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The Bridge

Harding School of Theology

Winter 2021

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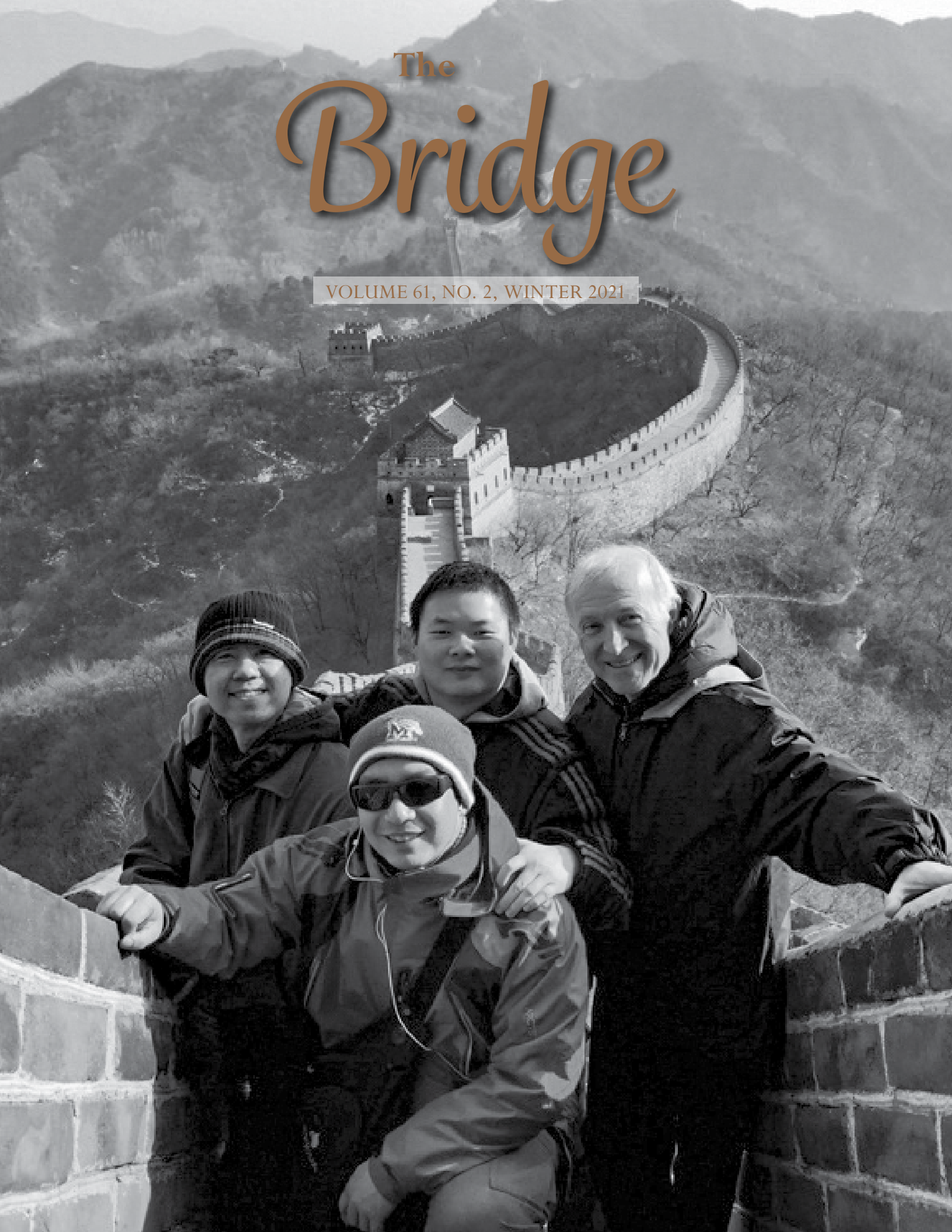
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The Bridge

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Ron Wade in China

Photo Credit: Rachel Hemphill



Greg Muse

The Joy of Giving By Greg Muse, HST Advancement Director

Isn't it nice to receive a thank you note for an act of service you think is hidden to the world? Former HST Dean Dr. Philip Slate (1986-1992) knows that feeling. He speaks from the heart about the joy of giving to HST students as follows:

Recently, a surprising and delightful letter came to me from Christoph Kündig, a preacher and teacher with the congregation in Bern, Switzerland. He thanked me for the Slate Missions Scholarship that enabled him to participate in distant learning from HST. I wept. He is exactly who the scholarship was designed to help, viz., those who are "preparing to work in neglected and needy areas." I created the scholarship in memory of my parents, who encouraged Pat and me when we decided to work outside the USA, even though we were taking their only grandchild!

