Bria Rochelle was studying exercise science and planning to become a physical therapist when God called her to minister to both bodies and souls. She knew God was calling her to serve in the church, and when she visited Duke Divinity School, she felt at home: “All the people I interacted with were personable. I didn’t feel like a stranger on campus.”

Since arriving at Duke Divinity two years ago, Bria has continued to grow as a minister and a leader. She is one of the co-presidents of Divinity Student Government and delivered the Baccalaureate sermon in May at her alma mater, Huntingdon College (Montgomery, Ala.).

When you give to the Divinity Annual Fund, you make it possible for students like Bria to follow God’s calling to prepare for ministry. Every gift to the Divinity Annual Fund serves as a tangible statement of partnership and support for students who are on the path of service and leadership in churches, chaplaincy, and community ministries.

As Bria said in her Baccalaureate sermon: “It makes such a difference in your journey when you have someone to walk alongside you, someone who does not walk ahead of you to prove to you that they can do it but gets right next to you and says: ‘Hey, I see you. We’re going to get through this. And we’re going to do this together.’”

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Moving toward a beloved community requires more than cultural competence, tolerance, or good intentions

*By Ismael Ruiz-Millán*

"Facing Uncertainty"

*A note from the artist:*

“This painting is very near and dear to my heart. So many people are facing uncertainty as our immigration laws are separating families and deporting parents while leaving the citizen children here to fend for themselves, or become orphans, living with foster parents or other family members. My heart goes out to these families. God bless them.”
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THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Hispanic churches reveal how to endure storms with hope and faith
In the **EYE** of the **STORM**

Ministry with the Hispanic/Latinx community during a time of turmoil

**by Edgar A. Vergara Millán**
n November 2016, a group Hispanic/Latinx lay and clergy leaders gathered at the Methodist leaders gathered at the Methodist leaders gathered at the Methodist leaders gathered at the Methodist Building in Garner, N.C., to express grave concern to Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and the North Carolina Conference to Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and the North Carolina Conference to Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and the North Carolina Conference to Bishop Hope Morgan Ward and the North Carolina Conference Connectional Table. I had the privilege of being among that group of concerned pastors and laypersons. The source of our concern was the result of the presidential election the previous week. In acknowledging the raw political moment, we used the analogy of an impending storm to describe the gravity of the situation facing immigrant communities, particularly the Hispanic/Latinx community. In the subsequent three years, that sociopolitical storm has made landfall and is now raging against immigrant communities in ways that profoundly affect churches who minister with Hispanic/Latinx people.

PAIN FROM THE STORM
The storm began to form in the distance when Donald Trump announced the launch of an exploratory presidential campaign committee on March 18, 2015. It made landfall on November 9, 2016, the day after he was elected president of the United States. Almost immediately, pastors and community organizers in North Carolina received reports from parents that Hispanic/Latinx children and youth suffered harassment through anti-immigrant and racist verbal attacks from fellow students that day. We also had several reports that children and youth did not want to return to school the following day as a result of those attacks.

The landfall was strongly felt in the North Carolina Conference of the UMC at Pilgrimage 2016 on the weekend after the election. Pilgrimage is a yearly youth event celebrated in Fayetteville, N.C., that draws an average of 5,000 youth from across the North Carolina Conference for a weekend of worship, service, and encounter with Jesus Christ. That year’s event was marred by racist attacks perpetrated against Hispanic/Latinx youth, who were attending the event in record numbers. The youth group from the church where I was serving at the time were the primary targets of those attacks.

One of the most devastating bands of this storm has been the expanded priorities for deportation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which came into effect via executive order. In prior decades, law enforcement focused their deportation efforts on those who were threats to national security, committed an aggravated felony, or had recently entered the U.S. without documentation. Law enforcement officials were granted the exercise of discretionary judgment in pursuing deportation. Factors to consider against deportation included the length of time someone had been present in the U.S., having come to the U.S. as a child, participation in higher education or military service, social ties to the United States, and old age. A 2011 memo urged “particular care” be taken with cases involving veterans, victims of domestic violence or trafficking, and people with serious health conditions. This guidance and the space for discretionary judgment was rescinded in February 2017, signaling a significant shift in immigrant detention and deportation priorities.

SANCTUARY IN THE STORM
This shift in the prioritization of immigrants who are targeted for deportation has created an atmosphere of fear for families whose members are now targeted and has affected churches who minister with them. Some immigrants who are vulnerable to deportation have sought protective sanctuary in churches across the U.S. North Carolina has led the nation’s current sanctuary movement, having provided protective sanctuary from deportation to seven individuals: Samuel Oliver-Bruno, Oscar Canales, José Chicas, Rosa Ortez Cruz, Minerva Garcia, Eliseo Jimenez, and Juana Tobar Ortega. Churches in Durham have provided sanctuary for Pastor José Chicas at the School for Conversion and for Samuel Oliver-Bruno at CityWell UMC.

