer a document bank to hold onto those vital documents.

In the 1990s, a member of the congregation who was a doctor suggested we offer medical care at The Stewpot. Hypertension, ongoing foot problems, diabetes, and other chronic problems were apparent, and volunteer doctors sought to treat these problems. Now Parkland Hospital offers a full-time, barrier-free clinic for the homeless at The Stewpot.

I believe that The Stewpot does not need to reinvent the wheel when other service providers have expertise. More than 25 agencies over the years have come to The Stewpot to provide services from Legal Aid to the Veterans Administration, AIDS and HIV resources, Epilepsy Clinic, and drug and alcohol counseling. I like to think of The Stewpot as a spoke of this

collaborative wheel. As a staff, we've been trained in how to help an epileptic, what to do if there is an active shooter, and how to respond to infectious diseases.

Other programs have emerged, too, like creating a community court to help those experiencing homelessness clear their records of misdemeanor charges (some that arise from the criminalizing of homelessness). Now we've acquired the property across the street from us, including the historic 508 Park building where the brilliant blues guitarist Robert Johnson recorded half of his oeuvre, and we are creating new programs accordingly, including a Museum of Street Culture, a Community Garden with a horticultural therapy program, and an amphitheater.

Like The Stewpot, I've grown—and thrived—where I was planted. **U**



TOP: Last year's Talent Contest, held at The Stewpot.

ABOVE: The Sculpture Wall and the sculptors, Brad Oldham and Christy Coltrin (right). Bruce invited them to create this piece for the outside of the Amphitheater.

Four Named as Distinguished Alumni/ae for 2016



LEFT TO RIGHT: Clifford J. Green '64, '72, Victoria J. Barnett '81, Ann Belford Ulanov '62, '67, Raphael G. Warnock '94, '06

Union alumni/ae Victoria Barnett, Clifford Green, Ann Belford Ulanov, and Raphael Warnock received Uitas distinguished alumni/ae awards at an October 7 ceremony in James Memorial Chapel that marked the close of the 2016 ReUnion.

Established in 1994, the Uitas awards bear witness to the faith and perseverance of living Union alumni/ae who exemplify the Seminary's academic breadth, its diversity and inclusiveness, and the range of vocations its graduates follow. Uitas recipients offer exemplary leadership in church, society, and the academy. Each year four alumni/ae are selected. Some are near the end of their ministries while others may be at mid-career.

Uitas recipients represent all those Union graduates who have distinguished themselves across the country and, indeed, around the world.

Dr. Victoria Barnett

Dr. Victoria Barnett received her Union M.Div. degree in 1981 and went on to earn her doctoral degree from the School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. She is Director of the Programs on Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, where she works closely with scholars of religion and leaders of all faith communities who teach and engage the history of the Holocaust and its legacy. Her research has focused on the history of the German Confessing Church under National Socialism and the responses of the international interfaith and ecumenical communities in that era. More recently she has examined the dynamics of interfaith contention and dialogue, and she is writing a historical study of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in the U.S. during the early twentieth century.

Well known for scholarship about Dietrich Bonhoeffer, from 2004 to 2014 Dr. Barnett served as one of the general editors of the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, the seventeen-volume English translation of Bonhoeffer's complete works that was published by Fortress Press. She is also the author of *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (Oxford University Press, 1992) and *Bystanders: Conscience and Complicity During the Holocaust* (Greenwood Press, 1999). In addition she has translated several books and published numerous articles and book

chapters on the role of religious leaders and institutions during the Holocaust.

Dr. Barnett's Unitas citation reads: "Victoria Joan Barnett '81: Holocaust historian, German Confessing Church scholar, theological editor; for her inspired, inspiring, and galvanizing work with multi-religious organizations as Director of the Programs on Ethics, Religion, and the Holocaust at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, to engage, understand, and teach the legacy of the Holocaust; for her tenacious and illuminating scholarship on the history of the German Confessing Church under National Socialism; and for her incisive work as General Editor of the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* English Edition."

The Rev. Dr. Clifford Green

The Rev. Dr. Clifford Green, after receiving his Bachelor's degree from Sydney University and his B.D. degree from Melbourne University of Divinity, completed the S.T.M. degree *magna cum laude* at Union in 1964 and the Th.D. with distinction in 1972. During his career he has taught at Wellesley College, Goucher College, and Hartford Seminary. The founding president of the International Bonhoeffer Society, English Language Section, Dr. Green also served as the executive director of the English Edition of the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, and in that capacity worked closely with Victoria Barnett and others. The author or editor of more than a dozen scholarly books, including *Bonhoeffer: A Theology and Sociality*, he is also appreciated for his scholarly writings on Paul Tillich, Karl Marx, Gustavo Gutierrez, and James Cone. Currently he is the Bonhoeffer Chair Scholar at Union, a position he has held since 2015.

Dr. Green's Unitas citation reads: "Clifford James Green '64, '72: Professor, archivist, theological editor extraordinaire; for his impassioned oversight and direction of the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* English Edition; for his vast, no-stone-left-untuned scholarship and contributions to Bonhoeffer translations, publishing projects, symposia, colloquia and congresses; and for his countless hours of labor as founding president of the International Bonhoeffer Society English Language Section, and in the Bonhoeffer Archives at Union Theological Seminary."

Dr. Ann Belford Ulanov

Dr. Ann Belford Ulanov received the M.Div. degree from Union in 1962 and Ph.D. in 1967. A Jungian psychoanalyst with a private practice, she is Union's Christiane Brooks Johnson Memorial Professor Emerita of Psychiatry and Religion. Her teaching and research have focused on issues of prayer and the spiritual life, aggression, anxiety, fantasy and dream, identity, and the feminine. Her numerous lectures and speaking engagements have taken her to professional gatherings throughout the U.S. and abroad; she was particularly in demand in the aftermath of 9/11 for her message about the relationship between religion and aggression, understanding unconscious processes, and the need for healing the psyche, which she sees as the most crucial deterrent to violence in the world. A member of the International Association for Analytical Psychiatry, the Jungian Psychoanalytic Association, and the American Association

of Pastoral Counselors, Ulanov has also served on numerous editorial and advisory boards. She is the author of countless articles and many books, including *The Female Ancestors of Christ, Madness and Creativity, The Unshuttered Heart: Opening to Aliveness and Deadness in the Self, Spirit in Jung, Spiritual Aspects of Clinical Work*, and *Attacked by Poison Ivy: A Psychological Study*. She is the co-author, with her late husband Barry Ulanov, of several studies, including *Religion and the Unconscious* and *Cinderella and Her Sisters: The Envied and the Envyng*.

Dr. Ulanov's Unitas citation reads: "Ann Belford Ulanov '62, '67: Professor, psychoanalyst, guide to the inner self; for her stellar research, writing, and teaching on prayer and the spiritual life, and healing the psyche; and for illuminating the unconscious processes of aggression and anxiety, and the realms of fantasy and dream, identity, and the feminine—with such radiant light that others might discern their own individual journeys to enlightenment, repair, wholeness, and self-realization."

The Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock

The Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock since 2005 has served as the Senior Pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. Earlier in his career he served a number of congregations, including for six years as the Youth Pastor and four years as Assistant Pastor at the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York City. A 1991 graduate from Morehouse College, Dr. Warnock received the M.Div. degree at Union in 1994 and Ph.D. degree in systematic theology in 2006. Dr. Warnock has been honored many times for his pastoral leadership and prophetic activism, including when his footprints were placed on the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in 2016. At President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama's request, Dr. Warnock delivered the closing prayer at the 2013 Inaugural Prayer Service held at the National Cathedral and delivered the sermon for the Annual White House Prayer Breakfast in March 2016. A preacher much in demand, he is also author of *The Divided Mind of the Black Church: Theology, Piety & Public Witness*.

Dr. Warnock's Unitas citation reads: "Raphael Warnock '94, '06: Pastor, civil rights activist, and prophetic clarion voice for racial equality and social justice; for his superlative leadership as Senior Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and the community at large; for his resounding challenge of the criminal justice system and impassioned defense of voting rights; and for his sweeping vision and virtuoso launch of new ministries to help individuals and families improve their own life outcomes, and live healthier and more prosperous lives." 📖

To nominate a Union alumna or alumnus for a Unitas award, please submit a letter of nomination to the Unitas Committee of the Union Alumni/ae Council, which makes recommendations to the Seminary's President. Ordinarily, four alums are recognized annually at a Unitas ceremony on campus. A nomination form can be found on the Union website at utsnyc.edu/unitas-award.

Emilie Grace Briggs, *Summa Cum Laude*, Class of 1897

BY RUTH TONKISS CAMERON

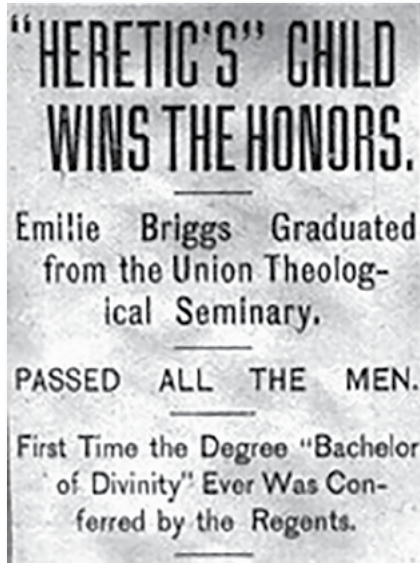
EDITOR'S NOTE: Ruth Tonkiss Cameron, who retired at the end of June 2016 as Archivist at the Burke Library, is completing a book on the life and contributions of Emilie Grace Briggs.

"Heretic's Child Wins the Honors!" "Miss Briggs for the Pulpit!" How might Emilie Grace Briggs have reacted to these news headlines, published from New York to Atlanta in 1897? She was the first woman at Union to receive the award of Bachelor of Divinity (equivalent to current M.Div.), and she received it *summa cum laude*. Her mother, clearly proud of this achievement, produced a scrapbook of newspaper clippings of this occasion, which still exists. During the graduation ceremony Emilie Grace's academic success was declared by Union's President Thomas S. Hastings to have "opened equal access for women to Union Theological Seminary courses." Newspapers declared this a significant step forward in the rights for women.

Directly following her graduation, Emilie Grace Briggs and Mary E. Woolley of Wellesley were accepted as the third and fourth women members of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis (SBL). By 1920 Grace, as her family called her, had also been elected as a member of America's oldest scholarly organization, the American Oriental Society.

