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Edgardo Colón-Emeric M.Div’97, Ph.D.’07 is the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Christian Theology. Here, he teaches lessons of healing and harmony to Duke Divinity students and graduate students visiting from Central America.

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BRIDGETTE A. LACY is an award-winning journalist who writes about faith, food, and family. She was a staff writer for The News & Observer (Raleigh, N.C.) for 16 years, and her work has appeared in Newsweek, The Washington Post, and Faith & Leadership. She also published Sunday Dinner, a Savor the South cookbook from UNC Press.

MILTON GILDER is the director of the Duke Youth Academy. He earned a bachelor’s degree in public policy and international studies and completed studies in secondary education at Duke University. He previously served at Urban Hope, a neighborhood-based youth ministry in Durham, N.C., where he re-launched a high school youth leadership program.

PHILIP PORTER is a doctoral student in theology at Duke Divinity School, having previously completed an M.T.S. at Loyola University Maryland. His primary research areas are philosophical theology, contemporary Catholic thought, Latin patristics, and the theology of death and martyrdom. Before beginning his theological studies, he served as an officer in the United States Marine Corps for six years.
A VISION FOR VITALITY

In his return to service as dean, Greg Jones discusses the context of and opportunities for theological education

By Yonat Shimron

BE EVER THANKFUL

Each summer, Duke Youth Academy welcomes dozens of high school students for an immersive experience in exploring Christian identity and theology

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ON THE COVER:

A sunrise over Duke Chapel and the Gray Building of the Divinity School on Duke University’s West Campus. Photo by Bill Snead, Duke University Photography
Find the time to read, reflect, research, or just relax with Study Leave for Ministry Professionals. Over the span of five to seven days, participants can immerse themselves in learning and renewal through self-directed study, worship, and prayer on the Duke University campus. For more information, visit http://divinity.duke.edu/events/study-leave-ministry-professionals.

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/PEOPLE/

A community of faithful scholarship
and passion for the reign of God
L. GREGORY JONES is no stranger to Duke or Duke Divinity School. His connections to the school stretch back more than 35 years; his father, Jameson Jones, was dean of Duke Divinity for a year until a heart attack took his life in the summer of 1982. The following semester, Greg, as he is commonly known, enrolled as a student, graduating with a master of divinity degree and later earning a Ph.D. from Duke’s graduate program in religion.
With the exception of a few years he spent teaching at Loyola University Maryland and a year as provost at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, Greg Jones’ entire career has been in service to Duke, including the 13 years he spent as dean of the Divinity School from 1997 to 2010.

Still, when Duke Provost Sally Kornbluth tapped him to once again steer the Divinity School for a transition period after the deanship of Elaine Heath, he was stunned.

“If you are surprised to be reading this message from me as your dean, rest assured you are no more surprised than I am to be writing it,” he wrote in an email to the Duke Divinity community.

**PAST ACCOMPLISHMENTS, FUTURE DIRECTION**

Jones is known as a deep thinker, strategist, collaborator, fundraiser, and compulsive workhorse.

“He is one of the most fecund intellects I know,” said J. Warren Smith, associate professor of historical theology at Duke Divinity. “He’s reading all the time. I’ve traveled with Greg and it’s true: there’s no down time. If he’s got a gap between flights, he’s reading.”

Under Jones’ previous tenure as dean, the school built the 53,000-square-foot Hugh A. Westbrook Building, including Goodson Chapel, for which he secured $24 million before construction began.

Jones also founded Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, a non-degree initiative funded by the Lilly Endowment Inc., to shed light on challenges, trends, and strategies pertaining to churches and church-related institutions. The initiative is part of his academic interest in leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Jones stepped down as dean in 2010 to direct the university’s global engagement as Duke’s chief international strategist. For the past few years, he’s been teaching and overseeing the Leadership Education initiative.

Duke Divinity School has changed much since he left. Many of the school’s headliners — professors such as Stanley Hauerwas, Richard Hays, and Grant Wacker — have retired. And fewer students are applying for the flagship master of divinity degree, mirroring a nationwide decline in the number of students preparing for ministry.

**DIVINITY** magazine sat down with Jones to discuss his vision and plans for the future direction of the school. The interview was edited for length and clarity.

**DIVINITY:** You wrote to students that the request to step into the role of dean came as a complete surprise. Was it a pleasant surprise?

**JONES:** Initially it was a bewildering surprise. Now it feels like a very happy and hopeful surprise. I hadn’t had any forewarning or anticipation. It was just one of those “Oh!” kind of surprises. But it quickly began to seem to be a calling and invitation to serve a school I love and to bring a lot of things I’ve been learning over the past eight years to bear on the faculty, staff, students, alumni, and everybody I care deeply about. So yes, it’s now quite happy and hopeful.

**How long do you anticipate you’ll be in the role?**

Probably two or three years. I told the provost I wanted to be in the role long enough to be sure we had a healthy trajectory going forward, but not any longer than was necessary for that. I don’t know if that’s two or three years, but something in that neighborhood.
You’ve had some health issues in the past. How’s your health now?
Great. It’s very stable and good, and I wouldn’t take this on if I were worried about it. I had a physical yesterday and got a clean bill of health.

What do you want to accomplish during this second stint as dean?
The provost said in her letter that academic, financial, and cultural challenges were the reasons they concluded a transition was necessary; and, I would add from my perspective, ecclesial, in terms of connections to church and ministry.

In each of those areas I want to help the school advance and develop a strong vision so that we can not only address all of those challenges but also create virtuous spirals. None of the challenges that were identified are problems where if you roll up your sleeves and work hard enough you can fix them in isolation. They’re intersecting.

My goal is to cultivate and nurture a really strong faculty, staff, student body, and external stakeholders to see the possibilities for a vision, direction, and set of activities that encourage the kind of vitality that church and ministry is going to need in the 21st century.
The school has changed a lot since you were dean. Some of the star faculty have retired. It looks like a different school. Does it feel that way to you?

Roughly half the faculty now has been appointed since I left the deanship. I think there’s a remarkable set of younger people emerging who are extraordinarily talented. We need to build on them and develop a renewed and enhanced profile for what we’re able to accomplish with this faculty.

What are your thoughts about declining enrollment, especially in the M.Div. program? It’s a problem affecting all theological schools. Do you think it can be reversed?

It’s been a longstanding trend. In fact, when I became dean in 1997, people were concerned about enrollment. Some schools have decided to down-play the significance of the master of divinity degree in order to attract more people into M.A. programs. I think part of the hallmark of Duke over a very long time, going back at least to the 1950s and 1960s, is that we have had a really strong commitment to the church and ordained ministry as well as to intellectual excellence. That’s what has made Duke distinctive for a very long time. We’ve got to look at our curriculum, look at our delivery system, as well as build these relationships with judicatories and with the feeder schools—undergraduate institutions—and the ways we’re visible on those campuses.
My own sense is that there is not a shortage of young people who are interested in the kinds of vocations that would lead to ordained ministry. They became disenchanted with the ways in which various denominations have gotten preoccupied with internal politics rather than looking at the roles of congregations and the roles of pastors at their best in revitalizing and cultivating thriving communities. I think if we can articulate that kind of difference, there will actually be an increase of interest in the M.Div. and perhaps some other programs. What we need to do is articulate a vision of the vibrant role that churches and clergy can play in cultivating thriving communities. They can be catalysts and conveners and curators—and that’s extraordinarily promising.

James and Deborah Fallows wrote a book that came out a couple of months ago called Our Towns, and David Brooks and his wife, Anne Snyder Brooks, are doing something similar with the Aspen Institute. What you see are really important new signs of vitality and efforts to reweave the social fabric in communities across the country. Both projects suggest that what you need are really strong leaders in these communities, whether in North Carolina, across the country, or around the world.

**Do you envision courses on leadership and entrepreneurship?**

I’ll be appointing a task force to look at the range of our degree programs and how we need to adapt to changing circumstances and do what we do better. But the kind of vision I’m pointing to isn’t only about leadership; it’s also about how courses in Bible and history and preaching and worship contribute to a vision of thriving communities and the roles that pastors play in that. The Black church, for example, has a long tradition of that kind of work and leadership in the way that congregations affect the larger communities around them. There’s a lot to be learned from that.

**Some schools have been able to succeed financially by offering online programs. Do you see Duke heading in that direction as well?**

I don’t think the future is going to be only online, but I think what our hybrid programs—our D.Min. and M.A.C.P.—offer are excellent. I teach in the D.Min. program regularly, and I love the hybrid model. I think you actually have better faculty-student communications, and some people from underrepresented groups often communicate more in a class that includes an online component than just a purely face-to-face interaction. That’s my experience. We will need to study and experiment with a variety of ways in which digital technology can enhance learning and teaching.