Pastor José Chicas, a native of El Salvador, has lived in the U.S. for over 30 years. During a routine check-in with ICE, during which he expected a renewal of his legal presence documents, he was instead issued a final order of removal. He decided to enter protective sanctuary at the School for Conversion in Durham on June 27, 2017. Pastor Chicas’ wife, Sandra, and their children, surrounded by a loving and diverse support community, have worked tirelessly for the past two years for justice to be done on his behalf.

Samuel Oliver-Bruno is a native of Mexico who had lived in the United States for over 20 years. In an experience similar to that of José Chicas, he went to a regular yearly check-in with immigration authorities in which he expected to have his legal presence documents renewed. Once he arrived, he was told that his documents would not be renewed. Like Pastor Chicas, he also received a final order of removal. Both of their experiences are painful examples of how the shift in deportation priorities has contributed to the separation of families.
Oliver-Bruno entered protective sanctuary at CityWell UMC on December 10, 2017. His decision was inspired by love for his wife, who suffers from lupus and who depended on him for care and sustenance, and for his son, whose high school graduation was only a few months away. Oliver-Bruno lived at CityWell UMC for 11 months. During his time there, he used his construction experience to skillfully contribute to renovations of the church building, and he also deeply enriched the life of that faith community. He was a student in the Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching Initiative at Duke Divinity School. Oliver-Bruno sought within the immigration system a way to remain with his family and applied for deferred action through United States Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS). He received an appointment for a routine biometrics session on November 23, 2018, at 9:00 a.m., the morning after Thanksgiving.

**STRUGGLE IN THE STORM**

I had the honor of being a small part of Oliver-Bruno’s protective sanctuary, which transcended the walls of CityWell UMC that morning. We surrounded him with prayer and songs of worship when he entered the USCIS building in Morrisville, N.C., for his appointment. Inside that building, ICE agents were waiting in plain clothes. They were pretending to fill out paperwork and posing as immigrants waiting in line. Oliver-Bruno was violently apprehended and physically wrenched away from his son in an act of deception orchestrated by ICE in collaboration with USCIS. When Oliver-Bruno’s sanctuary community noticed that ICE agents were taking him out through the back door of the building, we ran to his aid and formed a protective barrier surrounding the van in which he was placed. We continued to surround him with prayer and songs of worship while also speaking truth to ICE agents who were around the van. It was gut-wrenching to witness how ICE agents would blast the car stereo volume every time Oliver-Bruno’s family attempted to speak with him through blacked-out windows. I will never forget the moment in which his son’s words, which sought to reassure his father that he would take care of his ailing mother, were drowned out by the stereo. One of the most striking moments for me that morning came when we joined in the Lord’s Prayer. I witnessed how one of the ICE agents surrounding the van struggled as he started to pray along, mumbling the words—then caught himself and stopped, but again prayed audibly toward the end of the prayer.

By the end of that morning, 27 courageous members of Oliver-Bruno’s sanctuary family were arrested for defending him. Prayer vigils and rallies were celebrated at the Wake County Detention Center, CityWell UMC, and the ICE office in Cary, N.C., as expressions of resistance and support after this deceitful and violent arrest. Oliver-Bruno was taken first to the Wake County Detention Center, from which he was moved to Atlanta, Ga., and eventually sent to Stewart Detention Center in Lumpkin, Ga. While his son was en route on the eight-hour trip to visit him in Georgia, Oliver-Bruno was transported to Brownsville, Texas in the middle of the night.

Samuel Oliver-Bruno was deported to Mexico on November 29, 2018. He was forced to leave his loving and ill wife, his courageous son, and his faith community. His sanctuary community continues to grieve the injustice of his deportation and to support him beyond the border, advocating for him to be reunited with his family in North Carolina.

**THE SWIRLING STORM**

Part of the devastation from this storm are the raids conducted by ICE in 2019. Nearly 300 immigrants were detained for the purpose of deportation in early February in North Carolina alone. ICE

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**A PARTIAL TIMELINE OF THE STORM**

- **JUNE 2015**
  Donald Trump launches his presidential campaign with a speech that labels immigrants, especially Mexican nationals coming into the U.S., as drug dealers, criminals, and rapists.

- **MARCH 2015**
  Donald Trump announces a presidential exploratory committee.

- **AUGUST 2016**
  Steve Bannon becomes the CEO of Trump’s campaign and intensifies anti-immigrant sentiments.

- **NOVEMBER 2016**
  Donald Trump is elected president of the United States. Pastors in North Carolina hear reports of Hispanic/Latinx children taunted and threatened at school. Hispanic/Latinx youth suffer racist attacks at North Carolina Conference youth event.

- **JANUARY 2017**
  President Donald Trump signs two executive orders: “Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements” and “Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States.”
agents have employed tactics that target immigrants in the places where they go about their daily routines. Immigrants have been harassed and detained very early in the morning as they prepare to leave their homes, during their morning commutes on the way to work, while they take their children to school, at their places of work, and as they arrive home at the end of a long day. These tactics are being employed in communities that have considerable Hispanic/Latinx populations. ICE agents have been known to conduct operations using unmarked vehicles, to use work vans or other similar vehicles to surprise immigrants, and to even go as far as to disguise themselves by dressing up as construction workers.