Grace was born in Berlin, Germany in 1867, the eldest daughter of musician Julia Valentine and theologian Charles Augustus Briggs. She and her younger sister Agnes were both born in Germany during the three years when Charles was attending theological classes there. Grace as a toddler developed the capacity to speak basic German and later showed a natural fluency for languages.

Returning to the U.S., her father was ordained in the Presbyterian Church and became minister at Roselle, New Jersey in 1870. In spite of repeated requests from Professor Isaak Dörner for Charles Briggs to teach in Germany, Briggs left his parish



and accepted a teaching position at Union Seminary in 1874.


Grace was mainly educated by her parents. Thanks to her mother's teaching, she became an accomplished pianist, happy to perform in public throughout her life. At this period Union faculty and students lived, worked, and studied near or within the Seminary's buildings on Park Avenue at 70th Street, Union's location from 1884 until 1910. Its theological library was growing, thanks to Charles Briggs. From the age of seven, Grace found herself living at home in an educational and social community where religious debates, ancient languages as readable texts, and the examination of new ways of thinking were an everyday part of life. Her interest from an early age encouraged her father to teach her Theology, Church History, Bible studies, and languages, including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic.

The family frequently travelled together in summer visiting Europe while Charles was giving lectures, meeting overseas scholars, and obtaining books for the Union library. Grace, by the time of her attending Union courses, was fluent not only in Biblical languages,

but also in German, French, and Italian. While attending Union courses, Grace was also teaching New Testament from the Greek to the prospective deaconesses in the Training School for Deaconesses at Grace Church, and later at St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, New York. Her teaching continued for almost 20 years. At the same time, Grace was constantly helping her father as his amanuensis following the way in which she had supported him in the writing of his speeches during his heresy trials. The bulk of Charles Briggs' publications, articles, and books from circa 1890 onwards should be regarded as containing major content and oversight from Grace.

Grace produced only three articles of her own, one of which was published during her Union courses. Following graduation she was encouraged to develop a doctoral dissertation under the guidance of Union's faculty. Unfortunately, she prioritized her father's work as his amanuensis, resulting in the dissertation taking considerable time to develop. It was almost complete by the time of her father's sudden death in 1913, but was further delayed because Grace had promised her father in his last days that she would complete and publish all of his unfinished work.

Following the death of Charles Briggs, the family left Union. Grace lived with her mother for many years while continuing to develop her father's unfinished works, and occasionally adapting her dissertation. Many of Briggs' formerly unfinished works were published until publishers recognized that later proposals contained little of Charles's work but mostly Grace's writing.

Her brief obituary in 1944 was appropriately entitled: *Miss Briggs Theologian*. The archival papers of Emilie Grace Briggs, Julia Briggs, and Charles Briggs are accessible in the Burke Library by appointment. Please contact burkearchives@library.columbia.edu for assistance. 

Trailblazers 2017 Honors Black Alumni/ae



L-R: Jamall Calloway '14, Barbara Holmes, Renee Hill '90, '96, Michael Elam '07



L-R: Nancy Taylor, Kym McNair '08, '09, Elaina Smith, Joseph Tolbert, Betty Bolden, Henry Mitchell '44, Candace Simpson, Cassius Rudolph

THE ANNUAL Trailblazers series, which incorporates the Rev. Dr. Henry H. Mitchell '44 Black Alumni/ae Preaching Series, is sponsored by the Office of Alumni/ae Relations to celebrate Union's Black alumni/ae as "Trailblazers who have come before us." The theme for the February 2017 program was "New Compasses: Faith, Direction, and Questioning."

This year's Trailblazers planning group consisted of Christopher Jones '13 and Kymberly McNair '08, '09, members of the Alumni/ae Council; student leaders Claudine John, Medina Jones, Cassius Rudolph, Elaina Smith, Shawn Torres, and Joseph Tolbert from the Black Caucus, the Black Women's Caucus, and Fierce, the Black Queer Caucus; and Union staff, including Betty Bolden, Burke Library Reader Services Assistant for Special Collections and Archives; Marvin Ellison '81, Director of Alumni/ae Relations; Derrick Harkins '87, Senior Vice President for Innovation in Public Programs; Kevin McGee, Director of Special Events; and Yvette Wilson-Barnes '09, Associate Dean for Student Life.

Trailblazers 2017 began on February 2 with an evening worship service in James Chapel entitled "Black Worship as Resistance," organized by student

caucus leaders. Dr. Patrice E. Turner, famed gospel musician and artist in residence at the First Corinthian Baptist Church, Harlem, was worship leader and along with the Trailblazers choir led the assembled congregation in song. M.Div. candidates Medina Jones read poetry and Lisha Epperson offered liturgical dance. A highlight of the evening was having Dr. Henry Mitchell '44 and his son-in-law Robert Lawrence in attendance.

The second Trailblazers event on February 15 was a panel on "Black Joy in

Times of Crisis," featuring four speakers: Rev. Michael W. Elam '07, lecturer and educator on same-gender love theology and co-founder of the Fierce/Black Queer Caucus; Rev. Dr. Renee Hill '90, '96, Columbia University Community Scholar researching religion in Harlem; Rev. Dr. Barbara A. Holmes, former President of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and author of *Joy Unspeakable: Contemplative Practices of the Black Church*; and Jamall Calloway '14, Union Ph.D. candidate. After the insightful presentations and lively discussion, the evening ended with a reception.

The final Trailblazers event for 2017 was a noon worship service in James Chapel on Monday, February 27 in which alumna Kym McNair preached. As chair of the Alumni/ae Council's Trailblazers working group, she chose as her text II Peter 1.16-21 with a focus on verse 19: "You would do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place."

The Trailblazers working group, after reviewing this year's series, will begin making plans for Trailblazers 2018, which will include a celebration of the work and legacy of Dr. Delores S. Williams '91, prominent Womanist theologian and Paul Tillich Professor Emerita of Theology and Culture at Union. [U](#)

“In 2001, the Black Alumni/ae Association held its first Trailblazers gathering. I’m glad that in 2017 the spirit of that first Trailblazers event is alive and that the flame that was kindled by those proud Black Union graduates still burns brightly today.”

—Kym McNair, Chair of the Alumni/ae Council's Trailblazers working group

PROFILES OF ENTERING STUDENTS

This past fall, Union welcomed 90 new students from 23 states and 9 countries, and in this issue of *Union Network* four of these students write about their backgrounds and the reasons they elected to pursue their studies at this seminary. Two are currently M.A. candidates, one an S.T.M. student, and another a Union M.Div. graduate who is now in the Ph.D. program.



Yasmine Yonis
M.A. STUDENT

While attending seminary was God-written for me, Union was never part of my plan. I am a Muslim. And this is a Christian Seminary. I am a black activist. And this is a white institution. And I had no interest in studying God in between the four walls of a classroom. But I prayed for a graduate education where I would not have to choose between academics and ethics. God answered with Union.

A few years ago, I found myself disillusioned by my human rights career. I was based in Washington, DC where I lobbied the Obama Administration on its foreign policies along with assisting in highlighting human rights abuses against refugees and migrants in the U.S. and across the world. My work was deeply personal for me. My family and I fled Somalia's civil war in 1991 when I was 3 years old, becoming refugees who would be resettled in the U.S. soon after. I understand intimately how the foreign policies of Western countries continue to

“I have felt intellectually challenged and spiritually nourished. I am especially impressed by the intellectual caliber of fellow students of color.”

perpetuate a form of violent colonialism that isn't much different than that which my parents were born under. That knowledge and my experiences surviving this world as a black woman deeply committed to justice here in this settler colony called the United States and around the world brought me to a career in human rights where I hoped to do the work necessary to move this world toward justice.

Though many experiences during my time in Washington highlighted the allegiances of the nonprofit industrial complex was with the current power structure, my second year stands out. I was given the Central African Republic (CAR) portfolio as the country continued to unfold in a civil war over the nation's mineral-rich resources. I was asked to push the Obama Administration to request French peacekeepers to be sent into CAR. I knew France was one of the most violent colonial powers in Africa's history and continues neocolonial,

exploitive policies on the continent. I knew, both historically and morally, that a former colonial state never has the interests of the colonized at heart. And most of all, I knew peacekeepers rarely bring peace.

But my attempts to discuss the postcolonial and ethical implications of advocating for greater Western military intervention in the Global South were repeatedly dismissed. A year later, those same French peacekeepers were found to have abused the children in their care. The directors who had pushed for the peacekeepers the most became quiet, asking us not to speak to the media despite our complicity in harming those children. I learned a hard lesson that day: many of those who say they work in the service of justice still support racist, imperialist systems that crush the bones of my people. This was just one of many experiences that left me praying for a graduate program where faith and morality would not be deemed contradictory to intellectual growth. I feared a human rights career that doesn't center on humanity that, rather than focusing on revolutionary work, is satisfied with small reforms of the status quo. I knew I wanted to gain a foundational understanding of how we got here: the political, religious, economic and social histories that explain the horrific violence and inequity of our current world. I wanted two years of reading, reflecting, questioning, and thinking. I wanted to do the work so I could make sure I fought with my people, never hurt them.

So here I am. Union has been an amazing experience thus far. I have felt intellectually challenged and spiritually nourished. I am especially impressed by the intellectual caliber of fellow students

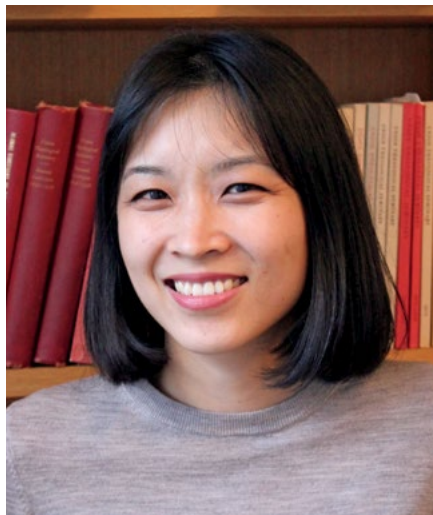
of color who have welcomed me with open arms, quickly becoming friends who encourage my voice both inside and outside the classroom. I have joined them in advocating for Union to become a sanctuary school to protect our undocumented siblings in light of the last eight years of brutal detention and deportations under Obama and the incoming Trump Administration. I have been impressed by the caliber of academic scholarship at Union and inspired by my liberation theology course with Professor Cone, my religious and sexual legacies of slavery course with Professor Azaransky and my bible course with Professor Kahl. And I feel grateful for the opportunity to attend a graduate school that would prepare me for a career in human rights where I will be able to do justice to "the claims of the world" upon me. I feel deeply that place is Union.