**Some of the stories people have read about Duke Divinity in the past few years have been about a lack of inclusion—in some cases it’s racial inclusion, in some cases it’s LGBTQ inclusion. Students want more diversity on the faculty and in the student body. How will you address that?**

It’s an issue we’ll need to address on multiple fronts. It’s also something we need to be working together on to cultivate a greater sense of trust and some understanding of the constraints that also exist. These are issues that are extremely important and also complicated. We’ve got to strengthen lines of communications. If we have healthy discussion and engagement, we can find ways to cultivate trust, even as we’re working at addressing the issues, whether it’s faculty or students.

Some of the issues are peculiar to Duke Divinity School. Others are broader issues in higher education and professional schools. Some of them are signs of the times in broader American culture and around the world. Unfortunately, as we’ve seen...
I’m hopeful and excited that we’ll be able to achieve those best days the more we’re able to work with diverse groups of people and help re-weave our social fabric as we bear witness to God.

in events like Brexit and our recent election, we’re at a time when fear and hatred can easily lead to fractured relationships. The church ought to be a place to cultivate trust and what I call meaningful disagreements that nonetheless bind people together.

Some students have described their frustration over the departure of several African American faculty. Is that something you’ll address? Yes, and I’ve been reaching out to some of our alumni, African American clergy, and faculty. We have a wonderful new director of the Office of Black Church Studies, David Emmanuel Goatley, who has been a friend of mine for more than 25 years. I didn’t have anything to do with his coming to Duke, but I’m delighted he’s here. I’ve already begun working on these issues, and it’s going to be a very important priority moving forward.

The United Methodist Church may be headed for a schism over LGBTQ ordination and marriage. That must be of concern to you and to leaders of other schools affiliated with the UMC. How do you walk that tightrope? The United Methodist Church is at a particularly difficult moment because Christians on different continents, and within regions, view human sexuality in conflicting ways. The United Methodist commitment to be a global church in its governance is threatened by these divisions.

We are paying close attention to the decisions made by the church. At this point, it’s hard to read the tea leaves. I wouldn’t predict anything for sure about what will happen next February [at a special session of the United Methodist Church’s General Conference]. The United Methodist Church is a global church. Its governance is global. That’s one of the complexities we have to navigate. About 40 percent of the voting delegates next February will be international. [What the delegates decide will have] financial implications for us as a school and implications for where graduates would go to serve. I’m mindful of how in recent decades that has affected students in other traditions that have had, if not formal splits, then complicated arrangements.

I point to the success we’ve had at Duke with the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies. Over the last 10 to 12 years, we’ve managed to serve both the Episcopal Church U.S.A., which is open and affirming of same-sex marriage and ordination, and to prepare people for various Anglican Communion traditions with different views. We’ve managed to walk that line. It’s one we need to recognize is challenging and difficult and is likely to remain that way for United Methodists. Over the next nine months, I’ll be looking at different scenarios of what might happen at the 2019 General Conference and how that might affect the finances of Duke Divinity, how it might affect the relationships with judicatories and our recruitment and placement of students. If I had a pretty good sense of what was going to happen in February, I’d be working toward that, but I think anyone who’s confident of the outcome is likely to be just guessing.

One thing people say about your first term as dean is how good you were at fundraising. Do you see that continuing, and how are the school’s finances? There’s a huge need, and I hope to develop and redevelop relationships. That’s a high priority for me. It’s not only raising money. It’s interpreting the value of theological education and developing relationships with people who become invested in thinking through what the new programs should be and what new ideas we need to wrestle with.

The finances of Duke Divinity are challenging. That’s one of the three things the provost wrote about. That’s an issue that has particular ramifications at Duke, and it has broader ramifications for theological
education. It’s also an issue other professional schools are wrestling with, whether it’s because of technology or globalization or the changing character of the profession or the problematic character of some core business models in higher education. Thinking creatively about fundraising and other kinds of revenue streams while managing expenses is the responsibility of any dean of any professional school.

**What are you reading nowadays?**

I try to keep several books going at any one time. In theology and faith-based social entrepreneurship, I’m reading the work of Greg Boyle, his books *Tattoos on the Heart* and *Barking to the Choir*. I also try to keep something going around education. I’ve been reading a book called *Robot-Proof Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* by Joseph Aoun, the president of Northeastern University. I also try to read on the dynamics of cultural change in America. I also read histories and biographies. I’ve been fascinated by some of the work on Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant, who were engaged in political leadership in a challenging period of time in American history. I read books on leadership and organization as well.

**Is there anything you’re reading on leadership that inspires you to be a better leader?**

I would say the work of Roger Martin and Jennifer Riel at the University of Toronto has been really valuable. They have a new book called *Creating Great Choices* that’s about finding both / and solutions rather than either / or. I hope that’s going to inform the way I lead going forward. The Fallowes’ book, *Our Towns*, was really important in helping me see and think about the ways we need to work across sectors. The work I’ve done on the virtues and character and practical wisdom has been important in shaping my imagination. There’s a book by Christian Miller called *The Character Gap* that was significant and interesting. A recent excellent book that weaves leadership and the virtues together is by Nancy Koehn, *Forged in Crisis: The Power of Courageous Leadership in Turbulent Times*. I hope that much of what I read is informing my imagination and the questions I’m bringing to my leadership.

Probably the central image I’ve been working with goes back to Sam Wells’ book, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics*. How do we find creative ways forward by digging into the best and most life-giving traditions and character of the past? Improvisation is key. That’s something I hope to do. I think Duke Divinity School had a wonderful set of traditions. Even as there are problems and things we need to repent of and cast off, there are also things for us to draw from, going back decades, that help us know who we are and chart creative ways forward.

We have a long tradition of developing new degree programs and new initiatives every 10 to 15 years to address changing circumstances. We’re not just doing this to try to find new revenues; it’s actually part of the ongoing identity of the school to re-evaluate and re-assess. I’ll be encouraging a task force of faculty and administrators to work together in imagining how we take that step into the future yet again. It’s leaning into things that have been part of our DNA for a long time and then saying, “How do we do that in fresh ways going forward?”

If you think of improvisational jazz groups, they’re always drawing on the past in rehearsals and performances. Then they can come together and do dramatically new things as they listen to and learn from each other as they improvise.

**Is there anything you want to say to ecclesiastical leaders and pastors in the United Methodist Church about the vision you may have for the education of future pastors?**

We are committed to partnership and learning and growing together with both judicatories and churches and schools and others. We want to be good partners in that process.

We care deeply about vital churches and strong clergy working together to help cultivate thriving, healthy communities. We know that means we have to be prepared to listen and learn as we lean into the future. We also care deeply about helping to form people with embodied wisdom and to nurture creative institutions.

The challenges that need to be addressed are real and daunting. My bewilderment about being asked to serve in this role isn’t isolated; I think we’re living in a time of bewilderment, not only in the churches but also in the broader culture and the world. There’s so much tumult. Yet I believe very firmly that Duke Divinity School’s best days are still in the future. And I’m extraordinarily hopeful and excited that we’ll be able to achieve those best days the more we’re able to work with diverse groups of people to find common ground and to help re-weave our social fabric as we bear witness to the God who promises to bring us, and the created order, to fulfillment in the new creation.
n the Lord I’ll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God, do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near; lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

Participants and leaders in the Duke Youth Academy for Christian Formation (DYA) sing this refrain when they ascend the staircase to the York Room for morning prayer. Now in its 17th year, DYA invites high school youth from around the country to an immersive week of Christian community centered on common celebration, common work, and common prayer. Following this week of residency, students develop year-long projects in which they creatively respond to their theological interests and their local communities.

Our common celebration is daily Eucharist. This celebration of Eucharist spills out into our laughter-filled meals and spontaneous dancing through the halls of Duke Divinity. Our common work is the creative and intellectual re-imagining of the church and discovering our calling in the church. This work happens in rigorous conversation with academic scholars and biblical texts. We learn to ask new questions, see Scripture anew, and find our voices to participate in God’s work both at DYA and in our local churches. Our common prayer is our rhythm of daily prayer and worship. Prayer saturates our day in the rising of the sun, in our meals, in our worship, and in our small groups. This dedicated time allows our community to taste the diverse breadth of Christian worship traditions, from Negro spirituals to Spanish praise music to traditional hymns.