These tactics have sown terror and trauma in immigrant communities, particularly those that are Hispanic/Latinx. During the February raids in North Carolina, we saw children being left at school or at a bus stop at the end of the school day without any parents to pick them up. We saw cars left on the side of the road with doors left open and no drivers. We saw families so afraid to leave their homes that they did not go out to buy groceries for over a week. We have witnessed how children, mothers, and fathers are traumatized by the terror of not knowing if they will be together as a family at the end of a given day.

The advocacy community of grassroots and nonprofit organizations, community organizers, and faith leaders in N.C. denounced these raids as evidence of direct retaliation from ICE in response to an effort led by Hispanic/Latinx community leaders to elect sheriffs in five N.C. counties who would no longer collaborate with ICE. This suspicion was confirmed by Atlanta ICE field office director Sean Gallagher in February 2019.

**PRAYING IN THE EYE OF THE STORM**

The Hispanic/Latinx community in the United States is living in the eye of this hateful, racist, violent, and deadly sociopolitical storm. The eye of this storm is a place of apparent calm, but it is in constant movement. It is surrounded by raging winds and torrential rains of greed, white nationalism, and xenophobia. Devastation and death are looming possibilities in the eye of the storm. These possibilities can become reality at any moment, as on August 3, when 22 people, the majority of whom were Hispanic/Latinx, were killed at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, by a man claiming to protest the “Hispanic invasion of Texas.”

This storm was brought forth by a political strategy that, seeking to obtain power, placed dehumanization of immigrants at its center. It has taken only 33 months for this strategy to escalate from inspiring verbal harassment of Hispanic/Latinx children and youth to inspiring the actual firing of bullets that has taken innocent lives and orphaned children in the name of xenophobic nationalism. It is from the eye of this storm that our communities cry out to the One who has the power to calm the violent winds and to still the raging waters. We cry out with the psalmist saying: “Arise, Lord! Lift up your hand, O God. Do not forget the helpless!” (Psalm 10:12, niv). We cry out with the terrified disciples: “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” (Mark 4:38, niv). How can you be sleeping on the boat? Wake up and speak calm into the storm!

The wind and the waves are overwhelming, but the One who has the power to command them into peace and stillness is with us. Our eyes are set on him. We turn to him in the midst of fear. It is to him that we pray in desperation. It is he who calls us back to faith, because faith is needed to work for justice, to love our enemies, to pray for those who persecute us, to welcome the stranger, and to shine light into the darkness of this world. It is only through faith that we can become living words spoken from the mouth of Jesus. May our lives serve as instruments that bring peace into the raging storm. Así sea. Amen.

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**FEBRUARY 2017**


**FEBRUARY 2019**

Massive immigration raids begin in the workplace and in largely Hispanic/Latinx neighborhoods.

**APRIL 2018**

Attorney General Jeff Sessions implements a “zero tolerance” policy at the border between the U.S. and Mexico. The policy includes separating nearly 3,000 children from their parents. Reporters and officials describe inhumane treatment of detainees and abuse of minors in detention facilities. It is estimated that some 30 immigrants have died in U.S. custody, including seven children.

**AUGUST 2019**

Twenty-two people are killed at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, by a gunman targeting Mexicans in response to what he called a “Hispanic invasion of Texas.”
not long ago, I was invited by a colleague at another divinity school to participate in a video conference with a group of students in a D.Min. class. His course had focused on cross-cultural ministry, and I was joining them to share about my experiences among Hispanic/Latinx immigrant congregations. I spoke about preaching styles, demographics, and denominational fluidity—but when we came to the time for questions, everyone wanted to know the same thing: “How can our churches reach the Hispanic people in our communities?”

These were faithful people with a sincere question. For some of them, the primary concern was evangelistic, wanting to make sure that everyone in their community could experience a life-changing encounter with Christ. Others were eager to guide their churches into a more multicultural future as a witness to the surrounding culture. Still others approached the issue out of a desire to stand in solidarity with people they considered to be marginalized.

All of their concerns were faithful and honorable, but their question was still off the mark. It presupposed that their Anglo-American institutions were the best (or even the only) options for ministering to Hispanic people and that they would need to begin the work from scratch. Unfortunately, this approach ignores the work already being done within Hispanic communities by bivocational Hispanic ministers and a wide array of community service organizations.

More subtly, the urge to initiate brand-new ministries among Hispanic communities sometimes masks a desire to maintain long-term control over those efforts and even to use them as feathers in our caps (“Look what our church is doing for our marginalized neighbors!”). These motives can stand in the way of the long-term interests of a ministry for Hispanic people, especially when it comes to the development of their own leadership and autonomy.

So, what can our churches do? How can we help without hurting? Here are five things to keep in mind.