Kristine Chong

M.A. STUDENT

One night, my six-year-old self beckoned the realm of identity and theology by asking, "Who am I?" Immediately upon uttering these words, I felt a jarring new sensation of being overwhelmed by the unknown. While I did not have the conceptual capacity or language to recognize the significance of the question, I attempted to probe the meaning of self, which led to questioning the existence and nature of God and humanity's relation to God as well. Each repetition of this simple yet profound question had an effect of further disconnection with my physical self and a commingling of fear, curiosity, anxiety, and a grasp towards the unnameable sublime. That night marked an out-of-body experience of displacement that would inform and cause the recurrence of existential angst and an ontological uncertainty in my Asian American journey and faith formation.

I return to my six-year-old self as a reminder of the inherent contradictions and absurdities that entail committing to the figure of Jesus in a postcolonial context. As a daughter of Korean immigrants born shortly after the Korean War, who came to the United States for better



“Union [is] a community where I can explore, be challenged by, and construct a narrative that encompasses my questions around identity, theology, and social change.”

economic opportunities, I was raised in the Korean immigrant church, absorbing mainline Protestant churches of the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian varieties. Because the suburb I grew up in had a majority minority population of pan-ethnic Asian Americans, I was not overtly discriminated against due to my ethnicity—and still—I internalized a self-loathing of my otherness in a white-dominant culture as portrayed by the media, mainstream culture, and my church community's adoption of white theology. I started to recognize this self-loathing as I engaged in activism and learned about the social gospel during my undergraduate years at UCLA, where I realized the theologies I had been taught as a youth were narrowly evangelical and held no meaningful resources for marginalized experiences.

In time, a more social gospel still felt limited in providing a resonant

theological framework for my engagement in social movements for immigrant and refugee rights and anti-domestic violence work. I joined these movements after completing a Master of Public Policy degree at the University of Michigan. Though I had studied public policy in hopes of unpacking social issues from a systemic lens and believed that policy advocacy could offer an effective avenue to combat oppressive systems, working with immigrant communities and organizations quickly helped me to realize the limitations of structural fixes without moral and spiritual witness. I felt an important component of spirituality was missing from my advocacy work. I witnessed a jarring disconnect in the way faith communities—including my own multi-ethnic American Baptist Church, which held solid values—found it difficult to engage in ecumenical, intersectional movements. I also lamented the ways in which power struggles and corruption of power occurred within the movements I was a part of. I felt bifurcated, offering differing narratives and cases for change depending on my settings at church and at work. I longed for a theological framework to address the tensions and questions I had in both communities.

This longing led me to Union, a community where I can explore, be challenged by, and construct a narrative that encompasses my questions around identity, theology, and social change. As an Asian American, I feel it is significant to be at Union to continue the legacies of Asian American activists of faith, as well as to share my education and learnings with my community back home in California. So far, my Union experience has been one characterized by deconstruction and reimagining the tension of being a part of a religious tradition that has often been the source of oppression and white supremacy, while holding onto the examples and embodiments of radical love and life-giving hope. Participation in the #Love in Action Oral History Project at Burke Library and the revived Asian & Pacific Islander Caucus have provided grounding for better understanding Union's

history and context for student activism and API representation.

In the middle of my first semester, Reverend Fran Thiessen '04 (Spiritual Director in Residence) reminded me of why being at Union at this particular time and context is important when she shared a quote from Rilke with my peers and the faculty at Union, I hope to "live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far into the future, we will gradually, without even noticing it, live our way into the answer."

Sweetie Helen Chukka

S.T.M. STUDENT

As a Dalit woman born and brought up in a multi-religious context, I have been exposed to cultural, geographical, religious, and denominational diversity. Such diverse experiences did nothing to my theology. However, my first theological degree from Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, Chennai, India, broadened my perspectives and navigated my theologi-

The atrocities against Dalit women in India shook me to the core. Very soon I realised that I am among those who perpetuated the brahminical and patriarchal systems that inflicted violence, torture and discrimination. I started to disengage myself from systems that legitimate violence on women.

As the church failed to purge itself from the sin of patriarchal violence, my theological thinking sought alternatives that would challenge those illegitimate systems that are established as legitimate. The silence of the church, when it should have spoken up, exposed its dearth in exercising its theological call to be a witnessing community amidst diverse challenges of the day.

My mentor, Dr. Monica Melanchthon, played a major role in developing my interest in Womanist biblical interpretation with special reference to the plight of Dalit women in India. I pursued a Master of Theology in Gurukul Lutheran Theological College in the department of Old Testament and joined the National Council of Churches in India as Executive Secretary-Commission on Youth.

the theological students that were only limited to secular youth.

While I thoroughly enjoyed working with youth of the churches of NCCI, my passion was in equipping myself to become a theological educator. I dreamt of a future wherein I would teach, challenge and equip young people who join theological education to transform the church and thereby the society. As religion, Christianity with no exception, is one of the institutions that legitimize unjust structures. I dreamt of disturbing those structures with the help of the youth.

It was this dream that has brought me to Union. Joining Union is one of the best decisions I have ever made, since it integrates social action and political witness. Its ethos of social justice is manifested in its commitment of acknowledging the diversity of religious, cultural, linguistic, gender and denominational backgrounds. With its diverse focus, Union is strengthening me in articulating my contextual theological emphasis. The priceless contributions of the professors towards academic,



cal thinking. It was in the theological college that I first experienced conflict of my personal convictions with the daily challenges in the Indian society. My life took a significant shift at that juncture where reality conflicted with perception.

My encounters with casteism and sexism evoked my interest to fight against such social discriminations.

“Union is a place for every diligent learner, every aspiring woman, and for every visionary. Union’s scholarship program is one of the assets that attract international students and this is an occasion for mutual learning, exploration and contribution.”

My first work experience provided me opportunities to engage with the lives of the youth in India. Being the first ever woman youth secretary in the 100-year history of the National Council of Churches of India (NCCI), I encouraged young women into leadership roles. I organized leadership training programmes, social awareness programmes, youth camps and encouraged young women to take up internships in ecumenical organizations. One of my major contributions to the youth in India was to introduce NCCI scholarships to

spiritual and ministerial formations are providing impetus to my theological journey. The Chapel services remain central to me at Union. Union is a place for every diligent learner, every aspiring woman, and for every visionary.

Union’s scholarship program is one of the assets that attract international students and this is an occasion for mutual learning, exploration and contribution. Union’s scholarship program and its uncompromising academic commitment to social justice brought me to Union.



Stanley Talbert
M.DIV. '16, PH.D. CANDIDATE

My journey to Union began when I was a boy preacher at the Shepherd Street Church of Christ in Mount Pleasant, Texas. At an early age, I knew that I wanted to be a minister. When I came of age, I enrolled in Southwestern Christian College, an historically Black college (HBCU) connected with the Churches of Christ, and later on I transferred to Pepperdine University.

My transition from Southwestern to Pepperdine marked a watershed in my theological understanding and openness. I remember walking into Dr. Raymond Carr's (my undergrad advisor) office and seeing books everywhere. With passion and curiosity, he asked, "Do you know James Cone? Do you know Karl Barth?" Because my religious tradition tended to focus on the disciplines of New Testament, Old Testament, Church History, and Preaching, I had no idea to whom Professor Carr referred. At Carr's advice I picked up *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, and I've yet to put it down. Dr. Cone's seminal text was one of the main reasons that I applied to Union's M.Div. program.

Although the opportunity to study with James Cone and Cornel West were my primary motivators for applying to Union, my tenure as an M.Div. student, and now a Ph.D. student, has opened me up to so many more jewels that Union has to offer. My love for the Bible began in

Sunday school when my teachers would challenge us to memorize passages of scripture. Union helped me to cultivate my passion for the biblical witness by giving me resources to wrestle with the Bible through exegetical skills and historical criticism.

Not only has my time at Union given me the opportunity to engage the discipline of Systematic Theology, but I have been able to explore various theologies like Black Theology, Womanist Theology, Latin American Liberation Theology, and much more. Union is distinguished by its pluralistic and ecumenical approach to theological education. It truly is a place where students can wrestle without the fear of shame or exclusion. Whereas some institutions teach students *what* to think, Union gives students resources and methodologies so that we can learn *how* to think.

However, thinking is not everything. I have been fascinated by the ways in which UTS has married the life of the

“I have been fascinated by the ways in which UTS has married the life of the mind to the struggle for justice. The school has a tradition for concretizing its various faiths into praxis.”

mind to the struggle for justice. The school has a tradition for concretizing its various faiths into praxis. During my matriculation, I have witnessed faculty, staff, and students take the materials of the classroom into churches, synagogues, and mosques, social justice organizations, protests and the streets, and also their personal lives. The things that I have learned in my classes have not been

for abstract play. In contrast, every reading, every exercise, and every assignment has had real life consequences.

When I applied to Union's M.Div. program, it was the only school to which I applied. I knew it was the school for me. After I enrolled at Union in 2012, I simultaneously began a full-time ministry position at Kings Church of Christ in Brooklyn. Going to school full-time and being a full-time assistant minister was challenging, but ministry has always kept me theologically grounded. Working with people where there is a mutual, thick love is especially formative for how I approach my studies. Also, I honestly believe my studies at UTS have helped me to become a better minister and teacher.

Last year as I was flying back to New York from Texas, I received life-changing news. As the airplane was about to take flight and before the attendant ordered us to turn our phones to airplane mode, I received a message from Union that I had been accepted into its doctoral program. Throughout the entire flight, I wanted to scream with joy, but I did not want to frighten the airline company or any of the passengers. I was overwhelmingly thankful that I would be able to continue my studies at Union as a Ph.D. student.

Currently, my major discipline is Systematic Theology, and my minor is African American Studies. I am honored to work with my doctoral advisors Dr. Andrea C. White and Dr. James H. Cone. My research focuses on theology concerning race, democracy, and freedom. In the future, I hope to teach and research at a college, university, or seminary.

