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Summer 2017

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Harding School of Theology

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# The Bridge

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*The Bridge* is published quarterly by Harding School of Theology for alumni, students, prospective students, contributors and friends.

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THE BOTTOM LINE

## Editor's Digest

A bittersweet aspect of working in higher education is watching students move on. The excitement of seeing students enter their chosen fields with new skills is balanced by a sense of loss at seeing them leave the community. And HST's community is so much more than just an educational one.

In the spring, 19 students graduated from HST, each bound for a future of service and ministry. Graduates include Peter McGraw (M.A.), Gregory Parks (M.A.C.M.), David Bath (M.A.C.), Hannah Burleson (M.A.C.), Stephannie Davis (M.A.C.), Nathan Howell (M.A.C.), Daniel Jarchow (M.A.C.), Rebecca Kelly (M.A.C.), Tasha Sallee (M.A.C.), Frank Bolling (M.Div.), Adam Mayfield (M.Div.), Casey McDonald (M.Div.), Brian Metz (M.Div.), Femi Osibin (M.Div.), Tyler Replogle (M.Div.), Clay Smith (M.Div.), Andrew Taylor (M.Div.), Dorn Muscar (D.Min.) and Terry Smalling (D.Min.).

However, last semester saw as many gains as losses. Five HST students were married and four celebrated the birth of children. These nine families represent seven states, four countries, three degree programs and numerous areas of ministry. Several of the spouses began degree programs or course audits. (*See cover photo for some of these students and families.*)

One of our May graduates said when he arrived here newly married he had no idea how to be a husband (and, later, father of two), but the training, encouragement and mentoring he received at HST taught him how to be the godly man his family needs. He feels more equipped now to be not only a minister but also a husband and father. (After all, what good is it to succeed at the former if you fail at the latter?)

When you support HST, you aren't just strengthening individuals for their future kingdom work. You are building up godly families — many of whom begin on this campus. It's impossible to trace how far your influence reaches when you support HST. You are participating in a legacy far greater than any one of us can imagine. Praise be to God for his work in and through this community. I know it is the prayer of each member of this community that he continues to use us in ways that glorify him and further his kingdom.

# Reflections FROM THE VP

## Three Important Behaviors for Any Church Leader

BY DR. JIM MARTIN, VICE PRESIDENT

My wife and I had just moved to a small Tennessee town. We were newly married, fresh out of school and were about to experience some firsts: first time homeowner and first move as a married couple to a new place. For the first time, I was about to be a full-time minister/preacher at a small church. This was a fairly new congregation, so I would also be their first full-time minister.

I vividly recall starting the week on a Monday asking myself, “What on earth am I supposed to do?”

I wrestled with this for a while and made several attempts to get started. For a time, I thought the answer was to work harder and longer. However, this approach really didn’t seem to be the answer. In fact, this kind of ministry focus is usually short-lived.

I learned much during this season of life including, among other things, that I needed some priorities in terms of my behavior. Years later, I would learn three priorities that have now been helpful to me for many years in working as a church leader.

These three originated for me with Dr. Edwin Friedman who wrote *Generation to Generation* and *A Failure of Nerve*.

### **Be a calm presence.**

There is often much anxiety in congregations. Various people want this or that. Some may threaten to leave. Others make demands and ultimatums. Often a group of elders seem to want a new minister to take on the anxiety already in their group. They may see the arrival of a new minister as the answer to their problems. They may even want this person to fix the congregation or make up for their own dysfunction in his role as a church leader.

Sometimes, it is the minister who is very anxious and carries into the elder group the anxiety he feels over what various church members are saying or doing. Ideally, however, this minister will instead be a less anxious presence in the group.

Far too often, both ministers and elders contribute to the anxiety in the church. Perhaps several families leave the congregation within one month with each family saying they are leaving for the welfare of their small children. In some congregations, there might immediately be hand-wringing in the next elders’ meeting with someone declaring, “We must do something immediately!” A quick, rash decision and a hurried announcement is made on a Sunday morning about a change in the congregation. Yet quick, rash decisions are not usually the healthy way to deal with anxiety in a church.

