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The Bridge

Harding School of Theology

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9-2004

## The Bridge September 2004 Vol 45 No. 5

Harding School of Theology

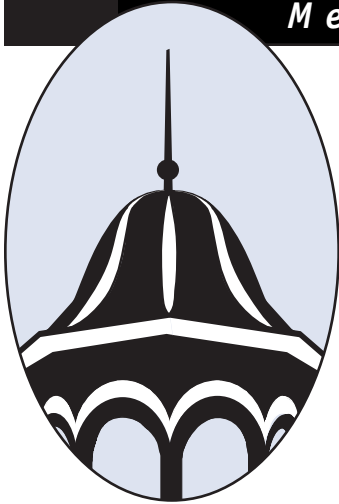
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**HARDING**  
UNIVERSITY

# The Bridge

Memphis, Tennessee



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## Thoughts from a Faculty Member to the Students

by Mark Powell

Some of the greatest spiritual challenges I have faced are intellectual ones that were a direct result of my work in theological education. But I would not trade these experiences for anything. I am closer to God and am a better minister because of them. Challenges can lead to doubt and despair, but they can also bring growth in maturity and greater reliance on God. Coupled with regular times of worship and ministry, and through the working of God's Holy Spirit, theological education can mold you into the likeness of Christ and give you a renewed vision of ministry and

the world.

One of my favorite prayers in Scripture comes from a lament in which the psalmist pleads, "Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell" (Psalm 43:3).

Wisdom and the knowledge of God are gifts of divine grace, and the purpose of these gifts is to draw us into the presence of God. Our desire at Harding Graduate School of Religion is for God to work through us to draw students closer to Him and to prepare them for a lifetime of effective ministry.

## Sheila Owen Promoted

At the annual convocation held Aug. 30, Dr. Evertt W. Huffard announced the promotion of Sheila Owen to associate librarian for the school. Owen came to the Graduate School of Religion as a catalog librarian in 2000 after serving Rochester College in Michigan as director

of library services. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in English from Pepperdine University and a master of arts degree in library and information science from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is a member of Park Avenue Church of Christ in Memphis.

## New Admissions Secretary Hired

Amy Hagedorn has accepted the position of admissions secretary. Hagedorn has been a student at the Graduate School for the past year pursuing a master of arts degree in Christian ministry. She has worked in the

admissions office as the graduate assistant to Mark Parker since January. She holds a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Kansas and is a member of Highland Street Church of Christ in Memphis.

# Harding University Graduate School of Religion

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Mark Powell is assistant professor of Christian doctrine and a Ph.D. candidate at Southern Methodist University.



Sheila Owen



Amy Hagedorn

## H.W. Durham Foundation Grant Received

The Graduate School of Religion received a discretionary grant from the H.W. Durham Foundation for scholarships during the 2003-04 school year. The grant provides scholarships for students above age 55 working on degrees at the Graduate School. One student is in the doctor of ministry program, three are in the master of arts in counseling program, and two are in the master of divinity program.

## Kinder Korea Passion Goes Full Time

Dr. Donald Kinder served as associate dean/registrar at the Graduate School of Religion from 1993-2000. He has recently taken a full-time position teaching at Korea Christian University in Seoul, Korea, and last spring he was appointed to the school position of International Director of Exchange. His duties will be to initiate and maintain productive contact with church of Christ institutions in the United States. For further updates, visit [www.kinderinkorea.com](http://www.kinderinkorea.com).

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## From the Dean



## The Friendship Gap

Our theme for this academic year is Young Adult and Campus Ministry. I hope we can encourage churches to give more attention to the spiritual growth of young adults. We will do this through our curriculum, daily chapel and special events on campus. I believe the future of ministry among young adults has more to do with the future of the church than even youth ministry. Shepherding souls should not end with graduation from high school.