Coming from a religiously conservative tradition, Union Theological Seminary has been the best place for me. Its mission to “prepare women and men for committed lives of service to the church, academy, and society,” complements my desire to teach in the academy, contribute to the life of the church through Liberation Theology, and concretize my theology through social justice. This triad correlates to my identity as a theological student, ordained minister, and social activist. I have learned much as a student at Union, and I look forward to the next stages of this journey. **U**

ALUMNI/AE PROFILES



Rev. Mykal Slack, M.Div. '07

📍 Durham, NC

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mykal Slack began his professional life as a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union's LGBT and HIV/AIDS Rights projects and then served as a law clerk in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York. After discerning a call to ministry and graduating from Union, he served in various ministerial posts in the Metropolitan Community Churches and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations before becoming in 2016 the co-director of North Carolina's Freedom Center for Social Justice.

What do you do?

My ministry and calling is to nurture spaces where people can connect in ways that heal and not harm, talk about and re-imagine church life that truly honors and celebrates our differences, and make sustainable changes that are an outgrowth of spiritual practice, deep listening, and active engagement in community. I have had the pleasure over many years of living out that calling as a speaker, trainer, worship leader, community minister, and congregational life coordinator in various contexts.

Currently, I'm a co-director of the Freedom Center for Social Justice, a Southern-based national organization that supports and leads LGBTQ advocacy from within the church and outside it. I lead our trans programming, which includes supporting a year-long Trans Seminarian Cohort brought together

by the Freedom Center, the National LGBTQ Task Force, and the Pacific School of Religion, and organizing a summer retreat for trans and gender non-conforming people of faith. We also help clergy, business owners, and educators reach a deeper understanding of what it truly means to be welcoming through our *Yes, You Can Go* campaign and our *Do No Harm* initiative. The Freedom Center also supports public policy efforts locally and statewide, to ensure that policy makers recognize the impact their decisions have on LGBTQ people. Much of our public policy work happens as part of the Moral Monday movement here in North Carolina and engages the community on issues ranging from poverty and economic justice to gender, reproductive, and sexual justice.

What's the best thing about your job?

There are too many to name, really. For one thing, I have never settled into any type of position, ministerial or otherwise, that captured so much of what I care about and love to do. My times as a civil rights lawyer, as a workplace discrimination investigator and trainer, and as a minister have created a remarkable foundation for who I am and how I show up, and I am grateful. Also, it has been a pleasure and honor to work with my co-director Bishop Tonyia M. Rawls, who is deeply invested in collaboration and understanding what it means to cultivate our relationship as co-conspirators in this holy work. Finally, as a trans man of color, I get the joy of organizing with and ministering among people in the queer and trans and POC communities I call home. Despite the political landscape in which we find ourselves, this has been a beautiful and hope-filled time, due in large part to the resiliency and brilliance of QT/POC communities that I get to build relationships with on a daily basis.

How did Union prepare you for this?

Being at Union helped me come into a full understanding that, by faith, absolutely anything is possible. I'm certain I didn't really believe that on my first day, but I knew it deep within my spirit,

in my skin and bones, by the time I left. People like Dr. Edwina Wright, Dr. Emilie townes, and Rev. Dr. Christopher Morse '68, '76 inspired not only a deep questioning of what I thought I knew, but also a vision of inclusiveness in and outside the church that I will carry with me for as long as I live. As my faith deepened and my analysis sharpened, I also got clear about who I was called to be in this life. So around Eastertime of my second year, I disclosed the full awareness of my identity as a transgender man to the faculty, staff, and students, reframing what resurrection really meant for me in that moment. To my knowledge, that was the first time that had happened at Union, and while I didn't expect it to go badly, I also didn't anticipate how spectacularly well it would go. In a show of radical hospitality and inclusion, everyone was remarkably loving and open and willing to do whatever it took to ensure that, in a moment of intense uncertainty, I would have the space to thrive. And I did! I will forever be grateful to Union for that, and their witness continues to inform how I hold space and show up for others and for myself.

How have you stayed connected to Union?

I've stayed connected with Union mostly through close friendships, both from my year and more recent ones. I also read Union's Facebook page periodically and try to keep up with important news and updates.

What would you say to someone considering going to Union?

A seminary education is an intense experience. You'll have an opportunity to begin to solidify your vision for ministry. You'll build lasting relationships that can set the tone for how you manifest joy, set boundaries, and engage in self-care. You'll feel the frustrations and the ebbs and flows of being in community. Don't be afraid to be changed and to be made new by any of this. You will not leave as the same person who arrived. And you can count that as one among many blessings. 🙏



Rev. Liz Edman, M.Div. '91

📍 New York, NY

What do you do?

In terms of employment, I'm bi-vocational and currently earn my living through my political career, directing community outreach for New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli. As a priest, I am pleased to count as my "altar home" the Episcopal Church of St. Andrew and Holy Communion in South Orange, NJ where I serve with the incomparable Rev. Dr. Sandye Wilson '82.

Beacon Press recently published my

new book *Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ People Know About Life and Love and How It Can Revitalize Christianity*. It has gotten starred reviews from *Kirkus*, *Publishers Weekly*, and the *Library Journal*. At the same time, it's humbling to note that in the New York Public Library my book is shelved directly adjacent to Dr. James Cone's *Black Theology*.

What do you like best about what you do?

I love, love, love hitting the road to talk with people and preach about how queer ethics can inform authentic Christian practice. My travels so far have taken me to London and various points in the U.S. I'll soon travel to Cuba. And a poignant opportunity is coming up that no queer person would take for granted: I will be preaching about *Queer Virtue* in the church where I grew up—where my mother's ashes are interred—in Fayetteville, AR.

How did Union prepare you for this?

My work involves a deep dive into scripture—including passages that on their

face are hard for progressive Christians to stomach. I'm looking for new life, for resurrection, for hope. No one taught me more about that than Dr. Phyllis Trible '56, '63. Union was also where I started learning how to bring such insights to life in liturgy at our daily chapel services. Very importantly, Union gave me the chance to explore sexuality through a lens of faith and rigorous scholarship back in the 80s and 90s, long before it was a mainstream conversation. "*Queer Virtue*" took years to incubate in my soul, and I had that time, thanks to Union's being on the cutting edge so long ago.

How do you stay connected to Union?

I live in New York and go to events at Union with some regularity. Usually I learn about them through UTS email alerts. I also have a robust network of Union alums who are friends on social media and just plain old friends!

What would you say to someone considering going to Union?

Be part of this awesome tradition. 🙏



David Sánchez, Ph.D. '06

📍 Pasadena, CA

EDITOR'S NOTE: David Sánchez co-chairs Union's Alumni/ae Council along with Linda Thomas '81.

What do you do?

I'm Assistant Professor of Early Christianity and Christian Origins at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. I'm the past-president of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic

Theologians of the United States and the past book review editor of the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

What is the best thing about what you do?

The best thing is having an impact on the next generations of theological thinkers. In my opinion, that means having an impact on the future of society. Religion in its diverse forms and expressions saturates our U.S. and international cultures in multiple, complex arenas. It's a privilege to be training the religious and theological thinkers who will soon be offering the world and church their leadership.

How did Union prepare you to do this?

Union taught me to ask hard questions. The faculty guided me to transgress the non-porous walls of the academy and see scripture not as an authoritative, ancient artifact, but as a contemporary template that informs how we authoritatively engage—or not engage—the world in which we live.

How have you stayed connected to Union?

Several ways. I'm part of Union's Los Angeles Alumni/ae Network chapter that meets semi-annually, and my wife Denna and I have hosted two gatherings at our home. I've also served on the Alumni/ae Council for the last three years and am now privileged to co-chair the Council with my colleague Dr. Linda Thomas.

What would you say to someone considering going to Union?

If you want to make a positive impact on the world through your ministry or academic vocation, then give Union a hard look. Education is multivalent: it can be employed to consolidate and validate power or to disrupt power. If you embody the scriptural mandate of theological and intellectual disruption, Union is the place for you. 🙏



Rev. Joy K. Bussert, Ph.D. '02

📍 Northfield, MN

What do you do?

I'm an interim pastor for the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA. Ordained in 1978, I have served the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), now the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), for 38 years in various capacities as a parish pastor, staff for a council of churches, interim pastor, and adjunct teaching faculty at Luther Seminary in St. Paul.

What is the best thing about what you do?

What's most satisfying is not only the traditional spheres of ministry like preaching, teaching, worship, and music, but the opportunity to use my doctoral work at Union to encourage the people of God to engage the largest questions of the day. To be the church is to be in continuity with a first-century counter-cultural movement of resistance for the sake of justice, mercy, and peace.

How did Union prepare you for this work?

Professor Roger Shinn M.Div. '41, Ph.D. '51, then Academic Dean, first welcomed me to the Quad at Union in 1985. Already for seven years I had been involved in

ordained pastoral and ecumenical ministry where I had lived and worked "on the boundary" in Paul Tillich's famous phrase, walking the fine line between churches in Minnesota and the early 1970s and 80s grassroots movements to establish shelters and crisis centers for battered and abused women and children. I arrived for my interview at Union bearing in my soul the full weight of Reinhold Niebuhr's critique of the liberal illusions of the social gospel movement because white liberals like me did not readily understand the depth of systemic power and evil. With my application papers spread across his desk, Dr. Shinn leaned forward, peered over his glasses, and with deep clarity pronounced, "You are what we call a Union type."

Union offered the space I needed to ask the most important questions of my pastoral, theological, and activist work and to shape my doctoral study around the theological problem of suffering. My influential mentors included Professors

“Union offered the space I needed to ask the most important questions of my pastoral, theological, and activist work.”

Delores Williams M.Phil. '86, Ph.D. '91, Phyllis Trible, James Cone, Dorothee Solle, and my dissertation advisor, Larry Rasmussen Ph.D. '70. The writings of Elie Wiesel focused me on the theme of silence and speech. Dr. James Forbes M.Div. '62 gave me the courage to travel and do public speaking and preaching through ecumenical channels. My research in Europe and Scandinavia strengthened my global understanding of the anti-violence movements, both within and outside of the church. The opportunity to teach with Dr. Paul Sponheim through Luther Seminary's Integrated Quarter upon my return to Minnesota further sharpened the sense of urgency for bringing theological reflection together with the movements to eliminate violence against women and children,

especially as I worked with 4th year students placed on-site in battered women's shelters, sexual assault centers, the early drop-in sites for victims of the trafficking industry, and Minnesota's pioneering Domestic Abuse Project.