Each summer our community begins anew by singing the anthem “In the Lord I’ll Be Ever thankful”—thankful for another week together at DYA and for the Spirit forming us all into new ways of being and imagining the church.
ABOVE: Students study Christian history and theology with Duke Divinity faculty and receive communion during the evening worship services.

RIGHT: Colton Arends, DYA student, plays a mini trumpet during an evening worship service.
ABOVE: Students serve as acolytes for the procession before the Episcopal worship service.

LEFT: Students experience worship in a variety of ecclesial traditions.
ABOVE: The DYA community waves ribbons in the closing benediction to celebrate their baptismal waters.

RIGHT: Hanna Stamey, a first-year Duke Divinity student and DYA leader, gathers phones from DYA participants. For many DYA students, this is their first opportunity to address questions about theology.
ABOVE: Alaina Kleinbeck is the director of youth ministry initiatives at Duke, and Milton Gilder is the director of Duke Youth Academy.

LEFT: Diversity in worship includes services in both Spanish and English, and students gain experience as worship leaders.
KNOWING your LIMITS

How I learned to write like a Christian

BY PHILIP PORTER
Learning to write well is hard.
I often wonder if I write well.
Sometimes I wonder what writing well has to do with Jesus.
I never used to wonder that.

That’s because I wasn’t raised a Christian.
My mother is a lapsed Methodist,
—or Lutheran, depending on who you ask.
My father has no religion to speak of,
—or lapsed or otherwise.
But I’m a Christian now, so I wonder what writing
—what writing well—has to do with Jesus.

Six years ago, I was an atheist.
I couldn’t have told you that Jesus was God,
or who the Holy Spirit was.
There’s something about three persons, right?
Are Christians polytheists? —No, they insist.
Well, all right.

The point is, I started from nowhere.
But the Lord changed something in me.
Then I wanted to know where to go next.
I knew I had to seek, ask, and knock.
But I didn’t know how to seek, ask, and knock.

When I realized I was a Christian,
I realized I’d have to be a theologian.
This isn’t the case for everyone,
but it is for me.
Now I’m a Christian, who is a theologian.

But I wasn’t always.
I went to community college.
Then I transferred to a university.
I got my degree and joined the Marine Corps.
You don’t do a lot of writing in the Marine Corps.
You do a lot of writing in grad school.

When I started my master’s in theology,
I hadn’t written an academic paper in seven years.
More importantly, I didn’t know anything.
At least, nothing worth writing about.
That’s what I was going to school to learn.
That’s what you’re here to learn.
You’re here to learn what’s worth writing,
saying, announcing, about Jesus.
I didn’t know who Jesus was.
Maybe some of you don’t know who Jesus is.
That’s OK.
That’s what you’re here to learn.

When I started writing theology,
I didn’t know there was such a thing
as pneumatology,
as hamartiology,
as eschatology.
Maybe you all know what these mean.
I didn’t.

You don’t need to know what all those words mean,
to learn to write well about Jesus.
At least not yet.
You’re here to learn what they mean.
You’re going to make mistakes.
That’s OK.

There’s something I didn’t learn until
I was a doctoral student.
I’ll tell you what it is.
It’s OK to be wrong.
This is the place to be wrong.
Not to make mistakes—but to be wrong.

Mistakes are caused by carelessness,
    misreading, or mishearing, or misremembering.
By being wrong I mean looking carefully,
at a book, at a sermon, at a liturgy,
    and thinking something is true when it’s not.

Being wrong is worthwhile. Here.
Because when you get it wrong,
    there’s someone to tell you.
There’s someone to tell you you’ve said it wrong,
    and to show you how to say it right.

You’ve been given a great gift:
    the time and space to get it wrong.
So that you can get it right, when it matters.
At convocation, my first year, Professor Ellen Davis said
something important.
She said that being here is about sanctifying your intellect.
I think she’s right.
And if your intellect needs sanctifying, it means it ain’t yet.

Getting it wrong is the only way to start getting it right.
That’s as true about writing as it is about anything.
You’re here to learn what’s worth writing about,
    what’s worth saying about, Jesus Christ.
To do that, to learn, you’ll have to say it wrong first.

There are no shortcuts in writing.
Just as there are no shortcuts in the Christian life.
The preacher’s, the pastor’s, the theologian’s crosses to bear
    are words.
You’re here to learn how to bear them.
To carry them for the people who need them.

You have to say it wrong,
so someone can teach you to say it right.
I didn’t know where to begin,
    when I started to learn what it meant to write about Jesus.
But you’re going to learn the language by being here.

Because that’s what you’re doing,
    learning a language—learning to write, to speak,
to act like a Christian.
You’re learning a form of life.
And it takes training.
We get it wrong, we have to know we’re going to get it wrong.
Because we want so badly to get it right.

You’re going to ask me
    —everyone asks me—
Are there any books that can help me to be a better writer?
You’re going to be disappointed
    —everyone is disappointed—
When I tell you no and yes.
No, reading books about writing won’t make you a better writer.

Yes, reading books will make you a better writer. Which books? Take your pick.

The books that will make you a better writer are the books that are written well.

This doesn’t (only) mean theology, —or sermons, or church history.

There’s a lot of bad writing out there. You know this already. Maybe you’ve written some. I have.

You need to read good Christian writing to learn to write like a Christian.

You also need to read good non-Christian (or not explicitly Christian) writing, to learn to write like a Christian.

Those were the only words I had when I started. Now I have more.

Reading good writing can make you a better writer. But only if you write, too.

Because—and this is important—you only get better at writing by writing.

Strunk & White can’t save you from this.

Reading good writing can make you a better writer, when you’re willing to try on what you learn from reading.

You try it on by writing. It probably won’t work. Not at first.

But you have to try.

When you try to write like the books you read, you learn something.

It’s not necessarily what you expected to learn. But keep at it.

You’ll learn more.
But you have to write. And people have to read what you write. This is the great gift of graduate school. The people here are paid to read what you write! They have to—it’s their job!

And it’s not just one person. It’s lots of people. Almost everyone here is paid to read stuff other people write, and to tell you what they think about it. That’s most of their job.

Because that’s most of their job, they’re good at it. They know what good writing looks like. They know what good writing looks like.

They know what good writing looks like. They know how to write well about Jesus Christ. You probably don’t. I didn’t.

That’s why you’re at school. Anyway, that’s why I’m at school.

I want to learn how to say true things about the Lord. I want to learn how to say those things well. We’re here to help you do that. Let us help you do that.

ED. NOTE: This is adapted from remarks Porter shared with first-year students during the RISE pre-orientation workshop in August.

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TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO READ AND WRITE THEOLOGY

RISE and the Center for Writing and Academic Support

NOT EVERYONE arrives at seminary with a background in religious studies, theology, or even the humanities. Some new divinity students last wrote an academic paper decades ago; others have experience in business or finance or the military, but not in reading church history texts or theology textbooks.

Duke Divinity School is committed to helping students have the tools and skills needed to read and write theology well. Writing is a central part of ministry, and words are fundamental for conveying beliefs. It allows pastors and scholars to discern and clarify their ideas and to transmit them to others.

The Center for Writing and Academic Support helps students at Duke Divinity School write theology well. It offers tutoring services, often with doctoral students in the Th.D. program who know the process of learning to write theology. The center also organizes events to promote the role of writing within the church and the academy.

The center also offers Refresher and Intensive for Scholarly Enrichment (RISE), an optional pre-orientation academic workshop for incoming students. The workshop teaches some of the skills needed to analyze and write theoretically. Over the course of two days, students work with brief theological texts and learn effective ways to read, analyze, and write about them through a theological lens.

“As someone returning to school after 25 years, RISE was helpful in acclimating my mind and heart back into school,” said Arlene Hudson, M.Div. ’20. “It gave me a good idea of what to expect in terms of course expectations and help organizing the course load. In addition, the writing sample was very helpful in giving me an idea of my strengths and weaknesses.”

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Judith Heyhoe has taught and practiced writing for over 40 years. She began her career as a newspaper journalist in England and then worked as an editor. In America, she taught for five years in the Freshman Writing Program at the University of Notre Dame and then worked as a high school teacher of English for Chicago Public Schools. For the last 10 years at Duke Divinity School, she has served as editor to the faculty and directed the writing center. She is overseeing the growth of the center as it offers students not only writing assistance but also academic support.
/PROGRAMS/

A commitment to form leaders who serve the people of God
AN M.DIV. FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Revisiting theological education in a time of change

BY YONAT SHIMRON

Getting a master of divinity degree at Duke Divinity School used to be simpler.