One major issue for young adults involves the separation from their first friends. As they graduate and go to college, they may lose contact with a close friend or simply drift apart. I was the only American in an Arab high school in Ramallah, Jordan. By the ninth grade, I had a good friend, my first Arab friend. We were top students in our class and found some interesting things to do — like hunt snakes in the hills of Judea or ride bikes from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea and Jericho. He was patient with my American ways and educated me in Arab culture. I was his first American friend, but my minority status in that school made his friendship mean much more to me.

A few weeks after I completed the 11th grade, all Americans were given 48 hours to leave Jerusalem. A week later, the Six Day War began. I left without any closure or way of maintaining contact with a really good friend. It was a few years before I returned to Ramallah, but I could not locate my friend. It took several years of reverse culture shock and adjustment back in the United States to find a friend like this one, who could talk about religion, international politics and science. The Americans I went to college with seemed more interested in cars, girls and sports. So for 37 years, I asked everyone I met from Ramallah if they knew where he might be.

For five years I have been blessed by the opportunity to participate in the National Campus Ministries Seminar at Montana State University, University of Alabama, University of Arizona, Kansas State University, and last month, at West Virginia University. Such semi-

nars encourage campus ministers and churches involved in campus ministry. These campus ministers deserve the same admiration that churches tend to give missionaries. Some very dedicated servants are working on more than 200 university campuses and really deserve our support and encouragement.

The seminar this year was a special blessing for me. A lunch session for Let's Start Talking was scheduled at a Mediterranean restaurant in Morgantown, W.Va. While I wanted to encourage LST for giving short-term mission experiences to more than 300 students each year, I also did not want to pass up the opportunity for good Arabic food! As I placed my order, I quickly discovered that the owner was an Arab from Ramallah. We attended the same high school. As usual, I immediately asked him if he knew my friend. He did! More than that, he was only an hour and a half away. By that evening, I was blessed by the reunion with Rajai and his family. We tried to catch up on 37 years in a few hours. He has performed more than 3,000 heart surgeries and has been very active in international medical missions. He still has the heart and values I always admired.

The confluence of this special reunion and a campus ministry seminar sharpened my awareness of the critical role of friendships during the post-teen years in emotional and spiritual development. It appears to me that the most effective campus ministers are really sensitive to the friendship gap in the lives of the young adults they serve. They create environments for healthy friendships to develop. Forty-five percent of the students at the Graduate School of Religion are younger than 30 years old. Most of them are developing friendships here that will bless their lives and ministries. The Graduate School of Religion is small enough to develop close friends but large enough to provide a rich curriculum of 83 courses this year for training in ministry.

—Everett W. Huffard ([dean@hugsr.edu](mailto:dean@hugsr.edu))

## Young Adult and Campus Ministry Announced as Theme for 2004-05

Convocation, held at the beginning of each school year, marked the start of another promising year at the Graduate School of Religion. Each year a theme is chosen for both its theological and practical significance for students as they engage in church work. This year, the theme of Young Adult

and Campus Ministry was chosen by the faculty to inform students of the isolation often felt by younger members of the church. Many graduate students are at this stage in life, and they are often experiencing the situations being discussed.

Dr. Richard Oster spoke at this year's convocation. He chal-

lenged the community to see the need for campus ministry and to seek the inclusion of all ages into the body of Christ.

Various events will be held throughout the year to explore the theme in depth. Chapel speakers will share personal experiences they have encountered as younger members in the

church. The W.B. West Lectures for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship will feature John Wilson, one of the founding members of campus ministries across the nation. The Ministry Forum in April will focus on the impact young adult and campus ministries have on the spiritual growth of the church.

## Campus Ministry *by Matt Carter, guest contributor*

Campus ministry is my passion and my calling. I cannot imagine any other ministry being as fulfilling or challenging. (I am extremely grateful for those who feel that way about preaching, youth ministry, inner city ministry, missions and other ministries!)