In July of 2011, Governor Mark Dayton signed the first version of Minnesota's Safe Harbor Legislation into law, redefining minors caught in the trafficking industry as victims needing assistance rather than criminals deserving prosecution. Cheryl Wudunn and Nicholas Kristof's book *Half the Sky* put the issue of trafficking before the global community. However, in recent visits to Seneca Falls, NY, I've discovered that long before our Second-Wave feminist movement, the early reformers like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, and Matilda Joselyn Gage had already spoken out on the problem of trafficking. In her book *Sisters in the Wilderness*, Delores Williams alludes to the work of sculptor Edmonia Lewis and helped me settle on the lone figure of Hagar in the wilderness as the illuminating character for women and children fleeing violence yet today. Hagar is the first to name the Deity El Roi, "Thou Art a God of Seeing." Her eyes are opened to see a well of water so that she and her child might live. Today, we stand on the shoulders of all of these courageous reformers that preceded us. We stand on their shoulders, continuing their struggle yet today. The question is, who will stand on ours?

How have you stayed connected to Union?

Recently, when I returned to Union, I felt as if I were walking on holy ground, but I did not take off my shoes because at my age, my arches would start to ache. Yet this ground was the sacred place where I found space in the 1980s to ask questions that were so little acknowledged by the churches at that time. The late Rev. Dr. William Sloane Coffin, who had been my mentor at Yale University's Battell Chapel in the 1970s, used to tell his students, quoting Tolstoy, that "God did not put the largest of human questions to us that we would answer them, but that we would spend a life-time wrestling with them."

In this post-election season, I'm

grateful for Union's support of the "Black Lives Matter" movement and opposition to the immigration ban. I'm also inspired by my college-age daughter's insights, by her generation's support of the January 21 Women's March, and by their ever-expanding understanding of intersectional feminism. In these times of transforming demographics, mainline churches perhaps will become numerically smaller, but I believe that this next generation of leaders will be no less critical as the vital "salt" and "light" for the

future. As quantities of scared Americans gravitate to large prosperity-gospel assemblies, astute and faithful visionaries will need to think qualitatively about their role and voice for our day. The question is, where will students today find the "wells of water" for survival as well as resources for resistance to the forces of mass cheap conformity? More than ever, Union has an essential role to play for our time.

What would you say to someone considering going to Union?

A year ago, a St. Olaf College student asked me to carry a copy of Professor James Cone's book *God of the Oppressed* with me to Union and have it autographed for her. Upon my return with the autographed book wrapped as a gift, I described to her the many gifts that Union would have to offer her, should she decide to apply: not only the heritage of prophetic teaching and scholarship, but a faculty who cares deeply that you grasp what the world should know for the sake of the "least of these." 🙏



**Rev. Gretchen Janssen,
M.Div. '86**

📍 Oswego, OR

What do you do?

That's the question! I've recently retired and am sorting through life again, now that I'm no longer serving a congregation or doing counseling. Author Dan Kadlec speaks of this as "the real retirement struggle," defining oneself as more than the sum of a long career. For 28 years I've been a marriage and family therapist. While at Union, my family moved to Denmark for six years because of my husband's employment, and during some of that time I did an internship at the American Church of Copenhagen. I returned to Union to finish my degree, but altogether it took me 13 years to finish. After I graduated, there were not very many women in pastoral ministry, but I was fortunate to be ordained at the First Presbyterian Church in Palisades Park, NJ, a congregation that had been founded

in the early 1900s but in recent years had become almost entirely Taiwanese in membership. While I preached in English, the sermon was translated into Taiwanese. I was three-quarters time, but there's no such thing as part-time ministry. My real work there was to prepare the way for a Taiwanese pastor to take the pulpit. It was after that ministry that I trained to become a counselor. Listening to people's stories, now that's been my dream job!

What's the best thing about your job?

I've greatly enjoyed seeing how people become involved in reshaping their lives in ways that are satisfying and meaningful. It's remarkable to work alongside people as they let go of traumas and experience healing. Perhaps I felt called to this ministry of care because, at an earlier stage of my life, I had received help from a pastor who had a Ph.D. in psychology. In Denmark I was able to lead workshops that encouraged people to share in small groups, and because of that program, I was asked to preach at the American Church in Paris. I've been fortunate to experience how God has worked through me to help others.

How did Union prepare you for this?

In some ways Union failed to prepare me, especially about how to handle church finances or manage people as a pastor. But I had a great experience in field education, and my advisor encouraged me to engage in research and writing about what I was experiencing in my own life: the struggles of the "trailing spouse"

whose corporate-employed husband was moved around all the time and the family was required to go along. With my feminist anger rising, I wrote my M.Div. thesis on biblical women facing similar challenges of disruption and resettlement. Eventually, I wrote a book, *Women on the Move: A Christian Perspective on Cross-Cultural Adaptation*, which addresses these issues. This monograph sold all over the world, and I was able to lead many workshops that explored these gender issues along with women's empowerment. I even heard from women in Mongolia.

How have you stayed connected to Union?

I've mostly stay connected with Union by donating regularly. Because I live in the Pacific Northwest, it's a long distance to travel back to campus. Once I was able to attend a reunion, which I enjoyed very much. Hard to believe, but 2016 marked my thirtieth anniversary from my Union graduation.

What would you say to someone considering going to Union?

Studying at Union is one of the best opportunities you can have, so take full advantage of it. I was a commuting student with two young children, so I faced some limitations about involvements in the city, but at Union you'll be exposed to an amazing assortment of opportunities and connections. Right now, as I'm moving into life in retirement, I'm asking myself again, what can I find that will make a meaningful difference? 🙏

Did you know?

BY KEVIN MCGEE

FOUNDED IN 1836, Union relocated in 1910 to 120th Street and Broadway (Reinhold Niebuhr Place), its third site in New York City. The cornerstone was laid on November 17, 1908.

Thirty-five architectural firms provided designs for the new campus; Collens and Allen from Boston was chosen.

The design is reminiscent of a quadrangle enclosure at Cambridge University, and the style is called “perpendicular Gothic” with tower finials reaching gracefully upward “inviting aspirations to go still higher.” Most of the dark gray stone—Manhattan schist—was quarried on site. Indiana Limestone is used around windows and doorways, and Lafarge cement holds it all together. There is no steel infrastructure.

The renowned ceramist Rafael Guastavino used his unique linking tiles to fill the rounded ceilings of the cloisters, the entrance at 121st Street and Broadway, and in the Narthex of James Memorial Tower.

Union was built at the height of the Beaux Arts style and the creation of incomparable buildings in New York City, but at the same time cleverly and respectfully incorporated clear academic references in the stonework.

Did you know that at the top of Library Tower (at 121st Street and Broadway) 18 different university crests appear?

Up top and facing Broadway you’ll see crests for: Dublin, Leyden, University of St. Andrews, Cambridge and (1) the Great Seal of the University of Paris.

Facing south: (2) Heidelberg, Marburg, Halle and Berlin.

Facing into the Quadrangle: (3) Princeton, Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania appearing over the seals of Yale and Harvard.

Facing north you’ll see: Glasgow, Aberdeen, Belfast and McGill.

Closer to the ground and adjacent to the Quad-side doorways, **did you know** that the crests of American universities appear on either side of the doorways to Hastings, Knox and the Refectory entrance?

At Hastings, you’ll see Amherst and Hamilton under the first bay window, Rutgers and (4) Williams flanking the doors

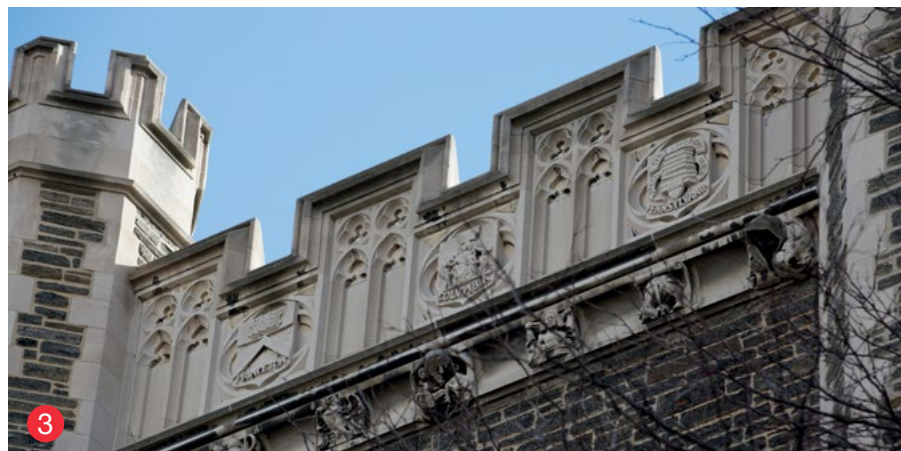
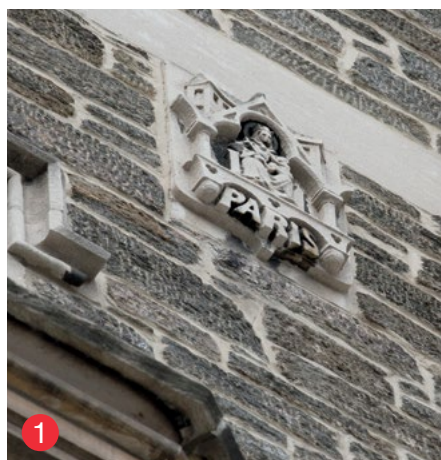
while Brown, Bowdoin and Dartmouth are just above at another bay window.

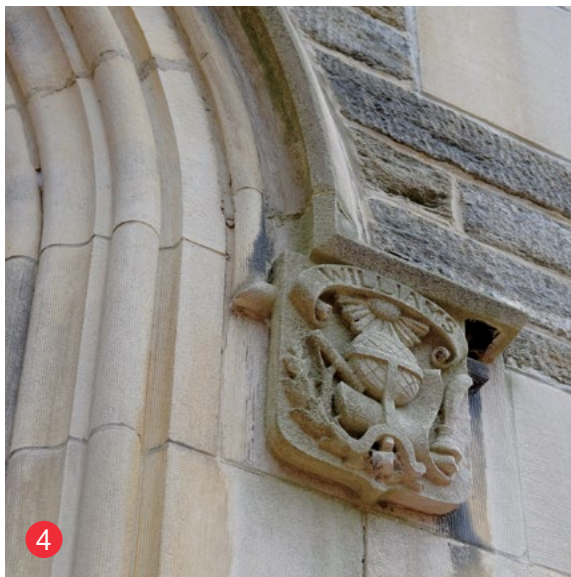
The doors of Knox Hall from the Quad are flanked by the seals of (5) University of Virginia and (6) Western Reserve on the east and City College of New York and New York University to the west.