What can the minister or any other church leader do to function as



Dr. Jim Martin

a less anxious presence? For one, the minister can work to become more self-aware of his own emotional state. Such self-awareness can come about by reflecting on how he functions emotionally within his own family. Such self-awareness is also developed by spending time in silence and solitude, seeking clarity and awareness about one’s own emotions. This minister, by the grace of God, as he matures in his self-awareness, can choose wisely how he will respond and function within an anxious church environment.

### **Stay connected.**

When a congregation or any other group experiences anxiety, church leaders might be tempted to disconnect emotionally from those with whom they are having the greatest conflict. The temptation to disconnect may occur when church leaders announce a new project or initiative and then receive pushback by the church members. The minister might even become embroiled in an anxious dispute with the elders in an us-versus-them conflict. He may disconnect from them emotionally and then wonder why things are getting even worse.

It is so important to stay emotionally connected as much as possible with the people in your church, even those who don’t necessarily agree with you. This doesn’t mean you have to be close or great friends. However, one can take the initiative to prevent cutoffs and disconnection with those whom we might be tempted to cut off.

### **Have a position.**

Staying connected with others does not mean that you do not have a self. Some ministers and elders try to ride the fence on most everything. If cutting myself off from those with whom I disagree is on one end of a continuum, the other end might be those church leaders who attempt to lead by trying to have no sense of self at all. Such a minister appears to have no position, opinion or conviction. He can become whatever others want him to be. These efforts basically reflect that the church leader is willing to abandon any sense of leadership in order to avoid conflict. In other words, he is willing to sacrifice progress for peace. Ironically, true peace is about reconciliation and connection, not pretending we all hold the same point of view. It is far better to state your view while valuing everyone else in the congregation whether they hold your position or not.

Leadership is hard work. It begins with learning to manage yourself. These three behaviors for church leaders are very important if a congregation is going to be able to make any progress.





Drs. Lance Hawley, Everett W. Huffard and Dale Manor led the students in their archaeological digs. This three-week course began in Memphis and ended in Israel. The group stands in front of their excavation site at Tel Beth Shemesh in June.

# Bringing Past Into Present

BY PARKER BULLARD, M.DIV. STUDENT

It is a basic tenet of exegesis that a great chasm is fixed between the world of the reader and the world of the text. It is a gulf of language, geography, culture, social location, theology, epistemology and so forth. This makes reading the Bible a cross-cultural experience, so we need tools to help us navigate this foreign world.

Archaeology is one such tool. This June, a team of nine students in Dr. Lance Hawley's Archaeology of the Bible course traveled to the Holy Land to participate in an archaeological dig at Beit Shemesh. (Dr. Hawley, I said it correctly!) I can't speak for the whole team, but here is what I learned.

First, my caricature of archaeology was of someone hunched over with a paintbrush sweeping away a mountain of dirt. In reality, digging entails a 4 a.m. wake-up call, blisters, heat stroke, pickaxes and occasional injury. A typical day yields hundreds of broken potsherds, the majority of which are discarded.

Also, I was struck that archaeology is a destructive process.

Like dissecting a frog in high school, once something is removed or unearthed, it can never be put back together. So on one hand, the archaeologist has only one shot to learn as much as possible through meticulous record-keeping. On the other hand, she must move quickly enough to actually accomplish something. That tension is an ever-present reality at the dig site.

When we weren't digging, we would steal away to visit other ancient cities like Jerusalem, Hazor, Beersheba and Lachish. Our sunburns, sleep deprivation and sore backs gave us a profound appreciation for the countless man-hours it took to uncover each site. We are also all grateful to Dr. Everett W. Huffard, who acted as our guide to these different sites.

Archaeology draws us into the past — into lives of ordinary people, political landscapes, ingenuity of the ancients, and humanity of those long gone. And when the Israelites and

Canaanites shift from being characters in the Bible to being real, historical people, the words of Scripture also spring to life.