Students grew up in and were formed by local churches. Their congregations—and sometimes their denominations—encouraged them in their call to ministry. They studied hard, prayed even harder, and earned a degree.

Things aren’t that simple anymore.

Over the past 50 years, the share of Americans who identify as mainline Protestants has been shrinking as younger millennials leave church and the ranks of the religiously unaffiliated grow. Today’s students are less likely to have grown up in church and more likely to consider a calling to a less traditional Christian ministry.

That’s having a direct impact on the number of students pursuing the gold standard for church leaders—the master of divinity degree.

DECLINING INTEREST IN THE M.DIV.

Last year, 28,400 students were enrolled in M.Div. programs in U.S. and Canadian theological schools, a gradual decline from a high of 35,000 in 2006, according to the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), which accredits 270 institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

Duke, too, has seen a decline in the number of students applying for the master of divinity degree. This past school year, it had 372 students in the three-year program, down nearly 80 students from 10 years ago.

The reasons are multifaceted. Some students expect to work in nondenominational churches that don’t require a master of divinity degree, as mainline Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church do. For others, the prospect of paying tuition for three years and then receiving a modest salary at a small church leads them to forgo the M.Div. in favor of a two-year master’s degree that will allow them to work in lay church positions as Christian educators, youth ministers, or worship leaders. Still others want to work in community organizing or in the nonprofit world.

“People are being called into ministry in a variety of different ways that aren’t always as pastor of a church, and they’re longing for theological grounding,” said Jerusha Neal, a professor of homiletics at Duke Divinity School who also has experience in theological education in Fiji.

Partly in response to these trends, ATS voted in June to begin a comprehensive re-evaluation of its accrediting standards, which is expected to take two years.

In the meantime, many theological schools are suffering from both slipping enrollment and growing financial pressures, and they are struggling to survive.

Just last year, Andover Newton Theological School, the nation’s oldest theological graduate institution, sold...
its 20-acre campus and 23 buildings in Newton Centre, Mass., and affiliated with Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Conn. It’s perhaps the highest-profile example of the kinds of mergers, consolidations, and contractions dotting the theological schools landscape.

Many of those dire scenarios are unlikely to impact Duke. Its strong academic reputation and top-notch faculty, known for their scholarship in biblical studies and theological interpretation, make it a prized destination for aspiring church leaders. As a school embedded within a university, it is also insulated from many of the financial pressures of stand-alone theological schools.

But that doesn’t mean the Duke Divinity is not trying to innovate and adapt to better meet the needs of tomorrow’s students.

“There’s a tremendous disruption that’s happening in the universe of theological education,” said Jeffrey Conklin-Miller, the E. Stanley Jones Assistant Professor of the Practice of Evangelism and Christian Formation who also serves as director of the Methodist House of Studies and the master of arts in Christian practice (M.A.C.P.) program. “There’s now an opportunity to think carefully about the way we do our work, pedagogically and formatively, keeping the commitment to academic rigor that we want to continue to embody and the commitment to the practices of the church that we believe we’re here to serve. How do we continue to do what we’ve done so well under a new set of conditions?”

**TEACHING STUDENTS IN CLASS AND ONLINE**

Among the ways many schools have tried to appeal to today’s students is by adding online degree programs, trimming the number of hours required for a master of divinity degree, and reshaping the curricula with a more practical emphasis on leadership formation.

Duke too has made some revisions to its degree programs. It expanded its field education requirements, launched online learning opportunities, and added to its list of certificate programs in specialized areas such as theology and health care, gender and sexuality, theology and the arts, and missional innovation.

Even as enrollment for the M.Div. has fallen, Duke’s total headcount has increased modestly to about 600 students as it has expanded its other master’s and doctoral programs.

In addition to the M.Div., Duke Divinity offers five degrees.

- **Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.):** Designed for those interested in rigorous academic study, sometimes in preparation for a doctoral degree program
- **Master of Arts in Christian Practice (M.A.C.P.):** A professional degree for those intending to work in church lay ministries or in Christian service organizations
- **Master of Theology (Th.M.):** A one-year degree program beyond the master of divinity intended for clergy or chaplains who want to dive deeper into theological study or those preparing for doctoral work
- **Doctor of Theology (Th.D.):** A research doctorate for people who want to teach in seminaries or other higher education institutions
- **Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.):** A professional doctorate intended for clergy in leadership positions who want a terminal degree but are working full-time

Two of those newer degrees—the M.A.C.P. and the D.Min—are hybrid programs, combining both in-person and online learning. They are specifically
designed for students who are already working in ministry. In many cases, those students don't live in the Durham area but would like to further their Christian education.

“Students desire flexible arrangements,” said Conklin-Miller. “They’re balancing many commitments while pursuing theological education.”

In the hybrid model, for every eight weeks of online study, students spend one week on campus taking multiple classes.

Not only the students benefit from the hybrid programs. The faculty is also challenged by the practical issues students bring to the classroom, both in person and through the online learning component.

“That dynamic changes what goes on in the classroom,” Conklin-Miller added. “The questions are very real and very live. The students are hungry for theological reflection on the experiences they’ve had and questions they’re facing. It brings an immediate reality into the work of theological education that’s enlivening.”

Beginning this fall, the faculty will discuss ways to revise the M.A.C.P. to make it more attractive. The program, which drew 23 students last year, has not grown as quickly as expected. One reason may be that people don’t understand what the degree is about.

“The master of arts in Christian practice is a new degree that doesn’t have immediate name recognition,” said Sujin Pak, associate professor of the history of Christianity and vice dean of academic programs. “We need to explore offering specialized tracks that are more recognizable.”

One idea is to repackage the degree with specific concentrations, such as pastoral care, reconciliation, prison ministry, chaplaincy, etc., to better meet the needs of emerging Christian lay leaders.

Changes in the curriculum can be viewed as opportunities.

“One of the things that excites me about Duke is that we’re asking, ‘How can we make the treasures of Duke’s academic program accessible to what God is doing among the laity?’” said Neal. “This question speaks not just to the ecclesial relevance of what we do but to our social relevance, because many of the laity who want this training want to make a difference in the world.”

IMPORTANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE M.DIV.
But even as Duke expands its online learning options, its core degree, the master of divinity, remains intentionally residential.

“The beauty of the residential model is that it’s embodied,” said Conklin-Miller. “We have a life that is bound by the chapel where we worship and by a library and classrooms where we study. It’s in our shared life together that we learn something of what it means to be church. That’s a significant component of forming a theological imagination for those called to do ministry in the church and the world.”

Increasingly, that shared life includes not only students from the Methodist tradition (nearly 40 percent) but also students from Baptist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Episcopalian, and nondenominational church backgrounds. Four percent of students are Roman Catholic.

Duke Divinity students are nearly evenly divided by gender, and in addition to Caucasians, last year’s student body included African Americans (16 percent), Asians (6 percent), and Hispanics (4 percent).

The school requires all students to take a course in Black Church studies to foster an appreciation for the distinctiveness of the Black religious experience and a course in world Christianity, which explores the global South as well as Asian-inflected Christian cultures.

Duke is proud of its rigorous field education program intended to help students build practical skills in ministry. M.Div. students are required to complete two field education placements. The school helps students find the placements in church settings, many of which pay students a $9,100 stipend for each placement.

The stipend, funded by the Rural Church Division of The Duke Endowment, can help defray the
Earth’s geology and ecosystems. Becoming the dominant influence on the ways in which human activity has the Anthropocene, which examines Duke faculty on a project called Facing There he partners with other Ethics at fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics. For the Environment and a senior professor at the Nicholas School Divinity School, he is a research study. In addition to teaching at the Vanderbilt, for instance.”

To do at places like Harvard or Yale or research university. It’s much harder for granted, especially at a major university and find that people are interdisciplinary learning.

“That proximity to other academic departments allows students to engage with the larger university in real interdisciplinary learning.

“You can go to almost any sector of the university and find that people are willing to engage you as a theologian,” said Norman Wirzba, the Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Theology. “That’s not to be taken for granted, especially at a major research university. It’s much harder to do at places like Harvard or Yale or Vanderbilt, for instance.”

Wirzba is himself engaged in such study. In addition to teaching at the Divinity School, he is a research professor at the Nicholas School for the Environment and a senior fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics. There he partners with other Ethics at Duke faculty on a project called Facing the Anthropocene, which examines the ways in which human activity has become the dominant influence on Earth’s geology and ecosystems.