A second surprise from the letter was to learn that Kündig's wife, Karin, is the daughter of Jim Springer whom I had in at least one class at HST in the 1970s. After graduation, Jim moved to Germany to work.

HST's influence is worldwide. It is satisfying to be part of that influence even after retiring many years from full-time teaching. I am sure others who have created scholarship funds have a similar satisfaction. It is indeed "more blessed to give than to receive."

Endowment giving is a way to honor the past, bring peace to the present, and have faith in the future. Consider establishing an endowment in memory of a loved one that also addresses your spiritual motivations, just as the Slates did. It's easier than you think. Contact me by phone at 901-574-1127 or email at gmuse@hst.edu to discuss your endowment goals. Matching funds may be available. I can't promise written thank you notes, but I guarantee a feeling of joy that money can't buy.

Reflections FROM THE Dean



Photo Credit: Jeff Montgomery

Dr. Allen Black

Lead, Kindly Light

By Allen Black

In early December as I write, the United States and much of the world is surging to new levels in the COVID-19 pandemic. In the U.S. nearly 280,000 have died; worldwide that number is over 1.5 million. In the U.S. there are more than 100,000 patients with COVID in our hospitals. We are having a post-Thanksgiving surge with great fears that the coming months will be worse — but also hopes that the vaccines will be available soon. It is certainly my hope and prayer that by the time this article is published the pandemic situation will be significantly improving, but, unless our Savior returns, it will undoubtedly still be a major factor throughout the world. Throughout the pandemic a British New Testament scholar, Richard Bauckham, has been emailing occasional bulletins with theological musings about our circumstances. His most recent bulletin calls attention to John Henry Newman's song, "Lead, Kindly Light."

Some of us remember singing this song in our worship services or in a high school or college chorus. It was in the old blue "Great Songs of the Church, Number Two" from 1937 — and possibly in earlier editions. Newman wrote the words as a poem in 1833. Before he wrote the song, Newman had a bout of serious illness that kept him in Italy for three weeks. Sailing back to England, his sailing ship was stuck for a week due to lack of wind. During that time he wrote the poem that has comforted so many since then. The title of the poem, "The Pillar of the Cloud," suggests he was using the pillar of cloud and fire that guided the Israelites in the wilderness as his metaphor for the "Kindly Light." That aspect is lost in the title of the hymn.

Here are the words of the poem as originally published:

*Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on!*

*The night is dark, and I am far from home —
Lead Thou me on!*

*Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene — one step enough for me.*

*I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou
Shouldst lead me on.*

*I loved to choose and see my path, but now
Lead Thou me on!*

*I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.*

*So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.*

A final note read "At Sea. June 16, 1833."

Newman had suffered from illness for three weeks and now was stuck at sea waiting for wind for the sails. In the hymn he acknowledges that he had once been impatient to see the distant scene, to choose and see his path. But now he states that one step at a time is enough and prays for the Kindly Light to lead him on. The last verse declares his confidence that as "Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on" through all obstacles. Ultimately, he has faith that the Light will lead him step by step through the night until the morning. The "angel faces" of the last two lines may be interpreted as those he longs to see back home in England, but also, more eschatologically, of those he will be joined with after this life.

This great hymn has provided comfort to millions in times of trial. It was sung in the darkness of a collapsed mine in England in 1909 by a small group of miners who were rescued from a great disaster that took 168 lives. It was sung by Corrie ten Boom's sister Betsie along with other women as they were led into a concentration camp during the Holocaust. In 1912 it was sung aboard one of the lifeboats from the Titanic as they awaited rescue.

As Bauckham rightly notes, these sentiments can comfort us as we struggle with this pandemic, even as we mourn the loss of loved ones. We need to trust that the One who has blessed us so long, will surely lead us on; and that, ultimately, we will get through the gloom of night and with the morn will see "those angel faces smile, which [we] have loved long since, and lost awhile."

The song is available on YouTube in several versions. One beautiful acapella version is done by Brigham Young University's "Vocal Point" (<https://tinyurl.com/BYUlead>). A grand version is done by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir (<https://tinyurl.com/Mormanlead>), although you may need the words in front of you as you listen to it.