The entrance to the Refectory from the Quad carries the crest of Union on the left (see cover) and the State University of New York on the right.

And, in 1950, the 19th crest, of Auburn Seminary, was added beneath the pinnacle of that new structure.

With this seeming folly, by 1910 Union had firmly joined its peer institutions in the Academy through its architecture and distinctive stonework. **U**

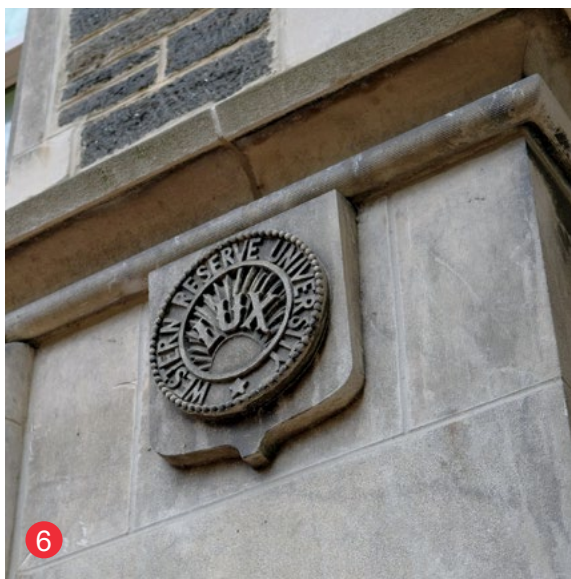




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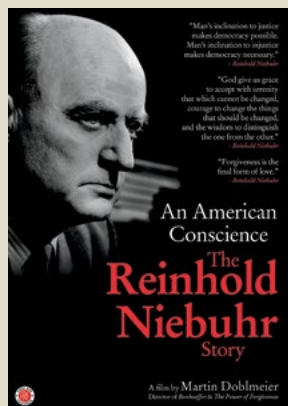
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FROM: *Education through Stone and Glass*, a pamphlet written by Daniel J. Fleming in the 1940s.

An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story

A REVIEW BY

DONALD W. SHRIVER, PRESIDENT EMERITUS



Having already produced a splendid biographical film on the life and works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Doblmeier has made an equally fine contribution to our ability to remember the message and ministry of Reinhold Niebuhr in "An American Conscience." For UTS graduates and friends I hope that this film can be widely viewed. As President Serene Jones commented in introducing this film, it could not be more timely.

The film is a fine mix of biography and excerpts from Niebuhr's books, which Doblmeier has obviously read.


He accents *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and concludes with a quotation from *The Irony of American History* that has always embodied for me Niebuhr's depths as both a theologian and biblical preacher: how "faith, hope, and love" overcome the limitation of all our ragged probings of world affairs.

I would agree with those who see *The Irony* as a take on American history especially pertinent to our Trump era. Not only does this book cut down to modest size our American pretensions of "liberty and justice for all," but it underscores the folly of any claim to "make America great again" in our domination of other nations and in continuing to amass great wealth.

Throughout this film we have records of Niebuhr's engagement with the crises of the twentieth-century world: from the Great Depression during his ministry in Detroit, to his support of unions against the power of Henry Ford, to his realistic assessments of both Fascism and Communism, his role in forming Americans for Democratic Action, his reluctant support of war against the predations of Nazi and Japanese imperialisms, his opposition to the Vietnam War, and his welcome into the counsels of Roosevelt, George Kennan, and other Democratic leaders of post-World War Two era.

Especially impressive are the testimonies that Doblmeier has gleaned from President Jimmy Carter and *New York Times* columnist David Brooks. Each has caught the spirit and substance of Niebuhr's writings. (Brooks is virtually the only American journalist known to me who in the past fifteen years has quoted both RN and Paul Tillich.)

Niebuhr's students Robin Lovin and Ronald H. Stone '63 offer generous comments from their study of Niebuhr's theology and ethics, and the film gives due attention to the importance of his parents, wife Ursula, daughter Elisabeth, and brother H. Richard of Yale.

This film will be an excellent resource introducing a congregation to the theology and ethics of a great American theologian. In all, it offers ample explanation of why many of us want to exclaim, in the midst of our Trumpian politics of 2017, "Reinhold Niebuhr, you should be living at this hour!" Of course, in his books and the furniture of our minds, he still does. 

Alumni/ae Council Updates

UNION'S ALUMNI/AE COUNCIL has elected new leadership and also welcomed four new members to the Council.

The Council re-elected Rev. Dr. Linda Thomas '81, Professor of Theology and Anthropology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, to serve as Council co-chair alongside Dr. David Sánchez '06, Associate Professor of Early Christianity and Director of American Cultures Studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

Four new members have joined the Council as of its February 2017 meeting: the Rev. John C. Allen '13 of Milton, MA; Requitehia Allen '16 of Brooklyn, NY; the Rev. David Cowell '94 of San Francisco, CA; and the Rev. Sharon Key '84 of Narragansett, RI, who is returning to the Council after serving earlier.

Currently, 19 alums are on the Council, including graduates from the 1960s up to the most recent graduating Class of 2016. The Council has twelve women and seven men on board. Eight members identify as persons of color and five as LGBTQ. In terms of vocations, 12 are serving congregations or as denominational staff, five in the academy, and four in nonprofits or community ministry. (Two of the 19 are bi-vocational.) Five of the Council members live in Metro New York, and others reside in California, Illinois, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington, DC, and Washington State.

For the past seven years, the Alumni/ae Council has designated as its funding priority the Eunice Jackson and Ella Mitchell Endowed Chair to support a Womanist theologian on the Union faculty. The



Council is delighted that the Jackson-Mitchell chair has now been fully funded. To its credit, early on, the Council pledged to raise internally among its own members a total of \$50,000 toward the \$3 million goal for a fully endowed chair. To date, former and current Council members have raised more than \$62,000 amongst themselves for the Jackson-Mitchell chair. In happily exceeding its own fundraising goal, the Council has expressed appreciation especially for the leadership of former Council co-chairs Daniel Spencer '83, '94 and Marvin Ellison '81, as well as for the creativity and perseverance of former Council member Connie Baugh '76. **U**

Alumni/ae Network Chapter News

During the past three years, more than a dozen Alumni/ae Network chapters have emerged across the U.S. Most chapters are organized geographically: Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Maine, Minneapolis, New York, North Carolina, Northern New Jersey, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, DC. Several "virtual" networks have organized or are being organized as affinity groupings, including networks of African American alums, Asian Pacific Islander (API) alums, Latino/a alums, and Unitarian Universalist alums. A network of Episcopalian alums is in the planning.

Here's a calendar of alum events this 2016-17 academic year:

OCTOBER 2016

- **Northern New Jersey:** alumni/ae reception hosted by Rich Hong '04

NOVEMBER 2016

- **San Antonio, TX:** reception at the joint annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature

JANUARY 2017

- **New Orleans, LA:** alum dinner at Society of Christian Ethics annual meeting
- **Pittsfield, MA:** Berkshires alumni/ae gathering hosted by John Messerschmitt '66 and John Nelson '91

FEBRUARY 2017

- **New York, NY:** Trailblazers 2017 Black Alumni/ae Series
- **Richmond, VA:** Samuel Proctor Black Church Conference February 19-23; reception for Richmond alums hosted by Wyndham Anderson '64
- **New York, NY:** Latinx Alumni/ae Network meeting February 23

APRIL 2017

- **Atlanta, GA:** alum gathering
- **Minneapolis, MN:** alum open house hosted by Sindy Morales-Garcia '15, Joy Bussert '02, Diane Jacobson '90, and Barbara Lundblad

MAY 2017

- **Washington DC:** alum brunch hosted by Alumni/ae Council members Karen Byrne '07 and Kym Lucas '95
- **New York, NY:** May 3 conference "Organizing for Racial Justice, 1960s and Today"
- **Baltimore, MD:** alum gathering hosted by Crista Burns '75 and David Hornbeck '66

JUNE 2017

- **Hempstead, NY:** alumni/ae lunch at the United Methodist New York Conference annual meeting

Alums Gather at ReUnion 2016


ALUMNI/AE RETURNED TO CAMPUS October 6–7 for ReUnion 2016, including members of the Class of 1966 who celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation from Union and three members of the Class of 1956. For those arriving Wednesday evening, they were invited for dinner at President Serene Jones' apartment in McGiffert Hall and had an opportunity to begin reconnecting as well as hearing updates about the Seminary.

Thursday's program included ample time for conversation, worship in James Chapel, and a community meal, followed in the afternoon by an all-campus meeting and a panel of faculty and students, who addressed the question, "What are students learning and doing, and what are faculty teaching, researching, and engaging in?" M.Div. senior Kathryn Berg and Ph.D. candidate Jorge Rodriguez spoke, as well as Professors David Carr, Professor of Old Testament; Cláudio Calvalhaes '07, Associate Professor of Worship; Jerusha Lamptey, Assistant Professor of Islam and Ministry; and Lisa Thompson, Assistant Professor of Homiletics. After an evening reception and dinner, the alums proceeded to James Chapel to hear Matthias Nagel and Dieter Stork's Bonhoeffer Oratorio performed by a visiting choral group from Burgdorf, Germany.

Friday's program included morning prayers, a screening of a documentary film about the James Chapel worship program entitled "Practice for Life," conversations with President Jones and Martin

Duus, Vice President for Development, and concluded with the Unitas distinguished alumni/ae award ceremony and the Unitas banquet.

Before departing Saturday morning, alums were able to enjoy a light breakfast and conversation with members of the Union Alumni/ae Council, which was having its on-campus fall meeting October 8.

Planning is already in the works for ReUnion 2017, which is scheduled for October 5–6. All alums are welcome with special attention given to the Class of 1967 celebrating its 50th anniversary, the Class of 1992 celebrating its 25th anniversary, and the Class of 2007 celebrating its 10th anniversary. For additional information about ReUnion 2017, including online registration, check the Union website at www.utsnyc.edu. 



