

Winter 2012

The Bridge Winter 2012 Vol. 52 No. 3

Harding School of Theology

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Recommended Citation

Harding School of Theology. (2012). The Bridge Winter 2012 Vol. 52 No. 3. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/hst-bridge/66>

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THE Bridge

VOLUME 53, NO. 3, WINTER 2012

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Love Embodied

In chapter six of his popular book *The God Delusion*, atheist Richard Dawkins challenges the idea that morality is groundless apart from God and religious belief. Instead, he argues that natural selection and Darwinian evolution are able to explain moral behavior without appealing to God. Dawkins offers "four good Darwinian reasons for individuals to be altruistic, generous or 'moral' toward each other." These four reasons are kinship (we naturally care for our offspring and those related to us), reciprocation (we repay favors given to us and give favors to others in expectation of future payback), reputation ("moral" behavior makes us look good to others, and so is in our best interest), and advertisement of dominance (when we are benevolent to others, we communicate our superiority over those in need).

However, even Dawkins realizes that these reasons cannot account for selfless acts like "Good Samaritan urges" or the "human urge to adopt a child." Dawkins accounts for such selfless acts as "misfirings," "mistakes," or "by-products" of natural selec-



Powell

tion. Just as we may have sexual urges for a member of the opposite sex who is unable to procreate, so too we feel pity when we see a "weeping unfortunate (who is unrelated and unable to reciprocate)." Dawkins says, "Both are misfirings, Darwinian mistakes: blessed, precious mistakes" (p. 251-253).

For Dawkins, morality is essentially self-centered. While some selfless acts, like adopting a child, are explained as evolutionary misfirings, he never addresses more difficult cases like loving and forgiving one's enemies. One gets the sense that, for Dawkins, selfless love for our enemies is impossible — no one really does this. If we do, it is simply because we are under the

delusion of religious belief.

A different vision of morality and love is presented in 1 John 4. John begins by affirming a basic Christian belief — our theme this year at HST — the incarnation. "This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God" (v. 2, NIV). For John, the incarnation is no dry, abstract doctrinal confession but is central to a Christian understanding of God and morality.

John continues, "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (v. 9-10). God revealed his love for us at the incarnation when he sent his Son into the world. John describes love not with a carefully worded definition but by pointing to the work of Jesus on the cross. Jesus not only tells us what love is but shows us as well.

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THE Bridge

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DEAN'S NOTE

Best Case Scenario

Paul prayed that, through Christ and the church, God would be honored through all generations (Eph. 3:21). What would that look like?

LOCAL POSSIBILITY

Churches would be reconciling people to God every week. Church leaders would enjoy teaching the word, shepherding the flock, empowering others to lead ministries, and engaging in the life of the community to bless it with the Spirit of Christ. Churches would work together as a united force in a dark and confused world. It would be more natural to plant new churches than to split churches. Through these new churches, the whole world would be blessed. Preachers would effectively balance exposition of the word, ministry to saints, and ministry in their community. Full-time ministers would be so admired that schools could not keep up with the demand for training in ministry. An army of vocational ministers would engage in church planting and renewal in urban areas.

While I see this scenario in a few churches, the gap between the ideal and the real still calls all of us to more sanctification. We see a host of teens and young adults leaving the church with very few roots in the soil of a nurturing community of spiritual life. Very little evangelism takes place. More elders manage the church than lead it, allowing the urgent to steal all their energy from the important shepherding and mentoring tasks. Tensions in

ministry leave many preachers with a greater desire for survival skills than for more training for long-term ministry. Often churches looking for a qualified preacher invest nothing toward producing qualified preachers. Every congregation shares national, regional and global responsibilities if the church is to honor God in all nations and through all generations.

GLOBAL REALITY

Each year, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* runs a status of global mission report. My January issue arrived yesterday, and I went straight to the annual chart and saw the following:

- The population of the world grew from 1.6 billion to 7 billion in 112 years at 1.18 percent per annum (p.a.).
- 33 percent of the world's population (2.3 billion) claim to be Christian compared to 22.7 percent in 1900. There are 43,000 Christian denominations and 4.7 million worship centers. The Christian population grew 1.3 percent p.a. (Islam claims 1.5 billion adherents and increased 1.79 percent p.a. Jews represent 14.9 million and have a .69 percent p.a. growth.) The fastest growing Christian groups are the Pentecostals (2.41 percent p.a.) and Evangelicals (2.25 percent p.a.) at 612 million and 298 million respectively.
- The number of computers in Christian use, growing at 5.45 percent p.a., is at 620 million. (There were only 1,000 in 1970!)