1. Discover ministries already in place

The first place to start is to reach out to other congregations or organizations who are already ministering to or serving Hispanic people in your community. Perhaps another local church is already providing ESL (English as a second language) classes, or maybe a nonprofit group is offering immigration resources. See how your congregation can begin to join in the work that is already taking place. Whether you are a minister or a layperson, you can invite others in your congregation to join you as you visit or serve

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1 Although the term Latinx has become widely accepted in academia and appears extensively throughout this issue, I am going to use the term Hispanic in this article because, in spite of its limitations, it continues to be the word most commonly used by Hispanic/Latinx individuals engaged in ministry in North Carolina.
with these other initiatives so that you all can gain greater awareness of the culture, stories, and resources of your Hispanic neighbors.

These encounters help lay the foundation for successful ministry. I’ve known several ministers who ran into trouble when they issued orders to their congregations that it was time to engage in multicultural ministry. It is almost always better simply to invite them along to get to know and love their neighbors and then to allow the Holy Spirit to lead you all together in a process of discernment.

**PURSUE PARTNERSHIPS**

The process of discovery and discernment may lead to partnering with an existing ESL initiative or joining a Hispanic congregation for a ministry project. Sometimes these efforts grow into more substantial partnerships over time. One of the great needs for newly established Hispanic congregations is finding space for their worship services. An Anglo-American congregation willing to open its doors in hospitality can serve as an incubator for a thriving new congregation. This is an excellent way to extend the ministry of under-used facilities.

Many years ago, I served as a translator for a friend of mine who was leading his congregation into a facility-sharing agreement with a newly planted Hispanic congregation. The arrangement brought new life to both groups. The Hispanic congregation had more stability and room to grow, and the Anglo-American congregation rejoiced to see their former sanctuary filled with the sounds of worship and children once again.

However you engage in partnership, remember that this is partnership, not ownership. Even if you have welcomed a Hispanic church into your facilities, it is often more helpful to think of it and speak of it as a sister congregation with its own identity than simply as the Hispanic ministry of First United Methodist or First Baptist. This builds in a greater sense of mutuality from the very beginning.

In recent years, some churches who have welcomed Hispanic congregations into their facilities have, out of their desire to show hospitality, chosen not to charge them any rent. Unfortunately, this generosity sometimes leads to resentment when conflicts over facility usage emerge. Every time the Hispanic congregation uses part of the facility, it is seen as a favor being done for them. Setting up a rental arrangement, even if it is below market value, allows the Hispanic congregation to contribute to the Anglo-American congregation as well. It also entitles them to the usage of certain parts of the facility and to the same respect that anyone else renting the facility would receive.

**BE FLEXIBLE**

This should be a rule for any ministry effort, but it is especially important for any Hispanic ministry partnership. Cultural expectations and priorities between distinct groups will always be different: not better or worse, but certainly different. Crossing cultural boundaries can be richly rewarding from both a spiritual and an interpersonal perspective, but it is best to enter into these experiences with an expectation that some adjustment will be necessary.

Sometimes the flexibility required is ecumenical. I know several UMC churches in North Carolina host Hispanic congregations aligned
with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Some Baptist churches in this state host nondenominational Hispanic congregations.

Sometimes the flexibility needed is institutional. We can become so accustomed to our own paradigms that we are left unable even to imagine different ways of doing things. Leadership looks different in many newer Hispanic congregations. Many ministers are bivocational and come straight from another job to lead a weeknight Bible study. Some of the tasks typically carried out by paid ministers in Anglo-American churches may fall to volunteers who may be new to the church or even new to faith. This fosters a creative and empowering environment, but it can be confounding for those with expectations that things will always be orderly and predictable. Remember, new wine requires new wineskins.

ANTICIPATE MISUNDERSTANDINGS
No matter how flexible you try to be, there will be misunderstandings. Some of them happen on the front end when resistance to change rears its head. Several years ago, when I led my own English-speaking congregation to hold a combined bilingual service with a Spanish-speaking congregation on Pentecost Sunday, I was asked whether this was a covert attempt to combine the congregations and have bilingual worship every week. This was a reminder to me that I needed to communicate more clearly not only about specific events but about the larger vision of our partnership.

Communication is also absolutely essential when a facility is being shared. I learned as a youth minister that the least visible people in the church usually receive the most blame. At a time when there were no youth or youth parents among the leadership of the church, the young people would always be blamed whenever something was missing or the church van wasn’t cleaned properly. If a Hispanic congregation is sharing a facility, its members will tend to receive the blame instead. The best way to avoid this is to create opportunities for members of both congregations to be visible to each other more often. Invite leadership from the Hispanic congregation to serve on your church council, join in each other’s activities, and plan joint worship, fellowship, and service opportunities.

When misunderstandings do occur, don’t act surprised. Remind everyone that this is part of the learning and growing to which you have committed yourselves. Bring people together to work through the problem. Focus on the faith, values, and goals you share in common. Plan together how communication can be improved to avoid the same misunderstanding in the future.