Duke may also be one of the only divinity schools in the country to have three full-time physicians with joint appointments in the medical and divinity schools who are exploring the intersection of theology and health.

At a particularly divisive time in U.S. and world history, an engagement with the university around social and political issues related to truth, community, justice, and mercy is critically needed, said Neal.

“There’s an urgency to the question now,” Neal said. “What is required of me now, given the struggles our nation is facing?”

Duke Divinity offers concrete ways to do that. It offers several dual-degree master of divinity programs, including one in public policy and one in social work. Students must be accepted to both schools to gain admission. Once they do, they split their time between the two schools.

In addition, the school has partnerships with the schools of law and the environment for students interested in pursuing joint degree programs.

“That’s one of the blessings at Duke,” said Conklin-Miller. “We’re a part of a great university—and not just as an appendage. Some of the most wonderful things happening here are right at the intersection of the theological school, the church, and the university.”

ENGAGING WITH ST. AMBROSE

Unlike some schools, Duke is not giving up its historic strengths.

“Duke Divinity is committed to a traditional form of education, with the classics of theology, history, and Bible,” said Pak. “That’s still needed. The students coming to us are less formed in their churches and have not necessarily majored in theology or Bible in their undergraduate degree. We don’t want to give up that core good we have. At the same time, we need to explore ways to better bring this gift in a changing landscape.”

While Duke has seen a large turnover as senior faculty have retired in recent years—many of them headliners such as Stanley Hauerwas, Richard Hays, Grant Wacker, to name just a few—its commitment to scholarship remains. The younger and newer hires in Bible, theology, and church history continue the tradition of academic excellence while also bringing such research interests as the prosperity gospel, bioethics, nonprofit management, and pastoral counseling for trauma.

Warren Smith, a professor of historical theology, said a jarring moment crystalized the changing theological landscape for him.

He was talking with a group of other seminary faculty at a Midwestern center for teaching and learning when a comment from one of the participants reminded him of something Ambrose, the fourth-century bishop of Milan, had said. But when Smith mentioned the saint’s name, one of his interlocutors let loose a loud guffaw.

It wasn’t that Smith’s reference to Ambrose was funny; it was that he had invited a long-dead white guy into a conversation about contemporary theological education.

For Smith, the moment perfectly captured the Duke Divinity faculty’s cherished ethos. At a time of rapid change in the world of theological education, Duke is trying to preserve an intellectual rigor that welcomes a living and ongoing dialogue with ancient and contemporary Christian giants, whether St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, James Cone, or Dorothy Day.

“Most people at Duke would say, ‘Oh, Ambrose is a perfectly legitimate conversation partner for modern theology,’” said Smith. “That’s characteristic of what Duke Divinity is.”
As Uiyeon Kim faced his 10th year as a pastor, he felt the need to be challenged. “From the very beginning of my ministry, most of my mentors shared with me that the key to a sustainable ministry is continuous spiritual formation and education,” Kim said.

Like many seasoned ministers, Kim was struggling with the complexity of the problems facing his congregation. In his tenure at Trinity United Methodist Church in Lenoir, N.C., the 37-year-old was ministering among an aging congregation in one of the poorest counties in the western part of the state.

His master of divinity degree from Duke Divinity School prepared him to minister to the flock’s spiritual needs, but he felt he needed more tools and resources to pastor a congregation facing such social and economic problems.

In search of resources, Kim decided to return to Duke Divinity School for his doctor of ministry (D.Min.) degree. “As we continue to minister to God’s people, we are in the midst of a world that is changing at a faster pace than most of us can even observe, let alone digest,” he said. “In many ways, pastors are expected to become this new renaissance person because there are so many other forces and factors that influence the people in our church. Their needs are wider in scope than ever before.”

A STUDY IN LEADERSHIP
Duke Divinity School’s D.Min. program engages pastors and leaders of other Christian institutions in rigorous and imaginative theological reflection as they continue to serve in their current ministerial roles. The program combines short on-campus residential seminars with distance learning.

Will Willimon, the faculty director for the degree program, has been teaching D.Min. courses almost since the program launched in 2011. Willimon, a professor of the practice of Christian Ministry, is the former dean of Duke Chapel and a bishop for the Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church.

“It’s quickly become the country’s premier D.Min. program,” Willimon said. “In part because there is a lot of emphasis on drawing on Duke’s distinguished faculty.” Degree courses are taught by Duke’s core faculty, including Greg Jones, the dean of Duke Divinity and Ruth W. and A. Morris Williams Jr. Distinguished Professor of Theology and Christian Ministry, as well as Ellen F. Davis, the Amos Ragan Kearns Professor of Bible and Practical

RE-IGNITING MINISTRY LEADERS
Doctor of ministry program sharpens leadership skills with a theological focus

BY BRIDGETTE A. LACY
Theology, and Curtis Freeman, research professor of theology and Baptist studies.

“Duke’s D.Min. is organized around the theme of leadership,” Willimon said. “We try to take the classical theological disciplines of church history, Scripture, theology, and ethics and bring them to bear on thinking about leadership. We attract clergy who really want to grow in their leadership skills.”

A DIVERSE GROUP

Another strength of the program is its diversity. According to Todd Maberry, the senior director of admissions, recruitment, and student finance, the incoming 2018 D.Min. class is composed of 16 men and six women and is racially diverse with nine African Americans, eight Caucasians, four Asians/Pacific Islanders, and one who decline to identify race or ethnicity.

Several denominations are also represented, including five United Methodists, five who are non-denominational, three Baptists, two Presbyterians, and one each from the African Methodist Episcopal, AME Zion, Church of God in Christ, Episcopal, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and Roman Catholic churches.

Most are pastors, but a few are nonprofit executives or leaders of Christian institutions. Students are able to learn from each other’s diversity of experiences and perspectives.

“These students tend to be experienced, more mature,” Willimon said. “The program is a cohort system. So you began with a group and you stay with your group for the two years of coursework. That becomes a big part of the educational component. You get to know each other down deep. Most of the class consists of case studies. We use actual cases of dilemmas that real pastors face, which is one reason why our program has been successful.”

FINDING HER VOICE

The Rev. Ellen Clark Clémot enrolled in the D.Min. program when she was serving as the senior pastor and head of staff at the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen, N.J. “I was newly appointed and wanted to build my leadership skills while grounding them in the Christian theological tradition. Duke is a seminary that focuses on Christian leadership.”

Clémot, a former attorney, wanted to re-tool. “The practical reality and challenges that ministering presents are different than what we learned in seminary,” she said.

“I wanted to do more work on leading through times of conflict, on vision, and on strategy-making in a changing church environment,” she said.
Clémot, who is 56 years old, was forced to confront more social issues when a congregant was arrested as an undocumented immigrant. She found herself advocating for him by participating in rallies and appearing with state senators asking for his release.

Clémot has completed her term at First Presbyterian but continues as a trustee of the Presbytery of Elizabeth for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She’s scheduled to earn her D.Min. in 2020, and she credits the program with helping her find her voice.

“Having men in the cohort who are more aware of women in leadership and see us as colleagues gives us more support on the national stage. This has led to others asking me to speak on the Sanctuary Church movement on the national level. I’m not viewed as ‘just a pastor’ in my local church. My calling isn’t limited, and my gender is not an obstacle.”

BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS
The Rev. Dr. Edward Mulraine, pastor of Unity Baptist Tabernacle in Mount Vernon, N.Y., graduated from the D.Min. program in May 2018. The 49-year-old Mulraine was looking for additional resources to help his church of 1,000 members.

Mulraine, an author and a pastor for 15 years, has long been involved in social justice issues, including serving as president of a local NAACP chapter.

For Mulraine, the D.Min. broadens his reach. “It increases your territory in terms of connecting with others that share the same passion,” he said. “It was good to meet professors who also had a certain mindset and could talk about those things and to build connections with other students who were on the same wavelength in terms of social justice, political involvement, and connecting the theological work with social and political issues.”

Mulraine’s research for his thesis examined the leadership of the biblical figures of Moses, Joshua, and Jesus along with the leadership of Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King to better understand the current crisis in Black leadership. He used the fruit of that work in his book *The Ten Step M.A.N.: A Practical Guide to Peace, Power, Purpose, and Liberation in a World of Women, Wine, War, and Wickedness*. “Writing about leadership at Duke helped me to add to the book in terms of the struggle that men go through.”

RE-IGNITING CONFIDENCE IN MINISTRY
The D.Min. program wants to empower and give students more confidence, Willimon said. “We want to give students all of the things they need to know how to lead God’s people forward and apply the Christian faith to contemporary church challenges.”