TRANSITIONS ...

Bob Turner leaves HST

by Sheila Owen

In November HST said goodbye to library director Bob Turner (M.Div., 2009), who is now the senior minister at the Church of Christ at White Station (Memphis, TN). Turner joined the library staff in July 2009, supervising student workers and providing reference and circulation services. He became library director in September 2017, teaching Advanced Theological Research and adding thousands of books to the library collections. Turner attended the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting regularly, not for the presentations, but for the discounts offered by publishers in the exhibit hall.

Turner constantly watched for new writing tools to help students. He taught the writing process, and regularly wrote articles and book reviews for both Church of Christ and theological librarianship publications. His email newsletter, *Footnotes: Curated Resources for Ministers*, became a popular source of information on current topics and publications. Turner developed the “World of the Bible” program, collaborating with HST faculty and advancement to take artifacts and archival materials from

the library out to churches and school groups. He spearheaded digitization projects that have made the papers of John Allen Chalk and Jim Bill McInteer, among others, available to scholars.

Whatever HST had on the schedule, Turner actively participated, and he worked to make the library a center for campus events. He often presided as the master of ceremonies and auctioneer for the annual Women for Harding pie auction. Turner ran in the Run for the Son 5K, wrote for *The Bridge*, spoke in chapel, and produced a constant stream of innovative ideas, positive attitude, and intimate knowledge of Memphis restaurants. Alumnus and former library student worker Christian Wright (M.A., 2020) noted, “His restlessness and appetite for new things kept the culture of the library from ever getting stale. Bob didn’t do ‘boring.’”

We miss his daily presence on campus but look forward to working with him as a local minister and alumnus, and know God will continue to work through him.

Photo Credit: Matt Carter



Faculty emeritus status for Dr. Evertt W. Huffard

By Allen Black

Dr. Evertt W. Huffard came to HST in 1987 to teach missiology. He began serving as dean/executive director in 1999 and as dean/vice president in 2006. He retired as vice president at the end of 2013, and as dean in 2015, but continued half-time as professor of missiology and leadership through December 2019. Dr. Huffard was outstanding as a professor for 32 years and served as a visionary administrator for half of those years. In both arenas he enhanced HST’s reputation, and drew students and support to the school. Furthermore, he arguably was and still

is the best ambassador for HST throughout the world. He has constantly traveled outside the U.S., consulting and speaking, always building up HST wherever he goes.

In educational circles, the status of “emeritus” is granted as an honor to one who has done his or her job with distinction. No one deserves such an honor more than Dr. Evertt W. Huffard, professor emeritus of missiology and leadership.



HST Alumnus of the Year

By Greg Muse

“They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord ...” Isaiah 11:9

Harding School of Theology’s recent academic theme, “Peaceable Kingdom,” and verse, Isaiah 11:9, are illustrative of Ron Wade’s approach to the kingdom of God. Ron embodies the biblical description of peacemaker. He is a collaborative, humble, and empowering church and community leader.

Ron is a native Memphian who graduated from Kingsbury High School and the University of Memphis with a degree in marketing. He married Christy in 1980. She has been at his side in all of his spiritual service. They have two married children, Daniel and Anna, and four grandchildren.

Ron grew up in the Macon Road Church of Christ in Memphis and served there in numerous capacities as an adult. In 1992 he and Christy began attending the Highland Church of Christ. They soon became leaders in the “International Class” which evolved into a major Chinese ministry that now has its own worship service at Highland. Ron became an elder at Highland in 2005.

From 1974-1988 Ron took one course a semester until he completed a Master of Arts in Religion at Harding School of Theology.

After working in the corporate world for 30 years, Ron became executive director of HopeWorks Inc. in 2008. This nonprofit 501(c)(3) provides education, spiritual development, and respect for work. Through daily classes and meals, educational training, and spiritual counseling, HopeWorks strives to break the cycle of crime, addiction, and generational poverty that traps so many in the city of Memphis.



Under Ron’s leadership, HopeWorks has experienced unprecedented growth. Two recent Department of Justice grants totaling more than \$1.5 million significantly expanded holistic reentry services. Ron’s vision has inspired the agency in its work to meet the education and employment needs of impoverished Memphians.