Huffard

- With 7.4 million titles of books about Christianity and 58,000 Christian periodicals, Christian publishing continues to be robust.
 - Personal income of Christians increased at 5.38 percent p.a. and is estimated to be \$31,890 billion this year. Giving to Christian causes will involve \$569 billion with about \$227 billion of it going to churches (which has almost doubled since 2000).
 - New non-Christian urban dwellers increase at the rate of 122,000 a day. Of the 3.66 billion urban dwellers, 1.49 billion identify themselves as Christians.
- [Johnson, Todd M., David B. Barrett, and Peter F. Crossing. "Christianity 2012: the 200th anniversary of American Foreign Missions," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 36 (January 2012): 28-29. Statistical table also available at <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/resources/documents/StatusOfGlobalMission.pdf>]

We are not without resources and opportunities. Lack of unity, ignorance and strange priorities can be overcome by generational, congregational, cultural and urban bridge builders. All, in my opinion, take training and serious preparation to be all that God has called us to be. It starts in a healthy church.

Dr. Evertt W. Huffard
(dean@hst.edu)



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Ephesus as a Religious Center in the Principate

An International Symposium in Honor of Richard Oster
Harding School of Theology

May 18-19, 2012

www.ephesusconference.com

Fifty Plus Years in Ministry

John Davis was the oldest son of eight children. When his father asked him what his plans were for the future, Davis was within walking distance of a major Alabama university — but he wanted to go to a Christian college. Dr. Cliff Ganus Jr. met Davis when he made a recruiting trip to Alabama. Learning that the only thing keeping Davis from attending Harding was work and scholarship funds, Ganus quickly found him a job. Davis graduated from Harding in 1952 and recognized that his education was not yet complete. He estimates he drove a total of 40,000 miles

commuting back and forth for classes, first in the graduate program at Harding in Searcy and then at Harding School of Theology in Memphis (at the time known as Harding Graduate School of Bible and Religion).

Beginning his ministry in Louisiana, Davis started working with Ridgewood Church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas, October 1959. He retired in 2011 after 52 years of ministry at the same congregation. When I asked Davis for his secret to the many years of faithful ministry, he said, "I enjoyed the joys and weathered the storms," adding that his

heroes are Ganus, Dr. Jack P. Lewis and Annie May Alston Lewis.

Thank you, John, for your lifetime of faithful ministry. Your example is an encouragement to anyone in ministry now and to those preparing for ministry. We are thankful to all our donors who are investing in the preparation of leaders for ministry. The return on the investment is more than just helping them through school. It is the years of faithful ministry after school wherever God sends them.

*Larry Arick
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BRIEFS

Asian Missionary or Church Leader: Apply Now for a Semester at HST

Funds will be available September 2012 for the first recipient of a grant from the **Hogan-Cate Asian Missions Endowment** for a semester at HST and Harding University. This fund will provide housing, travel expenses and tuition for a church leader on sabbatical or a missionary on furlough from Asia for two-four months. For an application, contact Dr. Evertt W. Huffard, at dean@hst.edu. **Deadline for application will be April 1.**

BRIEFS

Missionary Papers Welcomed at HST

Barry Jones (M.Th. 1985; D.Min. 1991), minister at the Ninth and Elm Church of Christ in Orange, Texas, donated **David Hallett's** letters and reports to the HST library. Hallett (Oct. 11, 1935-Dec. 16, 2011), a Canadian, served as a missionary to India from 1963 to 1993. His principal work was with the Alpha Bible College in Shillong, a city in North-eastern India. The Ninth and Elm Church of Christ began to support Hallett in 1970 and continued to support him after he returned to Canada until a few months before his death.

The bulk of the collection is almost 1,015 letters from Hallett to Roland E. Bennett, who was a close friend. After Bennett's death, the family returned the letters to Hallett, who passed them on to the Ninth and Elm Church.

Over the years, HST Library has collected reports and papers from more than 1,000 church of Christ missionaries around the globe and continues to collect in both print and electronic formats, making them available to students and researchers. Help us preserve these elements of church of Christ history.

Contact the HST library if . . .