For Uiyeon Kim, that means...
learning cutting-edge pastoral leadership alongside others in his cohort, who are often facing the same issues in their congregations.

At his previous church in Lenoir, N.C., there was “an increasing gap of socioeconomic provisions for people in our community. There was a stark need for education about everything. How can we provide food? How can we provide education that affects people’s understanding of finances, health, and diet?”

“There is a vast amount of need to care for the elderly,” Kim said. “What does it mean to minister in the midst of a congregation that is aging and dying? How do we do that fruitfully and faithfully? We were without a lot of resources—so how can we be innovative to use the resources we do possess?”

Kim has now moved to a new church with new challenges. He’s now an associate pastor at Myers Park United Methodist Church in Charlotte. But he knows that whatever he faces, he now has a network of peers with innovative ideas.

“I am inspired, encouraged, and pushed by my colleagues and faculty. To know others have done the same can be very fruitful and vital. The D.Min. has pushed me beyond my immediate boundaries to expand my ministry and the ministry of the church.”

“We want to re-ignite their ministry,” Willimon said. “The way we do that—and what makes Duke Divinity special—is our theological focus. It’s about God. We get people who wake up one day after 10 years in the ministry and say, ‘Gosh, I’m feeling like a director of a volunteer organization like Habitat. It’s not about God.’

“One of my classes is ‘Introduction of Leadership,’ in which we ask two questions: What about our leadership is Christian? Why do we lead differently than the CEO of General Motors? We agree we need to keep the church’s work theological. We study case studies of pastors at churches and ask, Where was God in this event? What should have been said about God in this crisis that wasn’t said?’

Going through those questions together with Duke Divinity faculty and a dynamic and diverse cohort of peers in leadership is at the heart of the D.Min. program. More than just a credential, it is a degree that sharpens, equips, and inspires leaders for vital, innovative ministry.
Join other high school students in an intensive encounter with Christian life and a year of engagement and practice.

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“DYA showed me that I am not alone as a teenage Christian.”
- Mayra Rangel, 2014 DYA participant

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/NOTES/

News, events, and updates on the work of Duke Divinity School
TMC Faculty Work with Holy Friendship Collaborative to Address Opioid Crisis

The Holy Friendship Collaborative is a regional initiative in northeast Tennessee and southeast Virginia that promotes addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery by working closely with local churches. In this region, the rate of neonatal abstinence syndrome (babies born with an addiction to drugs) is 10 times higher than the national average.

Faculty of the Theology, Medicine, and Culture (TMC) initiative at Duke Divinity School joined with 450 health care professionals, clergy, and laity from various religious denominations and other groups in Blountville, Tenn., in May for the Holy Friendship Summit, which focused on how to create resources for pastors and lay church members to help overcome the opioid crisis. At a follow-up meeting in July, 41 churches and organizations were represented.

“It struck me for years that the pain that people bring to doctors is often responded to by doctors with tools we have in our toolbox, which is narcotics,” said Dr. Farr Curlin, Josiah C. Trent Professor of Medical Humanities, TMC co-director, and a member of the steering committee. “That is not restoring people to health. They aren’t getting better as a result.”

The Holy Friendship Collaborative was awarded a $200,000 federal planning grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in September. Among other things, the grant will assist in funding a detailed analysis of gaps in opioid addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery in the region and in developing plans to address those needs.

“We are thrilled to see so many members of faith communities recognizing the impact of opioid addiction and joining this cause,” Curlin said. “People turn to churches for support and counsel in times of challenge, and congregations can become the communities in which many find healing from addiction. This grant will go a long way toward building supportive networks that will lead to a healthier region.”

Conflict Conversations Series for 2018–19

Conflict is a natural part of life and bound to occur, whether in the home, school, community, church, or workplace. In partnership with Conflict Transformation Ministries of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Center for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School is hosting a series of conversations about conflict transformation throughout the academic year. The series will discuss the skills necessary to deal effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of group conflict. In addition to giving a short presentation and taking participants’ questions, speakers will provide practical resources and lists of materials promoting awareness and confidence in dealing with conflict. The Hispanic House of Studies, Methodist House of Studies, and Thriving Rural Communities initiative are co-sponsoring the series.

The series includes the following topics and speakers:

- “Your Brain on Conflict,” held Aug. 30, with presenter Len White, associate professor of neurology, associate director for integrative human biological sciences, and co-director of undergraduate studies in neuroscience at Duke University
- “Understanding Implicit Bias,” held Sept. 26 with presenter the Rev. Chris Brady, pastor of Wilson Temple UMC in Raleigh, N.C.

- “White Supremacy Culture,” on Oct. 24, with presenter Tema Okun, Equity Fellows Program at Duke University
- “Active Listening,” on Feb. 13, with presenter the Rev. Chris Brady, pastor of Wilson Temple UMC in Raleigh, N.C.

For more information, see http://divinity.duke.edu/conflict.
Duke Divinity School held its 92nd Opening Convocation Service, the first worship service of the 2018–19 academic year for students, faculty, and staff. Highlighted by an academic procession of faculty and staff, the service was held in Duke Chapel. The Rev. Dr. L. Gregory Jones, the newly appointed dean and Ruth W. and A. Morris Williams Jr. Distinguished Professor of Theology and Christian Ministry who previously served as dean from 1997 to 2010, was the preacher. The convocation service also included a blessing of new faculty and staff and a welcome to the entering class of students.

To watch the convocation service, go to the Duke Chapel YouTube channel: http://divinity.duke.edu/convo2018.

Societas Homiletica, the international academic society for teachers and researchers of preaching, held its 13th annual meeting at Duke Divinity School Aug. 3–8, 2018. The theme for the conference was “Fearing God in a Fear-Filled World: Homiletical Explorations.” Richard Lischer, James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor Emeritus of Preaching at Duke Divinity School, was the featured preacher for the opening worship session. Anthea Portier-Young, associate professor of Old Testament at Duke, delivered a keynote address on “Biblical Perspectives on Preaching the Fear of God.” Donyelle McCray, who earned a Th.D. from Duke Divinity School in theology and homiletics and is currently assistant professor of homiletics at Yale Divinity School, gave a keynote address on “Pauli Murray and Black Preaching.” Conference attendees also visited Mount Level Missionary Baptist Church in Durham, N.C., to hear preaching from the pastor, William C. Turner Jr., James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor Emeritus of the Practice of Preaching.

Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts (DITA) is sponsoring a musical performance event titled “Performing Faithfully: Music & Martyrdom” on Friday, March 29, 2019. A trio from the Boston Symphony Orchestra will perform with Jeremy Begbie, Thomas A. Langford Distinguished Professor of Theology and director of DITA. The performance will feature the world premiere of a new work by Chinese composer Pei Lu.

The Pei Lu composition is inspired by the story of Lin Zhao, a martyr of the Mao regime in China, which was told in the book Blood Letters by Xi Lian, professor of world Christianity at Duke Divinity School. Lian will participate in the event, along with Stanley Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Professor Emeritus of Divinity and Law at Duke, and Carlos Colón, assistant director for worship and chapel in the Office of Spiritual Life at Baylor University.

Watch the 92nd Opening Convocation

“Performing Faithfully: Music & Martyrdom” Event
Gardner C. Taylor Lectures Address #MeToo

The Gardner C. Taylor Lectures, sponsored by the Office of Black Church Studies at Duke Divinity School, focused on the theme “Ministry and #MeToo: Confronting Sexual Violence from Black Church Resources.” The event on Sept. 18, 2018, featured lecturers Alison Gise-Johnson, associate professor of historical and theological studies and director of the doctor of ministry program at Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va.; and Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, professor of religion and director of women's studies at Shaw University Divinity School in Raleigh, N.C. The featured preacher was Judy Fentress-Williams, professor of Old Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Va.

Convocation & Pastors’ School 2018

Convocation & Pastors’ School, an intensive two-day conference that offers lectures, worship, and seminars for Christian leaders of all traditions, was held Oct. 8–9 at Duke Divinity School. Led by scholars and practitioners from Duke and beyond, this event is an annual cooperative endeavor with the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences of the United Methodist Church.

What does it mean for Christians to be a neighbor in a culture that is rapidly changing and in a space where many have little knowledge or interest in religion? Convocation & Pastors’ School explored how to practice and communicate Christian faith, spirituality, and hospitality with missional imagination, connecting with the steadfast mission of God.