Ron is quietly transforming the Memphis community by demonstrating that anyone, given opportunity and encouragement, can turn his or her life around. Ron’s vocation is a demonstration of the reality of the Peaceable Kingdom. Ron, through HopeWorks, has made a path for individuals whom society has viewed as a threat and marginalized.

In his home, in his church, and in his profession, Ron is an example to emulate. Harding School of Theology is proud to count him among its graduates. It is a pleasure to add him to the pantheon of HST Alumni of the Year.

Reflections on Zoom Chapel

By Dr. Allen Black

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we initiated a new form of chapel for this school year. We have met for our chapel services by Zoom. There are, of course, several fairly obvious drawbacks to Zoom chapel. We cannot sing together, shake hands, or give hugs. On the other hand, there have been some distinct advantages.

One advantage is that we have had an increase in attendance — since anyone can attend from anywhere. Since many of our students are distance students, it has been great to make chapel available to them without their coming to Memphis. Each week we have had attendees from all over the United States, and from various places around the world, including Nigeria, Switzerland, and Ukraine. Some of our inability to be up close and personal has been overcome by seeing everyone's faces as opposed to the backs of their heads. This is especially helpful when we are taking prayer requests.

Another big benefit is that we can have speakers from around the nation and even the world. All of our speakers in the fall semester were current students, current faculty or staff, or alumni. Among them were speakers from Botswana, St. Thomas, and Ukraine. Notable alumni who spoke included Randy Harris and Lynn Anderson. With such ease of inviting speakers outside of Memphis, our speakers were more internationally and racially diverse than usual.

To add a bit more of a personal touch to Zoom, we usually conversed some before each chapel, and those who wished stayed on for 10-15 minutes of conversation after chapel. I suspect that with its advantages, an occasional or weekly Zoom chapel will stay at HST after regular chapel has resumed.



Randy Harris



Anthony Powell

Community Read by Aaron Parker



This fall, the 2020-2021 HST Student Association inaugurated the SA Community Read. Each year, the SA will select a book, distribute it to the HST community, and facilitate opportunities for reflection and discussion.

The SA Community Read was inspired by the University's Harding Read, where the president selects a book for the Searcy campus to read as a whole. The Harding Read books are always great books, but they haven't always been especially relevant for ministers and graduate students. The SA decided that beginning our own Read program would let us more directly address topics relevant to the HST community and help increase the sense of unity as a school. Even before COVID-19, HST's long-distance hybrid format presented unique challenges, and we decided that this would be a great way for the SA to contribute. The SA Community Read also will give us an opportunity to deal with topics that are important for life and ministry but are sometimes beyond the scope of the classroom.

This year our first-ever SA Community Read book is *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness* by Austin Channing Brown, published by Convergent Books. Brown is a media producer, consultant, and preacher who specializes in race issues and the way the personal and organizational intersect in racial identity. *I'm Still Here* is her memoir about the experience of growing up as a Black woman in majority-white Christian spaces such as churches and Christian universities. The SA chose this book to begin our Read program because of the way it frankly and directly addresses race in religious contexts similar to those many of us work in. As a memoir, we found it to be well-suited for personal discussion and reflection. It is our hope that this program will enrich the HST experience for everyone.

Photo Credit: Matt Carter



The HST "mansion" which houses faculty and staff offices, got a facelift this fall with new paint on doors, windows, and trim.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Lance Hawley published an article titled "The Rhetoric of Condemnation in the Book of Job" in the most recent issue of *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. 139 (2020): pp. 459-478.

Dr. Mark Powell has discussed his recent book, *Discipleship in Community*, co-authored with John Mark Hicks and Greg McKinzie, on several podcasts recently, including Kingdom Upgrowth (kingdomupgrowth.com), Theology Shorts (theologyshorts.libsyn.com), and Intersection: Where Theology and Practice Meet, Siburt Institute for Church Ministry, Abilene Christian University (siburtinstitute.org/intersection).

DEGREE PROGRAMS

- M.A.** Master of Arts
- M.A.C.M.** Master of Arts in Christian Ministry
- M.Div.** Master of Divinity
- D.Min.** Doctor of Ministry
- C.S.L.** Certificate in Spiritual Leadership



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News & Events



Spring Break
March 8 - 13



Graduation
May 7

Intensive Course Week & Study Week
March 1 - 6

Final Exams
May 3 - 7