EMBRACE CHANGE
New ministries always change the dynamic of congregations. You cannot engage in cross-cultural ministry and not be changed in some way. The priorities and perhaps even the membership of your congregation may change as a result.

The ministry or partnership may also change over time. Through a process of mutual discernment, you may shift the emphasis or nature of the partnership. In some cases, the Hispanic congregation using the building of another church may grow to the point that it desires its own facility. These changes should be viewed positively as a result of the Spirit’s work and the investment of people in one another. In general, healthy change reduces dependence and increases autonomy. These shifts over time create true and even more rewarding partnership.

I began this article by reflecting on the question asked by a group of D.Min. students: “How can our churches reach the Hispanic people in our communities?” That question, despite its shortcomings, still expresses something very important, which is a desire for our churches to be engaged with our Hispanic neighbors in positive ways. An even better question is this: “How can we join or support the work that God is already doing among Hispanic people?” In this time of increased polarization and dehumanizing rhetoric, expressing and acting on that desire is a critically important part of the church’s witness. My prayer is that these suggestions will help us act on this desire and do so more effectively.
WHEN SAINT ÓSCAR ROMERO became the archbishop of San Salvador in 1977, the poor people of El Salvador were being crucified by economic exploitation, social oppression, and state repression. Acts of social injustice and violence threatened the identity of the people of El Salvador as a community and society. They were exposed to constant violence, “the violence of the oligarchy against the peasants, the violence of the armed forces against the church that defended the poor, and even the violence of the revolutionary guerrillas.”¹ Under these circumstances, Romero was aware that the church, in her effort to announce the kingdom of God and establish signs of its present reality, could not restrict her mission only to the spiritual problems of the people and dissociate herself from people’s “temporal problems,” as he described in his first pastoral letter, “The Easter Church.”
The preaching of Óscar Romero
During this time of social and cultural trauma, the spiritual leadership of Óscar Romero provided a Spirit-led and compassionate presence. He was an instrument of peace, love, transformation, restoration, and healing who listened carefully to God, the church, and the poor. Most people in El Salvador listened to Romero’s sermons, either in the cathedral of San Salvador or on the radio. Through his sermons, the people heard both a prophetic preacher who spoke for God and on behalf of the poor and a pastoral preacher who sought to respond to the people’s needs. In his sermons, with the invaluable help of Scripture, Romero communicated God’s judgment on the personal, social, political, economic, and cultural circumstances the people of El Salvador were experiencing. At the same time, he helped people hear the God who speaks to them in the midst of their suffering. In Romero’s sermons, pastoral care and prophetic proclamation are essentially intertwined.

EXPLOITATION AND REPENTANCE
Many people who called themselves faithful Christians were the same people who exploited and oppressed the poor people of El Salvador. As Óscar Romero himself said in his sermon from January 27, 1980, “The Living Presence of God’s Word”: “There is hunger, not because the land has not produced enough food but because some people have monopolized the fruits of the land, thus leaving others hungry.” As Rodolfo Cardinal, S.J., describes it, the oligarchy “expected their pastors to keep the people silent, passive, and resigned to their faith.” They wanted the religious leaders to teach the poor that the suffering they experienced in this life was going to be greatly rewarded in the life to come and that nothing needed to change now.

Romero did not accept this traditional ministerial role. He knew that the gospel of Jesus Christ does not tolerate oppression. On the contrary, in his preaching and ministry Romero made it clear that the church was on the side of the poor and oppressed, just as God is on the side of the poor and oppressed.2 In his sermons, Romero spoke truth to power—but importantly, by speaking truth to power, he was also caring for the souls of those in positions of power. For Romero, they too were children of God in need of repentance and conversion. In his sermon “Lent: God’s Saving Plan in History,” he called the oppressive oligarchs brothers and sisters who needed to convert from their worship of the gods of power and money to the worship of the true and only God. Romero understood that without a real conversion of hearts, Salvadoran society would never experience genuine structural transformation. Therefore, Romero proclaimed the word of God in a powerful and liberating way for both the oppressed and the oppressor.

SUFFERING AND COMFORT
Romero provided pastoral care through his sermons by acknowledging the people’s suffering and unmasking the cruelty experienced by the poor, oppressed, and marginalized in El Salvador. He not only denounced the repression and human rights violations but also named the people who had been disappeared, kidnapped, tortured, and assassinated. One important emphasis in Romero’s homilies is the incarnation of the word of God into the concrete circumstances of the people. In his sermon “The Strength of the Word,” Romero affirmed that we cannot separate the word of God from the current context into which it is proclaimed, for then it would not be the living word of God—it would be just an ancient text.