Featured presenters included Barbara Brown Taylor, best-selling author, preacher, teacher, and Episcopal priest; Ian T. Douglas, missiologist and bishop diocesan of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut; David Goatley, research professor of theology and Black Church studies and director of the Office of Black Church Studies at Duke Divinity School; and Cynthia Hale, founder and senior pastor of the Ray of Hope Christian Church, who served as convocation preacher.

Keep up with all the news from Duke Divinity School!

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JEFF CONKLIN-MILLER has been appointed the Thomas A. Langford Distinguished Professor of Theology. He published *A Peculiar Orthodoxy: Reflections on Theology and the Arts* (Baker Academic) and continues as co-editor, with Trevor Hart, of Ashgate Studies in Theology, Imagination and the Arts (Routledge), which now includes more than 15 volumes. In June he traveled to Scotland, where he led the T.F. Torrance Retreat at Loch Tay by delivering a series of presentations on “The Place of Music in a Robust Theology” and served as a respondent at a day conference in St. Andrews on N.T. Wright’s 2018 Gifford Lectures. In July he spoke at the inaugural meeting of Duke’s Theology, Modernity, and Visual Arts research colloquium in London.


JEFF CONKLIN-MILLER published “Christ, Kingdom, and Church: E. Stanley Jones on Ecclesiology and New Ecclesial Community” in *E. Stanley Jones: Sharing the Good News in a Pluralistic Society*, edited by F. Douglas Powe Jr. and Jack Jackson (Wesley’s Foundery Books). In June he presented the workshop “Working with Adjuncts” at the Chief Academic Officers Society of the Association of Theological Schools in Denver, Colo., and attended the California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church in Redlands, Calif. He began service as the director of the Methodist House of Studies in July and preached and taught a course on evangelism for the summer session of the Course of Study for Local Pastors at the Divinity School. In August, at the Fourteenth Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies, he presented “Formation for (Faithful) Fresh Expressions: The Necessity of Theological Education for Methodist Ecclesial Innovation” to the theological education working group, for which he served as invited convener.


WARREN KINGHORN delivered several talks: “From Machines to Wayfarers: How Not to Be a Dualist in Health Care,” at the University of Chicago Medical Center, May 3; “Being Human in an Age of Brain Politics,” at the annual conference of the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity, Trinity International University, Deerfield, Ill., June 22; and “Mental Health on College Campuses: Possibilities and Opportunities for Christian Study Centers,” at the Consortium of Christian Study Centers annual meeting, Chicago, Ill., July 31. He organized an interdisciplinary conference, “Prescribing Wisely: Psychiatric Medications and the Whole Person,” held June 8–9 at Duke University, and co-presented a seminar with John Swinton at the 2018 Summer Institute on Theology and Disability in Raleigh, N.C., June 11.

RICHARD LISCHER served as visiting scholar at Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, N.J., in the spring. He published an op-ed, “What Martin Luther King Jr. Would Think of Black Lives Matter,” in *The Washington Post* (April 4) and a review of *Among the Ashes* by William Abraham in *The Christian Century* (June 14). In April he spoke, with J. Cameron Carter, at the Martin Luther King Jr. service of remembrance at First Baptist Church, Burlington, N.C. In June he took part in a conference on the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” sponsored by the Project on Lived Theology, in Birmingham, Ala., where he also gave the talk “A Church Letter Goes Viral” at historic Bethel Baptist Church. He preached the opening sermon for the biannual meeting of the Societas Homiletica, held at Duke
Divinity School, and for a service of ordination at Zion Lutheran Church, Lexington, S.C.

RANDY MADDOX published volume 32 of the Bicentennial Edition of John Wesley’s Works, entitled Medical and Health Writings (Abingdon). In May he gave lectures in Seoul, South Korea, on “John Wesley’s Precedent for Reclaiming Wholistic Salvation” at Seoul Theological University, Methodist Theological Seminary, and the Salvation Army Graduate University for Officer Training.

JERUSHA NEAL published “Boundaries of Belonging: The Need for a Global Homiletic Conversation” in Homiletic: The Journal of the Academic of Homiletics (43.1, 2018). In June she presented and preached at the Young Preachers Festival at Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kan., and was keynote preacher at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s General Assembly.

G. SUJIN PAK published The Reformation of Prophecy: Early Modern Interpretations of the Prophet and Old Testament Prophecy (Oxford). From May 25 to June 2, she attended the Northeast Asia Reconciliation Forum in Kyoto, Japan, where she co-led a workshop with EDGARDO COLÓN-EMERIC on “Scholarship, Teaching, and Theological Education in Service of Peace and Reconciliation.” She preached at Duke Memorial United Methodist Church on Pentecost Sunday and attended the Florida Annual Conference in Lakeland in June. The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the UMC named her Exemplary Teacher of the Year at Duke Divinity School, where she took up the role of vice dean of academic affairs on July 1.


MEREDITH RIEDEL published Leo VI and the Transformation of Byzantine Christine Identity: Writings of an Unexpected Emperor (Cambridge). In April she presented the paper “Heresies and Heretics in Early Medieval Byzantium: Maximos the Confessor and Monotheletism” at “Inclusion and Exclusion in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Mediterranean,” an international symposium at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa. At the request of the dean, she represented Duke Divinity at the Army Chaplain Experience at Fort Bragg, N.C., in May.

LESTER RUTH led a songwriting workshop on developing contemporary songs that reflect a Wesleyan perspective at Trinity Church in Indianapolis, May 24–26.

MCKENNON SHEA presented “Holy Motivation: What Makes Theological School Alumni Donors Unique” at the 2018 Development Officers Conference hosted by the Association of Theological Schools in Houston, Texas.

DANIEL STULAC was awarded a research grant through Duke’s Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation Endowment Fund for a proposal titled “The Destroyed City as Grazing Space: Interpretive Possibilities in the Book of Isaiah.”

WILL WILLIMON became director of the Duke D.Min. program in June. He published the third volume of Will Willimon’s Lectionary Sermon Resource (Abingdon), and his book Who Lynched Willie Earle? Preaching to Confront Racism (Abingdon) won the Evangelical Christian Press Association...
Award for the best book in ministerial resources for 2018. In August he gave lectures on evangelism and mission at the Vancouver School of Theology and taught a course on theology and preaching for the D.Min. Program at Fuller Theological Seminary. He spoke at numerous gatherings: on preaching and racism for the Uptick Voice women clergy conference in Durham, N.C., April 20; to Duke Divinity alumni at the Texas Annual Conference in Houston, May 28; on “Why Jesus?” from his book of the same title at Roser Memorial Community Church in Anna Maria, Fla., June 24–25; and as preacher for St. Andrew’s Dune Church in Southampton, N.Y., Aug. 26. He also led various clergy and congregational events: a congregational retreat for Grace Episcopal Cathedral (Charleston, S.C.) at Kanuga, N.C., Aug. 31–Sept. 2; a three-day retreat for retired United Methodist clergy at Fort Caswell, N.C., Sept. 26–28; and a three-day clergy conference for Presbyterian and United Methodist clergy in Salt Lake City, at the end of September. In his capacity as chair of the Wofford Student Experience Committee, he led a study of student life at Wofford College, which he serves as a member of the board of trustees.

NORMAN WIRZBA has been appointed the Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology, having previously served as professor of theology, ecology, and agrarian studies. He began as associate dean of faculty development on July 1.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2019

an evening with
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A TRIO FROM THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WITH JEREMY BEGBIE

and featuring
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF A NEW WORK BY CHINESE COMPOSER PEI LU
THE WORKS OF JOHN WESLEY, VOL. 32: MEDICAL AND HEALTH WRITINGS
Edited by Randy Maddox, William Kellon Quick Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, and James G. Donat
Kingswood Books, 2018
724 pages, Hardcover, $39.99

FROM THE BEGINNING of his ministry, John Wesley was committed to nurturing in his own life and in the communities he served “health of body and of soul.” Far from being an amusing avocation, his interest in health and healing was a central dimension of his ministry and of the mission of early Methodism. When considered in its historical context, Wesley’s precedent provides a model of the concern for holistic health and healing that is instructive for his present ecclesial heirs. This volume provides a window into his concern for “health of body” by collecting all of his writings related to health and wellness. These range from his best-selling home guide to health care, Primitive Physick—which remained in print (and use!) into the 1880s—through his recommendation of electrical-shock therapy to his concern for nervous disorders.

As a primary record of one of the founders of the Methodist movement, John Wesley’s medical writings are crucial to a full understanding of the spirit of the early movement, its attitude toward the context from which it emerged, and the reasons for its lasting impact on Britain, America, and indeed the world. It also helps readers to understand the context and sensibility around issues of bodily health and Christian salvation out of which Wesleyan theology, worship, spirituality, hymnody, and conferencing emerged.