- you know of any current missionaries who would send us reports
- you are a current or former missionary
- you or your congregation has missionary files you would be willing to donate

*Don Meredith
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Love *continued from Page 1*

The implication for our lives is clear: We are to love as God loves.

John naturally moves from the incarnation to God's love for us to the command for us to love one another. Without the incarnation, the cross does not really demonstrate

doctrine of the incarnation affirms that the one in the manger and the one on the cross is the fully human and fully divine Son of God.

If we deny the incarnation, we deny the glory and honor due to God and miss the heart of God for us as



Detail of Christ Pantocrator in Hagia Sophia. Transferred from en.wikipedia.org. This work is in the public domain in the United States.

the love of God for us. If the Son of God only appeared to be human but did not really become human, then he did not die for us after all. On the other hand, if Jesus is not divine, then an angelic being or good moral teacher may have died for us, but God did not die for us. The

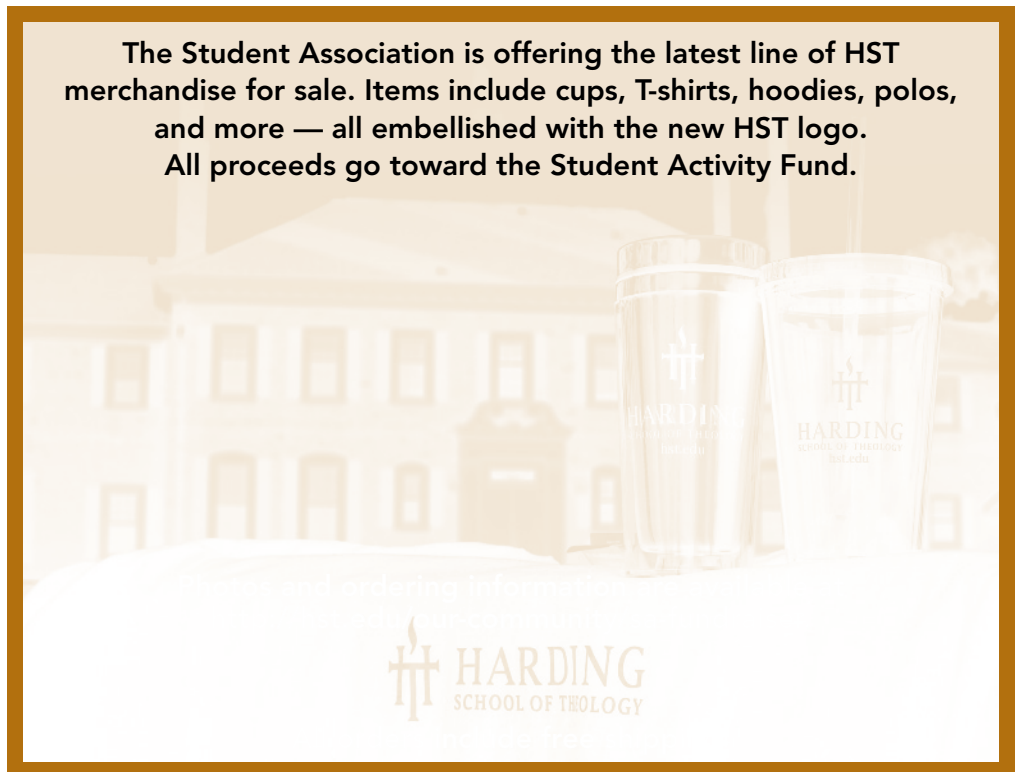
seen at the cross. If we deny the incarnation, we have a diminished view of God's love as well as the love we are called to emulate. The incarnation gives us a vision of love as radical self-giving for the sake of others.

We should be careful not to dismiss Dawkins' portrayal

of morality too quickly, as it summarizes well the kind of morality that comes naturally to us. However, Christian love is not natural or intuitive. Jesus calls us beyond a natural morality that is only concerned with kinship (Luke 10:25-37), reciprocity (Luke 14:12-14), reputation (Matthew 6:1-4), and domination (Mark 10:42-45). Christian love is rooted in God and can be lived out only with the help of God. We need the indwelling Spirit of God to grow in love and live out the radical demands of the gospel (Galatians 5:22-23). Living out the incarnation means loving the enemy who is impossible to love without the help of God's Spirit.

*Dr. Mark E. Powell
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The Student Association is offering the latest line of HST merchandise for sale. Items include cups, T-shirts, hoodies, polos, and more — all embellished with the new HST logo. All proceeds go toward the Student Activity Fund.