Musicians and singers from Der Kleine Chor Burgdorf performing "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Oratorio for Choir, Instrumentalists and Speaker"



Marvin Ellis '81 and Ilsabe Bartels-Kohl, conductor



L to R: Susan Hellerer '91, Allison Boden '91, Dawn Reel '91



FRONT ROW, L TO R: John Schaefer '66, Margaret (Peggy) Howland '66, Ed White '56, Stephen Klyce '56; MIDDLE ROW, L TO R: LuAnn Polk '66, William Polk '66, Tilda Norberg '66, Judith Marshall '67, Evelyn Durkee '66; BACK ROW, L TO R: Carl Schneider '67, Tom Boomershine '66, John Messerschmitt '66, Tim Callard '66, William Riley Covin '66, Beryl Ramsay Smith '67

CLASS NOTES

1940s

R. Kern Eutsler, M.Div. '43, is a retired American Bishop of the United Methodist Church, elected in 1984. He was assigned to the Holston Episcopal Area (Tennessee), where he served until 1988. He also served as the Chairman of the Curriculum Resources Committee of the U.M. General Board of Discipleship (1984–88). In retirement he served for seven years as the Director of Interpretation and Promotion of United Methodist Volunteers in Mission in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. He also served as a fund-raising consultant with local churches. Now 97, he reports that he is the second oldest United Methodist Bishop in the UMC/USA—and that he has been wondering how many Seminary alumni/ae are 97 or older.

1950s

Shiro Abe, part. '51, celebrated his 90th birthday with the publication of his autobiography in Japan. More than 1000 dear friends attended. He was also blessed with an honorary degree from Aoyama Gakuin University, he reports—and full recovery from a recent health scare, for which he is also thankful. He is enjoying daily life with the support of his two daughters, Keiko and Atsuko, and their families. In February 2017 he turned 91.

Hazel Margaret Hufton Porter, M.A. '52, celebrated her 90th birthday in December 2016. After working in churches in adult education for more than two decades, she became a pastoral counselor and worked a number of years in Greenfield, MA, before retirement. She reports that Union provided a deep sense of the God within that continues to help her today.

1960s

Franklin C. Basler, M.Div. '67, was installed as the new Pastor at the Ridgebury Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Ridgefield, CT, on September 18, 2016. Ordained by the UCC in 2016, he consulted for more than 25 years to corporations, nonprofits, and churches on organization effectiveness while coaching leaders on their interpersonal skills and career directions. Earlier, he was Manager, Management Development and Training, for General Foods, (now part of Philip Morris) and held senior organization and management development positions in three other companies. Frank believes he may be the last of the 1967 M.Div. class to be ordained.

William C. Nelsen, M.A. '67, has been elected to serve as the Interim President of Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, MA. An ELCA Lutheran pastor and former Academic Dean of St. Olaf College and President of Augustana University (SD) and of Scholarship America, the nation's largest private sector scholarship organization, Nelsen was selected for the position at EDS in connection with his membership in The Registry for College and University Presidents, an organization of former college administrators who take on special interim assignments.

1970s

Ernest F. Krug III, M.Div. '71, became Parish Associate at Third Presbyterian Church in Rochester, NY, in November 2015. He was ordained a teaching elder May 30, 1971, felt called to have a combined vocation in ministry and medicine, and received his M.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A physician-ethicist, Ernest developed a longitudinal curriculum in Medical Humanities and Clinical Bioethics for the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, where he was professor of Biomedical Sciences and Pediatrics, retiring from medicine in 2015.

Marvin A. McMickle, M.Div. '73, now in his 6th year as President of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, delivered the Wamble Lecture at Baylor University on October 13, 2016. His newest book, *Be My Witness: The Great Commission for Preachers*, was released by Judson Press in July 2016.

H. Stephen Shoemaker, M.Div. '74, is Visiting Assistant Professor of Religion at Johnson C. Smith University. He has published his seventh book, *Jesus Stories: Traveling Toward Testimony*, Judson Press, 2016.

Thomas W. Goodhue, M.Div. '75, retired last summer after seventeen years as Executive Director of the Long Island Council of Churches. He is completing a book about how to get along with our neighbors in a multifaith world and a biography of Kaahumanu, the Hawaiian queen who overturned tabus and embraced Christianity. He and his wife **Karen Pohlig, M.Div. '75**, still live in Amityville, New York, but will eventually move back to Manhattan.

1980s

Alan LaPayover, M.Div. '82, after two years as acting director, was appointed Director of the Goldyne Savad Library Center of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, PA outside of Philadelphia. He previously served as Associate Rabbi of Congregation Beth Am Israel in Penn Valley, PA, and Interim Rabbi of Congregation Tiferes B'nai Israel in Warrington, PA. He also has been a member of the faculty of the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School at Gratz College, and has taught various adult education classes at Philadelphia-area synagogues.

1990s

Daniel T. Spencer, M.Div. '83, Ph.D. '94, has been promoted to the rank of full professor in the Environmental Studies Program, College of Humanities and Sciences, at the University of Montana.

Amy E. Greene, M.Div. '86, was named President Elect of ACPE, the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. She is Director of Spiritual Care at the Cleveland Clinic since 2013, and the first woman to lead the department.

Tracey Lind, M.Div. '87, Dean of Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, OH, for the past 17 years, announced to her congregation in December that she would step down as of January 29, 2017. In an open letter published on the cathedral's website, Lind wrote that she had been diagnosed with Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD), a disease that progressively damages areas of the brain. She is in the early stages, she said. She plans to stay in the Cleveland area with her spouse, Emily Ingalls, and to speak publicly about this disease to educate people and encourage more research.

Thomas P. Miller, M.Div. '89, has been working for the last 2 years as an interim minister in Orkney, Scotland. He is also involved with choirs, writing groups, and creative church connections in the community of Stromness. Previously he was a Canon for a number of years at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

John A. Nelson, M.Div. '91, was installed as Pastor of Church on the Hill, an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ in Lenox, MA. He is active in local and national groups working for economic justice and promoting peaceful solutions to poverty and abuse, as well as interfaith ministries. He also helps his wife Angela Lomanto as she runs the Brook Farm Inn, a Lenox bed and breakfast. Nelson previously served congregations in Gloversville, NY; Dover, MA; and Niantic, CT.

2000s

Jacqueline M. Hidalgo, M.A. '03, received tenure at Williams College, and was promoted to Associate Professor of Latina/o Studies and Religion. In 2016 her book, *Revelation in Aztlán: Scriptures, Utopias, and the Chicano Movement*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan.

Anne Bowie Snodgrass, M.Div. '03, was ordained a priest on October 15, 2016. She is now serving as Curate of Christ Church in Short Hills, NJ.

Susan G. Sparks, M.Div. '03, was the guest for the annual Preaching Series in Newnan, GA, where she was hailed as "a female pastor from New York City, who has experience both as an attorney and a stand-up comic." After 10 years as a trial lawyer moonlighting as a standup, Sparks left her legal practice and spent two years on a solo trip around the world, including time working with Mother Teresa's mission in Calcutta. She then attended Union, and is now Senior Pastor of Madison Avenue Baptist Church in New York.

Fabian Vega, Ph.D. '04, was named Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, NY. Previously he was Associate Dean of the Education and Behavior Social Science Department and at Baltimore City Community College in Baltimore, MD, where he also served as an associate professor of psychology, psychology coordinator, general studies transfer degree coordinator, and psychology adjunct coordinator.

Cláudio Carvalhaes, Ph.D. '07, married Katie Deveney Perella on August 13, 2016. He is Associate Professor of Worship at Union.

Mykal O. Slack, M.Div. '07 was appointed Co-Director of The Freedom Center for Social Justice in Charlotte, NC. Previously he served in various ministerial posts in the Metropolitan Community Churches and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. Most recently, he was Director of Congregational Life for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh, NC. He is also the founder and lead organizer of 4LYFE, an associated ministry of Metropolitan Community Churches, which provides pastoral and educational resources to address sexuality and gender identity issues in social service organizations and faith communities across a broad spectrum.

Jacquelynn C. Van Vliet, M.Div. '08, was appointed Interim Pastor at the Lamington Presbyterian Church in Bedminster, NJ, effective September 1, 2015.

2010s

Julia E. Whitworth, M.Div. '10, has accepted the call as the 12th Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Indianapolis. Most recently she served as Canon for Liturgy and the Arts at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City. Whitworth was ordained an Episcopal priest after a previous career as a theatre director and college professor. She has taught theatre and performance studies, directing, and acting at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and Mount Holyoke College.

Heather L. Wise, M.Div. '10, S.T.M. '12, Ph.D. '16, and her husband Michael Wilhoite welcomed a son, Riley Shannon Wilhoite, on January 12, 2017.

Jeffrey D. Grant, M.Div. '12, was appointed Interim Executive Director at Family ReEntry in Bridgeport, CT, on October 10, 2016. His appointment marks the first time in the United States that a person formerly incarcerated for a white-collar crime has served as the head of a major re-entry agency.

John E. Shellito, M.Div. '12, and his wife, Haley Shellito, announced the birth of their son, Amos James Shellito, on February 22, 2017.

Rosalind Gnat, M.Div. '13, is living and working in Germany. A month after graduating, she left for Wiesbaden, Germany as the first person in the UCC New York to participate in the UCC partnership with the Protestant Church of Germany, Hessen-Nassau (EKHN). Her internship year ended with her ordination into the ministry of the UCC at Judson Memorial

Church on February 14th, 2015, and began the first of a three-year project for the German Church: the start-up of worship and bible study for English-speakers in the German Protestant tradition—UCC flavored, of course. Now starting its 3rd year, the project has grown into a congregation made up of Americans, British, Germans, Africans and others. Whether the lively and committed congregation survives is dependent on its ability to provide its own funding starting in 2018.

Blair A. Moorhead, M.Div. / M.S.S.W. '13, appeared on the televised game show *Jeopardy!*. The episodes in which Moorhead appeared as a contestant aired January 9 and 10, 2017, although the show was taped last September. Moorhead had just been hired as a social worker at Community Connections in Washington, DC, when she received news she was being called for an in-person interview. She said the organization was very supportive of her *Jeopardy!* bid and gave her time off during the qualification process.

William B. Owen, M.Div. '13, made the first profession of monastic vow and became Brother Aidan William Owen, OHC, a monk at Holy Cross Monastery, an Episcopal Benedictine community of men in the Hudson Valley.

Heather Kistler Kinz, M.A. '14, and her husband, David Kinz, announced the birth of a son, Brant Stevens Kinz, on February 22, 2017.

Ranwa Hammamy, M.Div. '15, was ordained to the Unitarian Universalist ministry at Mt. Diablo UU Church in

Walnut Creek, CA, on December 11, 2016.