I love campus ministry because I work with young people who are seeking real spiritual growth. They are honest about where they are, and they want their faith to make a difference in their lives. The Christian students at Kansas State University are quality young men and women, and we have tremen-

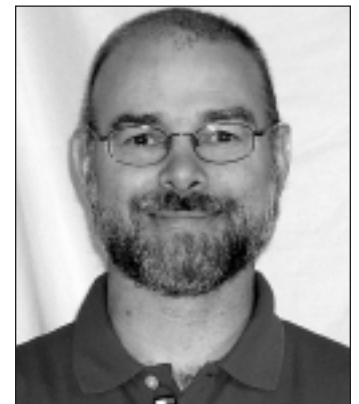
dous student leaders in our group. When students graduate and leave here, I want the time they spent in Cats for Christ to matter in their faith, in their lives and in their churches.

The campus is ripe for evangelism, with many students eager to talk about spirituality of any sort. We also have the best and brightest students from all over the world, and these international students form a mission field on our doorstep. In a setting where exchanging all sorts of ideas is the norm, we must bring the Gospel into the discussion for all students.

In campus ministry, I spend

time with students individually and in small and large groups. We pray together, study together, and live together as a community. We are together daily, sharing victories and struggles. We eat and play together, laugh and cry together. Acts 2:42-47 is real to us. And my role as campus minister is to equip and empower the students to do the work of ministry.

Campus ministry is my passion and my calling. The tools I gained at the Graduate School of Religion equipped me well to answer that call.



*Matt Carter (M.Div., '98) has served as campus minister for six years at Kansas State University through Cats for Christ and the Manhattan Church.*



### 29th Annual W.B. West Jr. Lectures

November 4, 2004, at 7 p.m.

featuring  
**Dr. John Wilson**  
Professor of New Testament  
Pepperdine University

*W.B. West Jr. Center  
Harding University Graduate School of Religion  
1000 Cherry Road  
Memphis, TN  
(901) 761-1356 / (800) 680-0809*

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## Why Bother with Scentless Roses?

*by Mark Parker, assistant executive director*

The roses you buy at a florist have no scent. They look pretty, but they seldom smell good. Scentless roses? What's that about?

One of my hobbies is growing roses. I'm a small-time gardener, but my dozen or so bushes give me great joy. One bush smells of raspberries, another of mango. The important thing is, they do have a scent.

Growing roses in Memphis is not easy. Roses don't like humidity because the diseases that affect them thrive in hot, humid climates. Roses are difficult to grow in the best conditions, but July and August around here are very challenging for my garden.

So I spray and prune. And spray and prune. Then I spray and prune again. It is a lot of work for me, and it probably isn't a lot of fun for the rose bushes either!

But September is here, and that means cooler weather. It also means that the rose bushes I have been fighting to keep healthy

will begin to thrive again. And they will reward me with dozens of beautiful roses throughout early fall.

On the surface, it might look foolish to spend so much time and effort growing roses in this part of the country. What I receive in the end, however, are blooms that florist-bought flowers cannot rival.

These rose bushes are much like the students coming to campus this fall. Some of them come to us young, and we will challenge them to focus their vigor into healthy ministry. Many will feel like they are being pruned at times as they examine themselves in the reflection of Scripture.

Other students come with years of ministry experience, and they are seeking caring gardeners to mentor them through the many challenges their ministry has given them. Some of them are changing careers and may find that some of their thinking and habits will need to be pruned away as

they make the shift into ministry from fields like education, banking or technology.

You may wonder if what we do at the Graduate School is worth the effort. Why train for ministry? Why does it have to be so rigorous? What does it matter that our graduates have been challenged so much?

My answer is simple: Florists are everywhere, but if you want roses to boast about, you had better roll up your sleeves and be ready to work.

We expect tremendous amounts of study, reflection and hands-on experience from our students because ministry is rigorous. So ministers must train well. Ministry training that is easy yields roses with no scent. Our prayer is that our graduates will bloom into diligent ministers bearing the "aroma of Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:15).

To encourage or support advanced training for ministry, please call me at (800) 680-0809 or e-mail [mparker@hugsr.edu](mailto:mparker@hugsr.edu).