In his sermon “Living Presence of God’s Word,” Romero described the nature and function of a homily: “This is the homily: saying that God’s word is not a reading about time past but a living and spiritual word that today is fulfilled here. Thus, we make an effort to apply God’s eternal message to the people’s concrete circumstances. … [A homily should be] a simple explanation of the eternal word and the concrete application of the word that is light, is strength, the word that enlightens, comforts, and guides.” A homily must explain the word of God and apply it to the people’s concrete circumstances, letting it shed light, give strength, bring comfort, and guide the listeners. Theologian Edgardo Colón-Emeric says that Romero’s sermons are like diptychs. On one panel is the Word that gives life to the church, and on the other panel are the specific circumstances of the church and people of El Salvador that are illumined by the Word. Similarly, scholar Miguel Cavada Díez explains that Romero performed a double reading of both the sacred Scripture and the “signs of the time.”

LISTENING TO GOD AND LISTENING TO THE PEOPLE
Romero listened to God in both Scripture and the people’s concrete circumstances. In a 1979 homily, he declared: “God speaks to us in history.

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2 “The preferential option for the poor” was adopted by the Latin American Bishops in Medellín (1968) and continued to be prioritized in Puebla (1979).
God cries out in the midst of all that is good and beautiful in the human person and cries out in the midst of all that is ugly and evil in society and the human person.” Romero spent time every week learning about the news and listening to the cries of the people about their needs and suffering, and this informed his reading of Scripture. In other words, as a preacher Romero acted as a representative of both the Lord and the people. As representative of both, he listened carefully to both God’s word and the people and then asked: What are they saying to one another? What are they asking of one another? How are they challenging one another? How are they illuminating one another?

Theologian and pastoral counseling scholar Edward Wimberly, drawing on work by Emmanuel Larte, describes a liberation model of pastoral care that helps people “to interpret and reinterpret their human condition in light of sacred scriptures.” In just this way, by listening to and putting into conversation the word of God and the people, Romero helped the poor and oppressed “edit” or “re-author” any negative internalized stories and identities they might have embraced. Encountering God in Scripture helps people understand the reality of their identity apart from the social context and cultural messages about their status. Wimberly describes the important role of caregivers who help people revise and re-author the internalized negative stories that hamper their growth and development. Through attentive listening, preachers can be the kind of caregivers who create safe environments and help people understand the evil of the past (or present) and the possibilities for the future.

Romero helped poor, oppressed, and marginalized people re-narrate their stories by reminding them of their worth as human beings and as children of God and by reminding them of God’s love and promises for them. He preached this in his sermon “The Birth of the Lord” on December 24, 1979: “There is no redemption, however, without the cross. When I say this, I do not mean that the poor should be passive. So often we are accustomed to repeat the phrase: ‘It is God’s will that you should be poor, on the margins of society, hopeless.’ No! This is not true! God does not desire social injustice; once injustice exists, however, God speaks of it as the great sin of the oppressor.” Romero could offer this word of hope because he acknowledged and addressed the traumatic realities that his community of listeners were experiencing.

In summary, Romero’s sermons respond to the social and cultural trauma the people of El Salvador were experiencing by acknowledging their pain, challenging the systems and powers that oppressed them, helping them edit their stories and find their worth in God, encouraging them to work together in seeking a better society for themselves and their children, and offering a word of hope.

People from any country, ethnic group, social class, or sexual identity are vulnerable to suffering and trauma. Therefore, preachers must recognize and acknowledge that no matter their geographical and social location, among their community of listeners are people who have experienced some kind of suffering. It is important for preachers to know and acknowledge when individuals or social groups have experienced longstanding trauma. Preachers and religious care providers can learn much from Romero’s preaching, especially the way he responded to people’s needs by listening attentively to both God and the people, so that they could experience the sermon as a true sanctuary, where God’s people can hear, hold each other’s suffering, and be transformed by their encounter with the one who suffered with and for them, Jesus Christ.

READ MORE ABOUT ÓSCAR ROMERO

Edgardo Colón-Emeric, Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology at Duke Divinity School, published Óscar Romero’s Theological Vision: Liberation and Transfiguration of the Poor (University of Notre Dame Press), which recently won first prize from the Catholic Press Association Awards in the Newly Canonized Saints category. On March 24, 1980, Archbishop Óscar Romero was assassinated as he celebrated mass in El Salvador. He is now considered one of the first Latin American Church Fathers, and the Roman Catholic Church canonized him as a saint on Oct. 14, 2018. Colón-Emeric explores the life and thought of Romero and his theological vision, which finds its focus in the mystery of the transfiguration. The hope for this book is that readers will be captivated by the doctrine of this humble pastor and inspired to think more clearly and act more decisively in solidarity with the poor.

The Council of Catholic Bishops, Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly (Washington D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1982), 7. As the Catholic bishops say in Fulfilled in Your Hearing, the preacher is a mediator who represents both the community and God.
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EMBODIED WISDOM

Embracing cultural humility and valuing reconciliation
two years ago, on the 50th anniversary of Catholic-Methodist Dialogue, Edgardo Colón-Emeric had the chance to meet with Pope Francis and to present him with a book chronicling the discussions he and his conversation partners have held over the years—a book Colón-Emeric translated into Spanish himself.