Networking for Shepherds

Networks in any field are important sources for camaraderie, support, and collaboration. Most preachers are well networked, as are missionaries. Youth ministers and campus ministers have networking down to a fine art. The exception among church leaders, it seems, is shepherds and elders. At best, the connections between elders of different congregations tend to be sporadic and casual. Whatever the cause, this isolation of shepherds prevents them from drawing on each other's experience or offering encouragement from someone who has been there.

Many churches want to develop new church shepherds. Where does one go to find training, encouragement and direction? Where can a congregation send those in whom they see God at work to help them develop into shepherding leaders? Who will shepherd the shepherds?

To address these needs, the Church Leaders Resource Network (CLRN) was formed. Church leaders from seven states gathered in November 2010 at the Harding School of Theology to brainstorm ways to encourage church leaders, especially church shepherds. As a result, the CLRN core values include providing networking opportunities for elders, encouragement for both elders and their wives, and resources and case studies to help elders address a variety of circumstances.

From this valuable input, the Shepherds Network was planned. These weekend experiences, specially designed

for shepherding couples, are structured around three tracks. First, experienced elders (those who have served 10 or more years) are offered sessions for refreshment, strength for the long haul, and direction on how to "finish well."

New and potential elders are the focus of another track with presentations designed to help them appreciate shepherding as a "noble task" (1 Timothy 3:1). They are able to draw from the knowledge and experiences of others for better understanding of best practices, fresh ideas, and how to work with the diversity in their congregation.



The third track focuses on encouraging wives. A shepherd's spouse is an integral part of his ministry. They often shepherd alongside (and apart from) their husband, dealing with many of the same joys and hurts as their mate. The resources, encouragement and relationships they gain from the Shepherds Network are invaluable for their ministry.

The key to networking is sharing. The women and men who participate in the Shepherds Network weekends come with a portfolio full of experiences and find a venue where they can share what they have learned along the way with others through case studies and guided

small group conversations.

In 2011, Harding School of Theology hosted two Shepherds Network weekends, bringing together shepherding couples from 10 states. A third Shepherds Network was held in January 2012 in Belgrade, Mont. This Northwest Connection weekend had approximately 170 people in attendance from 26 congregations ranging from Montana, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oregon, and southwest Canada. Almost 25 percent of these participants were potential elders encouraged by their churches to participate.

We hope to see the Shepherds Networks spread. God willing, the future will see more regional manifestations of the Shepherds Network.

The next Shepherds Network will be hosted by HST on September 21-23, 2012. An additional resource for shepherds and their wives is a new graduate-level course offered at HST: **Seminar in Shepherding and Congregational Leadership**. This seminar will be held March 20-25, 2012 and is available for credit and audit (<http://www.HST.edu/shepherd>).

Church renewal begins with God working through godly leaders who are equipped to face the challenges of sharing an unchanging Jesus with an ever-changing world. The CLRN and the Shepherds Networks are tools to help this become a reality.

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BRIEFS

Memphis Urban Ministries Closing

HST and Memphis churches are saddened by the decision to close Memphis Urban Ministries (MUM) at the end of 2011. For more than 20 years, MUM has worked to serve the poor of our community.

The partnership between MUM and HST has been profound; a list of HST students and graduates who served as full-time ministers or apprentices with MUM would include Anthony Wood, Brad Blake, Jeff Matthews, Keith Lape, Chris Stewart, Jim Harbin, Ron Cook, Chris Mauldin, Jim Holway, Amy Sanford, Jonathan Camp, Heath Amos, Bob Logsdon, Nathan Bills, David Black, Pat Pugh, Charlie Jarrett, Colby Hill, Joshua McGough, Matt Brent, Josh Marcum, Greg McKinzie, Jeremy Marshall, Angela Rusk, Ryan Fowler, Jonathan Strasser, Dorn Muscar, Cynthia Turner and Jared King.

Although the HST community regrets MUM's closure, we are thankful for having had the opportunity to work with this ministry. "Dr. Randolph and I will continue to develop a way for apprentices to serve in the city but will have to do it without a partner like MUM," HST Dean Evertt Hufard comments, adding the request, "Pray for new doors of opportunity to open to engage our students in this city."