LEO VI AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF BYZANTINE CHRISTIAN IDENTITY: WRITINGS OF AN UNEXPECTED EMPEROR
By Meredith L.D. Riedel, Assistant Professor of the History of Christianity
Cambridge University Press, 2018
240 pages, Hardcover, $105.00

THE BYZANTINE emperor Leo VI (886–912), was not a general or a soldier, like his predecessors, but a scholar. The religious education he gained under the tutelage of the patriarch Photios distinguished him as an unusual ruler. This book analyzes Leo’s literary output, focusing on his deployment of ideological principles and religious obligations to distinguish the ethos of the Christian community from the Islamic caliphate, primarily through his military manual known as the Taktika. It also examines in depth his 113 legislative Novels, with particular attention to their theological introductions, showing how the emperor’s religious sensibilities influenced the ways that he reshaped the legal code to bring it into closer accord with Byzantine canon law. Riedel argues that the impact of his religious faith transformed Byzantine cultural identity and influenced his successors, establishing the Macedonian dynasty as a “golden age” in Byzantium.

THE REFORMATION OF PROPHECY: EARLY MODERN INTERPRETATIONS OF THE PROPHET & OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY
By G. Sujin Pak, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and Vice Dean of Academic Affairs
Oxford University Press, 2018
392 pages, Hardcover, $99.00

PROTESTANT REFORMERS found biblical prophecy to be exceptionally effective for framing their reforming work under the authority of Scripture, for the true prophet speaks the Word of God alone and calls the people, their worship, and their beliefs and practices back to the Word of God. G. Sujin Pak argues that these 16th- and 17th-century reformers used prophetic concepts in order to determine a theology of the priesthood of all believers, a model of the pastoral office, a vision for the reform of worship, and processes for discerning right interpretation of Scripture. Protestant reformers’ understandings of the figure of the prophet and biblical prophecy contributed to the formation of distinct confessional identities, but explicit prophetic terminology waned among the next generation of Protestant leadership. Eventually,
the Protestant reformers concluded that the figure of the prophet entailed as many problems as it did benefits, though they continued to give much time and attention to the exegesis of biblical prophetic writings.

LAUGHING AT THE DEVIL: SEEING THE WORLD WITH JULIAN OF NORWICH
By Amy Laura Hall, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics
Duke University Press, 2018
144 pages, Paperback, $18.95

LAUGHING AT THE DEVIL is an invitation to see the world alongside a medieval visionary now known as Julian of Norwich, believed to be the first woman to have written a book in English. (Her given name is unknown, because she became known by the name of a church that became her home.) Julian of Norwich called for courage during a time of fear, writing that she “saw our Lord scorn [the Devil’s] wickedness” and that “he wants us to do the same.” In this impassioned, analytic, and irreverent book, Amy Laura Hall describes how a courageous woman transformed a setting of dread into hope, solidarity, and resistance.

THE JOURNAL LETTERS AND RELATED BIOGRAPHICAL ITEMS OF THE REVEREND CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.
Edited by Randy L. Maddox, William Kellon Quick Professor of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies, Richard P. Heitzenrater, William Kellon Quick Professor Emeritus of Church History, and Frank Baker
Kingswood Books, 2018
488 pages, Paperback, $54.99

AS A PRIMARY record of one of the founders of the Methodist movement, Charles Wesley’s journal is crucial to an understanding of the beginnings of that movement. It is an indispensable interpretive companion to John Wesley’s journal, diaries, and letters. Since it provides essential background for Charles Wesley’s own lyrical theology expressed in sacred poetry, it is also helpful for anyone who wants to understand the context out of which a movement that “sings its theology” emerged.

1 CORINTHIANS: BELIEF: A THEOLOGICAL COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE
By Charles L. Campbell, Professor of Homiletics
Westminster John Knox Press, 2018
272 pages, Hardcover, $40.00

The latest commentary in the Belief series looks at the apostle Paul’s theological wrestling with the divisions within the early church in Corinth. These divisions arose around various issues, among them the practices of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, preaching, and the exercise of spiritual gifts. The contemporary church in North America is likewise dealing with divisions of various sorts. Who can preach? Who can celebrate Communion? Who can marry whom? With this commentary, Charles L. Campbell helps preachers understand how to respond to those questions in their own settings.

A PECULIAR ORTHODOXY: REFLECTIONS ON THEOLOGY AND THE ARTS
By Jeremy S. Begbie, Baker Academic, 2018
224 pages, Hardcover, $32.00

Jeremy Begbie has been at the forefront of teaching and writing on theology and the arts for more than 20 years. Amid current debates and discussions, he emphasizes the role of a biblically grounded creedal orthodoxy as he shows how Christian theology and the arts can enrich each other. He explains the importance of critically examining key terms, concepts, and thought patterns commonly employed in discourse of theology and the arts today, arguing that notions such as beauty and sacrament are often adopted uncritically without due attention given to how an orientation to the triune God’s self-disclosure in Christ might lead us to reshape and invest these notions with fresh content. Throughout A Peculiar Orthodoxy, Begbie demonstrates the power of classic trinitarian faith to bring illumination, surprise, and delight whenever it engages with the arts.
60s
WILBUR I. JACKSON D’61 published a book of devotionals titled *Thinking of God Every Day* (Xulon Press). He currently resides in Knightdale, N.C.

80s
STEVEN MORTON D’83 began an appointment as superintendent of the North District of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference on July 1. He previously served 21 years as senior pastor at Hopewell UMC in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference.


MARTHA FAIRCHILD D’86 retired in March after 28 years of service as a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) teaching elder (minister of word and sacrament). For 23 years, she was pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Tenn. She resides in Reidsville, N.C.

90s
LOUANN AVERITT BRACE (MURPHY) D’95 married Billy G. Brace. Together they have four adult children, three teenagers, and two grandchildren. They reside in Rogers, Ark.

ALBERT MOSLEY D’98 has been selected as Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare’s new senior vice president for faith and health. Previously, he served as executive vice president of Bethune-Cookman University.

JASON BYASSEE D’99 recently published a book co-written with Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell, *Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis* (Baker Academic). The book is based on a study by the Duke University’s Clergy Health Initiative, a major, decade-long research project. He currently resides in Vancouver, B.C.

OOs
RODNEY PARKER D’01, D’06 completed a Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision with a concentration in pastoral counseling at Loyola University Maryland. He currently resides in Baltimore and serves as the director of ALANA Services at Loyola University Maryland and the executive pastor of Carter Memorial Church of God in Christ.

STEVE BENNETT FLOWERS D’04 is working as a hospice chaplain for Bon Secours Hospice in Richmond, Va. He has also started his own company, Chaplains’ Care of Virginia.

10s
WILLIAM JACKSON WATTS D’11 graduated in May from Concordia Seminary with a Ph.D. in theology and culture. He currently resides in Pevely, Miss.

KEVIN PORTWOOD D’15 is currently serving as associate pastor at First UMC of Kerrville, Texas.

Benjamin White D’04 received a 2018 National Endowment for the Humanities summer stipend to support research on his book project, “Practicing Paul”, which will argue for a new historiographical framework for writing Pauline biography. He currently resides in Greenville, S.C.

Matthew Olver D’05 received his Ph.D. from Marquette University. He is currently assistant professor of liturgics and pastoral theology at Nashotah House Theological Seminary in Nashotah, Wis., the second-oldest Episcopal seminary in the United States.

John Anderson D’06 was promoted to associate professor of religious studies at Presentation College in Aberdeen, S.D.

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// OBITUARY //

BERNARD R. FITZGERALD D’53 of Charlotte, N.C., died Feb. 22, 2018. During his more than 40 years of ministry in the United Methodist Church, he served churches in Asheville, Lincolnton, High Point, and Charlotte. He also had appointments as district superintendent for the Asheville and Charlotte districts. He is survived by his four children, six grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol.
The truth we omit doesn’t go away.
The rug gets pulled back and prophets show up.
The lost get found. The unofficial story gets told.
The unnamed and previously ignored get a seat at the table” – Rev. Dr. Judy Fentress-Williams, Professor of Old Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary

The 2018 Gardner C. Taylor Lecture Series: Ministry and #MeToo: Confronting Sexual Violence from Black Church Resources
A Symposium on the Future of Theology and the Arts | September 5-8, 2019 | Durham, NC

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