But for Colón-Emeric, the director of the Center for Reconciliation and the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology, shaking hands with the pope was not the highlight of the trip. As much as he enjoyed his audience with Francis—both are native Spanish speakers—the moment that really stood out to him took place far below the Vatican palace.

It was in the catacombs, dozens of feet below St. Peter’s Basilica, that 16 people—eight Catholics and eight Methodists—gathered in the cool darkness to pray surrounded by stone tombs and glass reliquaries filled with bones. There, next to what many Roman Catholics believe may be the tomb of Peter, one of the 12 apostles and Jesus’ designated successor, the group recited the Lord’s Prayer, asking God to “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

To Colón-Emeric, it was a sacred moment that offered a glimpse of unity between two Christian groups that for centuries have mostly prayed apart.

“Above ground, everything separated us: marble, Bernini, Michelangelo,” said Colón-Emeric. “But there we were just disciples praying together. We were praying before our Peter, not the Catholics’ Peter or the Methodists’ Peter. For me, it was that fundamental sense that we are broken, but we’re not broken all the way down. With God’s grace, those cracks and wounds will be healed, we will be restored in the end.”

Those kinds of moments are what animates Colón-Emeric’s ministry at the Center for Reconciliation, where he just completed his first full year as director.

Founded in 2005, the center works to cultivate seeds of reconciliation around the world. Through its annual convenings in East Africa and Northeast Asia, its Summer Institute for Reconciliation on the Duke campus, and its ongoing training for Central American ministers, the center seeks to teach and model a biblical vision of reconciliation.
Colón-Emeric is particularly suited to the task. A native of Puerto Rico, he has cross-cultural understanding, having moved to the continental U.S. to attend Cornell University. Growing up a lukewarm Catholic, he encountered the Methodist church through Cathleen, now his wife, and underwent a conversion to a Protestant, and a specifically Wesleyan, strain of Christianity. Over the years, he also felt a passion and a calling to do the work of reconciliation—not just with God but with all creation.

**NOT JUST PERSONAL SALVATION**

While some Christians see personal salvation as the sole aim of Christian faith, the vision of Colón-Emeric and the Center for Reconciliation is much bigger. They draw on a passage from 2 Corinthians 5: “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18, niv).

“The mission of the church is not just to save souls,” Colón-Emeric said. “The most robust understanding of reconciliation is one in which we need to be reconciled to God, but not God alone. Being reconciled with God empowers us and gives us a task of being reconciled to each other and to all creation.”

That larger vision of reconciliation has taken Colón-Emeric around the world, helping people in Latin America, Asia, the U.S., and Africa find a theological framework for the hard and often painful work of reconciliation.

Each year Colón-Emeric travels to Africa for a summit of the Great Lakes Initiative, a gathering of church leaders from seven East African countries. The Center for Reconciliation convened the initial meeting in 2006 and has since turned over leadership of the initiative to local leaders who take up issues of ethnic violence, tribalism, corruption, refugees, and disease in that region of the world.

He does similar work in Asia through Northeast Asia Reconciliation Initiative, which brings together church leaders, educators, and scholars from China, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea to discuss nationalism, territorial disputes, and the threat of nuclear weapons.

In both those projects, the agenda is decided by the participants.

“We don’t bring the context,” explained Colón-Emeric. “We offer a space for the context to develop deeper theological roots.”

Colón-Emeric walks alongside
participants. He may help them name the ways one party has been injured by another party, a practice he calls lament, steer them toward a public confession, or suggest ways they might embrace forgiveness or restoration.

“I do not guide the journey; at best, I walk with participants on the journey of reconciliation, a journey where, guided by hope of the new creation, we rediscover the biblical practice of lament for our brokenness and move toward forgiveness and work toward restoration,” he said.

He is now exploring a similar initiative in Central America. It’s a region he has long toiled in, first as founding director of the Hispanic House of Studies at Duke Divinity School (he still serves as senior strategist there) and beginning in 2010 as the director of Central American Methodist Course of Study, which trains Methodist pastors who have not earned a formal master of divinity degree in such places as El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

“Because of the history and social conditions of the communities where our Central American students work, it is impossible to think of theological education without thinking of the ministry of reconciliation,” he said.

Indeed, his many trips to El Salvador informed the scholarship in his book published last year, Óscar Romero’s Theological Vision: Liberation and the Transfiguration of the Poor. In it, Colón-Emeric explores the life and thought of the Roman Catholic archbishop—canonized as a saint in October 2018—who was assassinated in 1980 by a right-wing death-squad.

Colón-Emeric wants this new initiative in Central America to bring together scholars, church pastors, and NGOs to work on reconciliation around organized crime, violence, corruption, civil war, and other issues confronting the region.

His deep understanding of Central America—this year he will be traveling to El Salvador three times—has also led to flourishing friendships.

“I don't think there’s one place he’s gone, that he doesn't continue to go back to,” said the Rev. Audrey Warren,
Edgardo Colón-Emeric presented Pope Francis with the Spanish translation of the Catholic-Methodist Dialogue.

a Florida pastor and a graduate of the divinity school whom Colón-Emeric tapped to teach a course on pastoral leadership in El Salvador. “He understands that reconciliation at its core is about relationship.”