Maggie A. Jarry, M.Div. '15, is working as an Agency Policy Specialist, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, at the Minnesota Department of Human Services. In November 2016 she married Nicholas Ayedewe Atosona, in the courtyard of his mother's house in Doba, near Navrongo, Ghana. She reports that she had felt called to follow an inexplicable, life-long desire to travel to Ghana; there she met Nico, a gardener, farmer and fellow Catholic. Because of Nico, she traveled to Ghana three times last year. She is "finding it incredibly pleasant, though not easy, to have clarity through a chosen restriction," she says, "in choosing to care for another person's life as I would my own."

Mary M. Mendes de Leon, M.A. '16, was appointed Assistant Accommodations Director in the Office of Disability Services at Columbia University.

Jordan Tarwater, M.Div. '16, was ordained at the Jan Hus Presbyterian Church and Neighborhood House in New York City, on February 26, 2017. He is the Director of the Urban Outreach Center at Jan Hus, and Worship Leader for the Neighborhood Esperanza. [U](#)

To submit a class note or death notice, please contact **Leah Rousmaniere**, Associate Director of Development for Stewardship and Research, at lrousmaniere@uts.columbia.edu or 212-280-1442.

ReUNION 2017 OCTOBER 5-6 | SAVE THE DATE

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Class of 1967, 25th anniversary of the Class of 1992, and 10th anniversary of the Class of 1992. **Details will soon be available on the Union website.**



Mrs. Rosalind E. Havemeyer, Board Chair Emerita and Union Medalist, Dies

Rosalind Everdell Havemeyer, the first woman to chair Union Theological Seminary's Board of Trustees, died peacefully at home on March 8, 2017. She was 99. Former UTS President Donald W. Shriver, Jr. described her as the "embodiment of the prophetic role of women in theological education," and placed her "in the company of prophets stretching from Ruth of Moab to Lydia of Thyatira to Julian of Norwich to Mary Lyman of Union." A memorial service will be held at Union in James Chapel on Friday, May 5, 2017, at 12 noon. Mrs. Havemeyer's portrait hangs in the Refectory. She served as Board Chair from 1970 to 1976. [U](#)

IN MEMORIAM

AS OF MARCH 31, 2017

ALUMNI/AE

George E. Clarkson '43
William E. Tyree '43
Edith Fisher Hunter '44
William Edward Hordern '46, '51
Harry Robert Fox, Jr. '47
Alice Von Storch Worman '47
Charles W. Whitworth '48
William J. Hinson '49
Frank M. Cartwright '51
James W. Clayton '51, '56
Elizabeth Sullivan Daub '51
Malcolm L. Foster '51

Elinor Eccles Schneider '51
Joyce MacDonald Glover '52
John Edmund Filler '56
Frances Ellen Reynolds Johnson '56
William H. Hudnut III '57
Harry C. Kiely '57
Priscilla C.Y. Hsu Leo '57
Edwin M. Good '53, '58
Harold C. Smith '58
Donald L. Scruggs '59
Robert A. Bartels '60
Charles Anthony Ryerson III '61, '79

James E. Will '62
Joe E. Elmore '63
Clair Adrian Johannsen '64
Betsy Lyle Lonsinger '65
James Russell Boston '60, '66
David W. Budbill '67
Glen J. Percy '70
Genevieve Patricia Datchuck Sánchez '73
Stephen Hopkins Skiles '78
Horace L. Wallace '80
Kempton Brewster Hastings '88
Shirley L. Krampitz Gritz '92

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Margaret M. Cannella
Margaret Huntington
Horton Grant
Brendan Griswold
Rosalind E. Havemeyer

Harry Huff
Elizabeth H. Lasley
Richard C. McGill
Margaret S. Moritz

Corrine Niedenthal
Ellis L. Phillips, Jr.
Ina R. Sims
Harold F. Rasmussen

Why Alumni/ae Give Generously to Union

“WHEN WE’VE ASKED ALUMS WHY they give so generously to Union,” reports Marvin Ellison, Director of Alumni/ae Relations, “what we hear time and again is that alums are grateful for the transformative education they received at the Seminary and, further, that they want to support the next generation of faith leaders in their preparation for a variety of ministries.” That message of gratitude and that commitment to support current students explain why 100% of the Annual Fund is directed toward support for student scholarships. “Alums want to give back,” Ellison added, “and they are wonderfully generous not only in supporting the Annual Fund, but also in making planned gifts. For many of us who are ministers and teachers, making a legacy gift through our wills gives us our greatest chance to make a sizable gift to Union, which is a remarkable opportunity we have to really make a difference.”

Alumni/ae Council Makes Thank-You Calls

Between Thanksgiving and Christmas, members of the Alumni/ae Council made telephone calls to say thank you to dozens of Union alums who have donated consistently over many years, including those at the Caritas level who give \$1,000 or more annually. In reporting back from their conversations, the Council members shared some of the comments that they had heard from fellow alums about why they continue to support Union financially:

“We support many causes, but only one institution—Union.”

“We feel very strongly about the contribution that Union makes to the world and to theological education, and we are happy to support Union and will continue to do so.”

“I’ve been a monthly giver for some time. It’s important to keep the school affordable for current students.”

“Union paid my late husband’s way through his studies, and he felt that he owed Union a great debt and wanted to give back. Union had such an impact on his life and his years of active ministry that I want to continue to give in his honor.”

The Power of a Legacy Gift



“It is comforting to know that whatever we have saved in our lifetimes will be put to good use later on. And what better use than helping to perpetuate the unique spirit that is Union Seminary.”

—Mark K. Juergensmeyer '65

In terms of planned giving and becoming a member of Union’s Legacy Circle, Dr. Mark K. Juergensmeyer ’65, noted author and university professor, explains why he has included Union in his will this way: “The most significant encounters I had at Union were with my fellow students. I remember the stunned solidarity when we heard that JFK was killed and when a group returned breathlessly from the Audubon Ballroom in Washington Heights where they had just witnessed the assassination of Malcolm X.

“We cannot recreate these moments for a new generation of students, but we can help to make it possible for them to make their own discoveries. One of the easiest ways to do this is to include Union in our wills.

“Years ago my wife and I met with an attorney to help us with our wills. ‘Isn’t this a wonderful occasion,’ she said, as my wife and I

glumly contemplated our own morality. Why, we asked, was she so cheerful? ‘Well, lucky you,’ she responded ‘You can give all this stuff away and still keep it.’

“It is comforting to know that whatever we have saved in our lifetimes will be put to good use later on. And what better use than helping to perpetuate the unique spirit that is Union Seminary.” ♫

For information about Union’s planned gift program, go to utsnyc.giftplans.org or contact Martin Duus, Vice President for Development, at 212-280-1426 or via email at mduus@uts.columbia.edu.

MAY 3 CONFERENCE:

Organizing for Racial Justice, 1960s and Today



Union student activists from the 1960s will return to campus Wednesday, May 3 for a one-day gathering to engage current students in an intergenerational conversation about white supremacy and anti-racism organizing, then and now.

This event, co-sponsored by the Burke Library, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Office of Alumni/ae Relations, builds upon conversations that began last October during ReUnion 2016. Students Kristine Chong and Tabatha Holley collected oral histories about the Student Interracial Ministry (SIM), a student-initiated project in the 1960s that began at Union, but soon involved the National Council of Churches and eventually engaged more than 350 seminarians from 50 different theological schools.

About the 1960s Student Interracial Ministry Project

Throughout the 1960s, Union students, including Tom Boomershine '66, John Collins '61, James A. Forbes '62, George McClain '64, Charles M. Sherrod '66, Beryl Smith '67, and Virginia Wadsley '67, first created and then helped lead SIM, which arranged summer (and sometimes longer) internships that placed white seminarians in Black congregations and Black seminarians in white congregations in the U.S. South and North.

As alumnus John Collins has observed, "Being a part of SIM was transformative for many of us, and it was also transformative for Union. Our personal and professional lives were fundamentally reshaped in ways we hardly anticipated when we dared to cross the color line. Sometimes we encountered amazing hospitality, especially from the host congregations and pastors. Other times we

encountered great hostility, especially from angry and suspicious whites. Today aren't we still being challenged to confront the persistence of white supremacy and its power to inflict pain and suffering?"

Speakers Include Womanist Theologian Kelly Brown Douglas and Historian David Cline

Speakers at the May 3 event include Womanist theologian Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas '82, the Susan D. Morgan Distinguished Professor of Religion at Goucher College and Canon Theologian at the Washington National Cathedral; Dr. David Cline, Assistant Professor of History at Virginia Tech; and Wesley Morris, a third-year M.Div. candidate who is a community organizer and colleague of Dr. William J. Barber, II, of North Carolina's Moral Mondays movement. Dr. Cline has recently published a history of SIM entitled *From Reconciliation to Revolution: The Student Interracial Ministry, Liberal Christianity, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1960 to 1970* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016). Additional faculty and students will also participate.

Union Medals to Be Awarded to Charles Sherrod '66 and Shirley Sherrod

At the close of the conference there will be a reception, followed by the awarding of the Union Medal to Charles M. Sherrod '66 and Shirley M. Sherrod, in recognition of their decades' long leadership as civil rights and social justice advocates. The Union Medal, the Seminary's highest award, was instituted in 1981 as a means of honoring persons whose lives reflect the mission of the Seminary in the world.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE

For more information about the May 3 conference, call Kevin McGee at 212-280-1590.

To register online, go to [http: myunion.utsnyc.edu/organizing-for-racial-justice](http://myunion.utsnyc.edu/organizing-for-racial-justice).



WATCH THE WOMEN OF SPIRIT LECTURE

The Seventh Annual Judith Davidson Moyers Women of Spirit Lecture was delivered on April 26, 2017 by Winona LaDuke. LaDuke is a rural development economist and author working on issues of indigenous economics, food and energy policy. For the greater part of 2016, Ms. LaDuke lived at the Red Warrior Camp in the Standing Rock Indian Reservation where she urged the dismantling of the fossil fuel infrastructure.

ONLINE: utsnyc.edu/laduke_livestream

UNION

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TALK TO A MUSLIM

Mona Haydar, a current M.Div. candidate, and her husband Sebastian Robins started the "Ask a Muslim" project in the wake of the Paris and San Bernardino tragedies in late 2015. They hope to counter fear and misunderstanding with dialogue and a communion of donuts and coffee. This photo is from an early spring day outside the 121st Street entrance to the Seminary.