A collection of pottery found in the area where Lance Hawley and Rachel Lewis were digging in Beth Shemesh.

Parker Bullard



# Training Counselors in Memphis

BY DR. ALLEN BLACK, DEAN

Dr. Ed Gray came to HST in 1993. Dr. Bill Flatt, who had been our registrar and counseling professor, had recently become dean. They both envisioned a new degree that would help students become licensed counselors. Flatt gave Gray the task of developing the Master of Arts in Counseling (M.A.C.) degree. With the faculty's approval, the M.A.C. began in 1994. Gray served as the chief architect and loving shepherd of that program for the past 23 years. He was joined by Dr. John Kennedy from 2007-13, and in 2014 we added the excellent teaching of Dr. Kevin Shelby. As a result of the work of Flatt, Gray, Kennedy, Shelby, and a number of talented adjunct instructors, 104 graduates are providing Christian counseling in churches and clinics throughout the country. For the past three years, Gray and Shelby have been innovative and worked beyond the call of duty to steadily add to the excellence of our counseling training in Memphis.

From its inception, HST's M.A.C. has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and by the Association of Theological Schools. However, since 2009 we have been developing our program toward receiving accreditation from the Council for Accrediting Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a steadily growing organization that accredits hundreds of programs throughout the U.S.

Our program has closely tracked CACREP standards for several years now. To receive CACREP accreditation, there is a mandatory

requirement of three full-time counseling professors, a goal that is beyond our resources. We have struggled with how to meet that goal and gain this important accreditation.

Now we have a solution. Several years ago, Harding's Cannon-Clary College of Education received CACREP accreditation for its Master of Science/Educational Specialist in clinical mental health counseling degree. HST's M.A.C. faculty and degree will merge with the College of Education's CACREP program this fall. The Memphis location will be a new extension site for the College of Education degree. Our students will now be able to graduate with a CACREP accredited degree granted by the College of Education.

Beginning this fall, Gray and Shelby will be working under the College of Education but will still be located and teaching at the Memphis campus. The counseling students will take virtually the same courses in the same location here in Memphis but will receive the CACREP accredited College of Education master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. They will still be an active part of chapel and reap the spiritual and social benefits of our campus.

This is a big change in some ways but small in others. It means this fall we will meet our big goal of CACREP accreditation for counseling training in Memphis.

# Honoring Dr. Rick Oster's Scholarship

BY DR. ALLEN BLACK, DEAN

On Thursday, June 8, 2017, the 37th Thomas H. Olbricht Christian Scholars' Conference hosted a luncheon honoring Dr. Rick Oster for his significant scholarly contributions to New Testament studies. The luncheon marked the official presentation of a forthcoming festschrift (a collection of writings published in honor of a scholar). I was the master of ceremonies at the luncheon, and tributes to Rick were given by his daughter Molly and by three former students: James Walters, Jerry Sumney and Trevor Thompson.

Oster has taught the New Testament and its world at Harding School of Theology since 1978. He received his bachelor's from Texas Tech University with an emphasis on classical languages and literature. While finishing a master's degree from Rice University, he went on to Princeton Theological Seminary where in 1974 he completed his Ph.D. in New Testament. Oster's contributions to scholarship have focused on the geographical regions of Ephesus and Anatolia and, to a lesser extent, Corinth and Achaia. He has built an international reputation for his expertise, particularly on Ephesus. He has also written on Acts, 1 Corinthians and Revelation. Throughout he has sought to understand the New Testament documents in the light of the dominant cultural features of their ancient cultural matrices.

A significant part of Oster's contribution to scholarship concerning the New Testament and the Graeco-Roman world has been through his students. He has been devoted to HST's students. Through his publications and his teaching, both in and out of the classroom, he has enlightened close to four decades of students to the importance of understanding the New Testament within the context of the world in which it was written. Several of those students have gone on to pursue

Ph.D.s and make scholarly contributions themselves.