BRIEFS

Faculty/Staff Notes



Library volunteer **Steve Teranova** is shown with HST librarian **Bob Turner** at Teranova's HopeWorks graduation in December. Turner was recently appointed a member of the HopeWorks board of directors. For more information about HopeWorks, visit <http://www.whyhopeworks.org>.



Dr. Phil McMillion taught five lessons on "The Book of Psalms" at Wilderness Lakes Retreat near Sisters, Oregon, in October 2011. The weekend was sponsored by the Oregon State University campus ministry, and students from University of Oregon and Boise State University participated as well.

In November 2011, McMillion along with Drs. **Allen Black** and **Evertt W. Huffard** attended the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting held in San Francisco. This was concurrent with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, which Huffard also attended.

Huffard welcomed 2012 in Cologne, Germany, teaching a six-day seminar on "The Christian-Muslim Encounter" for the Ministry for Theological Education.

A Typical HST Student?

What is the typical HST student like? As the new director of Admissions, I'm discovering that my ministry has many facets. Our students come in all ages and all life situations. I counsel people who are seeking God's direction for their lives as they try to discern whether they have a calling to ministry. I work with recent graduates as they look for ministry training to better prepare them for the work God has called them to do. I help seasoned ministers who realize that they need more skills to meet the challenges in their current min-

istry settings. I walk through counseling programs and licensure requirements with future counselors. I'm blessed to visit with retirees looking for a second career that makes a difference for the kingdom.

What's the typical HST student like? They are diverse. Over the past few weeks, I've been with youth ministers at the National Conference on Youth Ministry and with college students and campus ministers at Gulfcoast Getaway. I've visited with elders and ministers from churches in several states. I've talked with coun-

selors, preachers, missionaries, and hospital chaplains.

What's the typical HST student like? They are Christians following God's will. A learner stretching academically. A reader feasting on the word of God. A servant learning to serve. A talker speaking intimately with God. A child of God becoming more like Jesus.

Do you find yourself in this picture? Do you know someone who does? I'd love to share your journey. Call or email to arrange a campus visit.

Matt Carter
(mrcarter@hst.edu)

And Here We Grow ...

One of our professors asked us to reflect on our first semester in the counseling program here at HST. We were challenged academically and spiritually to embark on a journey that will stretch us in our personal walk with God and in our interactions with clients. We have the responsibility of leading by example our future clients; if we have not first taken care of our own spiritual and mental health how can we lead others down that path? Leah White reflects, "As the semester progressed, I needed to be more honest in my prayer life. Someday I will be asking my clients to be completely honest with me as someone they hardly know." Eric Suddeath adds, "The greatest thing I have learned is how much God loves me. This love has helped me not to view coun-

seling merely as a problem-solving session, but as a time to accept and love." As a result of seeing God's love, Suddeath changed the way he views counseling. We all adopted a new perspective about what it means to be a counselor and how counseling is ministry.

Forrest Smith previously viewed counseling as "only for people who had major problems." However, after spending the last five and a half years in ministry, he now realizes that "counseling is part of life." In his first semester in the counseling program, Smith has had members from the congregation he serves "come to [him] with things they want to talk about. These talks are nothing less than real counseling sessions." He adds, "I now see counseling as a vital piece to sustaining a

healthy ministry."

One of the more challenging areas for us is integrating our Christian worldview and values with the ethical and legal requirements of the field. "The most impactful part of my classroom learning experience was learning how to integrate my faith with counseling," White notes. This is a process that we all have started and will continue throughout our careers. Here at HST, we are being equipped to make faith a foundational part of who we are as counselors. We are reaching out to help heal the hurting and lost. In some cases, we will be the hands of God to many who may never set foot in a church building.

*Lonn Baker, Forrest Smith,
Eric Suddeath and
Leah White*

Reflection on the Society of Biblical Literature Meeting

The 2011 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature was held in San Francisco. Four current students and three faculty members from Harding School of Theology made the journey. The event hosted top-notch scholars from around the world as well as thousands of students star-struck at their presence. On the streets, we passed world-class scholars, typically known only by the printed pages of our course

together. As students, we hardly had the income to afford San Francisco's best. We splurged one evening at The American Grilled Cheese Kitchen, home of the world's best grilled cheese sandwich. The cost of the town, however, encouraged us to eat most often at the conference. Receptions sponsored by publishing houses and universities took place each day. Since many of these receptions were geared toward prospective students, they

Her presentation was a great example of how biblical researchers can incorporate various disciplines into their researches to flesh out multiple aspects of a narrow thesis. Since I especially enjoy studies in the Second Temple period, this presentation was particularly influential.