The festschrift will be titled *Ephesus as a Religious Center Under the Principate*, a title taken from a well-known article Oster published in 1990. It will be published by Mohr Siebeck in its prestigious WUNT series. The book will contain a set of 12 technical essays, some written by archaeologists and others by New Testament scholars. Most of the essays represent papers delivered at a conference using the same title conducted on campus May 18-19, 2012. The conference was in honor of Oster for his 65th birthday.

Hopefully the festschrift will be published later this year and will be the third element, along with the conference and the luncheon, of a well-deserved tribute to Oster's work as a scholar.



Dr. Allen Black and Rick Oster stand in front of the festschrift cover page after the luncheon June 8.

Kristi Jones | Lipscomb University

*“HST challenges Christian leaders to develop deeper faith in God and higher standards of ministry and scholarship.”*



## Ministry

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Faculty

**Dr. Carlus Gupton** continued as interim minister at the Oxford (Mississippi) Church of Christ, which includes preaching, consultations with the leadership team, and a workshop “Healthy Leadership and Followership.” He presented “Radical Goodness, The Message of 1 Peter 2:11-12” during the summer series at Westside Church of Christ in Russellville, Arkansas. He also taught three Bible lessons and consulted on discerning the congregational vision at the Church of Christ at White Station in Memphis. Additionally, he consulted on leadership team-building at Donelson Church in Nashville, Tennessee, and effective growth strategies at College Hills Church in Lebanon, Tennessee.

#### Students

**Justin Sims** (M.Div.) is serving as a missionary apprentice for two years in Buenos Aires, Argentina, beginning August 2017. He will work with the Iglesia de Cristo Redentor (Redeemer Church of Christ), a house church that began in 2014 and now has 25 members from seven different nations. In addition to learning about ministry in Latin America, Sims will teach, preach, host Bible studies and work with the church to reach the community.



Ruby Deng, wife of Hunter Deng (M.Div.), Ananias Moses (M.Div.), and Heather Gould (M.A.C.) garden together on a humid day in July. The community garden is maintained by on-campus students and their spouses.

## Scholarship

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Alumni

**Steven Gaines** (M.Div., 2015) presented his paper “From Radio to Facebook: White Christians’ Engagement with African-American Rhetoric” at the Sacred Rhetoric Conference on May 31 at Winebrenner Theological Seminary in Findlay, Ohio. He also presented “Privileged Repentance in Prophetic Preaching: John A. Scott’s Response to the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.” on June 7 and “Daring to Prophesy: The First Sermon by a Woman in the Churches of Christ” on June 8 at the Christian Scholars’ Conference at Lipscomb University. **Shelley Jacobs** (M.A., 2009) presented “From Nashville to Bethany in 2016 (The Journey of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society’s Stone Campbell Archives)” at the Pepperdine Bible Lectures on May 4. She also presented “Despite Division, a Living Connection Remained: Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in Western Canada” at the Christian Scholars’ Conference at Lipscomb University on June 7.

#### Faculty

**Drs. Allen Black, Carlus Gupton and Mark Powell** attended the Christian Scholars’ Conference at Lipscomb University on June 7-9. **Dr. Dave Bland** was a respondent to Chris Doran’s book *Hope in the Age of Climate Change: Creation Care This Side of the Resurrection* at the Christian Scholars’ Conference on June 8 at Lipscomb University. **Dr. Carlus Gupton** attended the InterGenerate Conference at Lipscomb University on June 25-27. He also presented multiple sessions on “Strong Leadership in Anxious Times” at the Ohio Valley University Teachers, Elders and Deacons Workshop in Vienna, West Virginia, on Aug. 5. **Bob Turner** published “Mission: An Oral History” with Dwain Evans, Don Haymes, Richard Hughes, Victor Hunter, Warren Lewis and Thomas Olbricht (Missio Dei Foundation) in June.



# Notes FROM A Novice

BY JOHN COFFEY, M.DIV. STUDENT

With the summer comes a new cohort of Student Association officers. Several officers are back by popular demand — Brian Metz serving as president, Jackson House serving as vice president, Macy Johnson serving as communications director, and Ananias Moses serving as on-campus representative. They are joined by new officers John Coffey as secretary/treasurer, Robert Ogden as off-campus representative, and Heather Gould as counseling representative. Together we represent five states, two countries and five universities. We are future professors, preaching ministers, youth ministers, missionaries and counselors. Ultimately, we are servants of God seeking to do his work within the contexts in which he places us. For now, that makes us servants of the student body at Harding School of Theology.