A long-standing tradition at the SBL meeting is for those affiliated with the Stone-Campbell movement to gather on Sunday morning. It was great to worship

Attending SBL always expands my network of colleagues and strengthens my biblical competency and scholarship.

readings. We listened to the latest biblical research fresh off the lips of presenters and perused one of the world's largest expositions of biblical books and digital resources.

Each of us used our time in San Francisco differently. For some, making connections and listening to presenters was the highest priority; others took full advantage of our location and visited Alcatraz, the Fisherman's Wharf, the Golden Gate Bridge, the famous residence on Full House, and popular local restaurants; and at some point all of us experienced the Occupy San Francisco protest. Food always seemed to bring us

offered us a chance to socialize casually and eat for free. We ate like kings, or maybe like poor students trying to earn back the cost of our plane tickets.

Throughout the conference, the importance of interdisciplinary methodologies was made apparent. For example, in her presidential address entitled "Models of Moral Self: Hebrew Bible in Second Temple Judaism," Carol A. Newsom presented the psychological, sociopolitical, cosmological and grammatical features of moral agency in Second Temple Judaism, demonstrating how central and variegated the subject was in this period.

and fellowship with former professors and colleagues, to hear the stories, and to recognize the widespread involvement of those associated with the Stone-Campbell movement in schools and churches across the world. Attending SBL always expands my network of colleagues and strengthens my biblical competency and scholarship. The 2012 SBL annual meeting will be held in Chicago the weekend before Thanksgiving, and it will certainly uphold the event's exceptional standard. Until then!

*J. Andrew Sowers
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BRIEFS

Faculty/Staff Notes

The Christian Urban Development Association (CUDA), a non-profit serving Arequipa, Peru, recently added Dr. **Ileene Huffard** and **Sheila Owen** to their board of directors. Ileene is the director of Harding University's Mid-South Professional Center, located on the HST campus. Owen is the associate librarian at HST Library. HST grad Greg McKinzie (M.Div., 2008) cofounded CUDA with Kyle Smith as an organization to empower "vulnerable communities in urban Peru to overcome cycles of poverty." More information can be found at www.cudaperu.org.

Dr. **Dave Bland** spoke at the Midwest Preachers' Retreat in Wisconsin Sept. 26-28. He attended the 2011 annual meeting of the Academy of Homiletics, held December 2011 in Austin, Texas.

Dr. **Ed Gray** and his wife, Rhonda, have been asked by the government of Singapore to present the keynote sessions at the "Celebrate Marriage" Conference, held March 30-April 2, 2012.

Three Attend Literature Meeting

HST students **Andrew Sowers**, **Clint Burnett**, and **Andrew Taylor** attended the 2011 annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature held in San Francisco.

FINAL WORD

Available Resources

Interested in learning more about a topic mentioned in *The Bridge*? Check out the following resources:

Baker, Susan S., ed. *Globalization and its effects on urban ministry in the 21st century*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2009.

Dawkins, Richard. *The God delusion*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006.

Doherty, William J. *Soul searching: why psychotherapy must promote moral responsibility*. New York: Basic Books, 1995.

Flew, Antony. *There is a God: how the world's most notorious atheist changed his mind*. New York: HarperOne, 2007.

International Bulletin of Missionary Research <http://www.internationalbulletin.org/>
O'Brien, Peter T. *The letter to the Ephe-*

sians. Pillar commentary series. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Oster, Richard. *A bibliography of ancient Ephesus. ATLA bibliography series*. Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1987.

Silvey, Billie. *God's child in the city: catching God's vision for urban ministry*. Siloam Springs: Leafwood, 2005.

Snodgrass, Klyne. *Ephesians. The NIV application commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Society of Biblical Literature. "Research Tools," including *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition*, links to the Virtual Dead Sea Scrolls, and an Archaeology 101 page, at <http://www.sbl-site.org/educational/default.aspx>

Stetzer, Ed and Thom S. Rainer. *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations*. Nashville: B & H, 2010.

Van Rheezen, Gailyn, and Bob Waldron. *Status of missions in Churches of Christ: a nationwide survey of Churches of Christ*. Abilene: ACU Press, 2002.

For help in borrowing or purchasing any of these resources, feel free to contact us at the HST Library.

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