Summer is a blessing, though also a whirlwind of activity, between vacations, summer trips and intensive courses. It is a time of soaring highs followed by quiet relaxation. The intensive courses bring together students from all over, most of them congregating on campus, learning, fellowshiping and worshipping together. The diverse people bring a broad range of experiences infusing the campus with energy. Then they leave and students go on vacation or quietly study for class. The quiet is different, albeit nice at times, providing an atmosphere of relaxation and contemplation.

But with the fall comes a whole new kind of excitement! The trees around campus begin to turn, providing a daily reminder of the beauty of God's creation. New students move onto campus; older students settle back into their school year routine. We may dread the stress that comes with schoolwork, but we revel in the daily fellowship the school year offers. The fall brings the promise of new students with new experiences, new friends with whom to journey through classes. We are looking forward to the fall, and our Coming Together event. Coming Together is an SA-sponsored dinner and game night for the HST community. We hope that Coming Together will be a time of reconnecting with old friends, and welcoming those new friends arriving on campus. It will be a night of fellowship. It will be a blessed start to what promises to be a blessed semester.



Heather Gould

# CHAPEL *The Law of the Lord*

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday  
11-11:30 a.m.

BY JACKSON HOUSE, M.DIV. STUDENT

The task of planning chapel is what drew me to the office of SA vice president. Although this is a time-consuming and challenging task, I am motivated to serve because of what chapel has meant to me during my time at HST.

Chapel has always been an important time for the whole community of faculty, staff and students to gather as one. It is especially significant for students to worship and pray alongside their professors. Along those lines, this year I want to emphasize the oneness of what we do in class and chapel. It can be easy for students to see these as two separate spheres, but worship we offer in chapel and questions we ask in class are not mutually exclusive enterprises.

I think our new theme for the 2017-18 school year, "The Law of the Lord," will help us think about the wholeness of Christian life and remind us of the answer to the question: "which is the great commandment in the law?" According to Jesus, the

answer is:  
"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."



Heather Gould

## News & Events



Fall Semester Begins  
Aug. 21



Don Meredith's Retirement Event  
Sept. 21



Annual Fall Dinner  
Nov. 11

Convocation  
Aug. 28

Alumni Luncheon (94th Annual Lectureship)  
Sept. 27



## 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





## Bottom Line

BY MATT CARTER, DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

We are excited to unveil the new HST.edu. Web technology continues to improve, and after five years, it was time to upgrade our website. Rather than making cosmetic changes, we had the site rebuilt from the ground up to make HST.edu better both under the hood and for your experience.

A trend in adult education is that future students want to do all of their research on the internet. This means there are students we never hear from until they submit an application. Because of this, we designed the site to make it easy for prospective students to find the information they want. We have made it easier to learn about degrees,

request information, see the cost, and apply for admission.

But our website serves our broader community as well. There are clear tabs for our donors to make a gift and for students to get information they need as well.

We improved navigation on the site. We added dropdown menus to the main navigation bar and made the search bar more visible to help you find what you are looking for.

The new site is a responsive design. This means we no longer have a mobile site, but rather the full site adjusts to work whether you are browsing on your phone, tablet, laptop or desktop. No matter what device you

are using, the site will have a similar look and feel, and you will be able to find what you are looking for.

- If you are looking for reading suggestions, visit HST.edu/books to see what our professors are assigning in their various classes.
- To see a schedule of courses and perhaps view a syllabus, go to HST.edu/schedule.
- Learn about HST LIVE at HST.edu/LIVE.
- Apply for admission at HST.edu/apply.

We invite you to drop by and visit us at the new HST.edu. And, of course, you will find previous issues of *The Bridge* there at HST.edu/Bridge.