A VISION OF THE END
Colón-Emeric has spent nearly his entire career at Duke, first as a student in the master of divinity program. After a five-year stint as a pastor of a Spanish-speaking church plant (he was the first Latino ordained as an elder in the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church), he entered the doctoral program in theology. He became an assistant professor of Christian theology and director of the Hispanic House of Studies soon after earning his Ph.D. He recently was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor.

Yet, these days, it’s sometimes hard to find him on campus. As director of the Center for Reconciliation, his 2019 itinerary has him visiting nine countries. Consider the month of May: Colón-Emeric directed the Course of Study program in El Salvador, took part in a Methodist-Catholic dialogue in Philadelphia, participated in a Northeast Asia Reconciliation Initiative on the South Korean island of Jeju, and taught at the Center for Reconciliation’s Summer Institute in Durham.

“He’s a workhorse rather than a show horse,” said J. Warren Smith, associate professor of historical theology at Duke Divinity School. But Colón-Emeric doesn’t complain about being too busy or having too many responsibilities, said Smith. He’s humble to the core, and “because he’s humble, he’s also very ironic.”

He’s guided by his commitment to instilling in students who are training to be pastors a commitment to doing the work of reconciliation.

“You can’t separate the preaching of the gospel from working for peace and flourishing in your community,” Colón-Emeric said. “They’re not separate. They’re one.” To show his students what the work of reconciliation looks like, he took 11 Duke Divinity students on a trip to Peru in August as part of a new class called “Journeys of Reconciliation.”

Traveling to Lima, Cusco, and Machu Picchu, the group (which included several Peruvian church leaders, both Methodist and non-Methodist) examined the history of violence and oppression in Peru, the incomplete nature of the truth and reconciliation commission that met more than 15 years ago to investigate the human rights abuses committed during the 1980s and 1990s, and the role of the church in those events.

Back in Durham, the class planned to visit the Stagville Plantation, the historic Hayti community, and the Duke Homestead—the home, farm, and factory buildings of Washington Duke—to get a taste for what racial reconciliation work might look like locally.

“My hope is for students to see there’s more to ministry than what they might have thought and that this is God’s doing,” Colón-Emeric said. “God is inviting us to participate in restoring and reconciling all things. We’re invited into an even bigger adventure than we realized when we joined the church.”

He rejects the notion that reconciliation is a cheap or sentimental concept, meant to move groups toward forgiveness, unity, and a Hollywood-style happy ending. Indeed, many people prefer terms such as justice or liberation as more accurate responses to longstanding structural inequities.

But as a daily runner as well as a scholar, Colón-Emeric knows reconciliation is a journey, not always a destination. It’s that hope that keeps him going. Reconciliation work, he is convinced, should be guided by a vision of the end.

That’s what he saw that moment in the Vatican catacombs when he prayed with Methodist and Catholic church leaders: a vision of true communion. He knows it’s unlikely that the two groups will overcome their differences anytime soon. But he has faith that in God’s time they will.

“If the end is peace, then we can walk confidently and be patient with difference and disagreement, knowing we’ll get there,” he said. “The wait may be painful. There may be some cool-down times, or separation. But we know that at the end we’re one.”
The JOURNEY to CULTURAL HUMILITY

BY ISMAEL RUIZ-MILLÁN
am Mexican. I was born in a border town named San Luis Rio Colorado in the Sonora State in the northern part of Mexico. When I was three years old, I moved to Mexico City and lived there for nine years. When I was 12, my family and I moved back to my hometown because my parents became seasonal workers to the United States. It was when I turned 13 that an evangelical missionary group from the U.S. introduced me to Christianity—and I invited Jesus to be my Lord and Savior. A decade later, I felt prompted to immigrate to the United States, to North Carolina to be more specific.

By the age of 22, I had been influenced by many cultures: border culture, urban culture, evangelical Christian culture, child-of-an-immigrant culture, and American Southern culture.

Each of these cultures have formed my identity, my view of myself, my view of others and the world at large—and, more significantly, my view of God and the Christian life. Whether we like it or not, and whether we realize it or not, culture plays a significant role in our self-development. The complexity of culture also shapes our faith journey—our journey toward becoming more like Jesus.

THE LIMITS OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY

In my own journey, because I had interacted with all these different cultures I reached a point when I felt very culturally competent. This sense of competency led me to think I had the knowledge and experience I needed to understand all cultures. In other words, I was becoming culturally arrogant, which goes against the noble intentions behind cultural competency.

Derald Wing Sue defines cultural competency as “the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.”

I felt I was an expert in culture, and I thought I had the ability to recognize points of connection with other cultures. I had slipped from competency to complacency, which can happen when we view cultural competency as “an easily demonstrable mastery of a finite body of knowledge.”

At the time, I did not recognize when I stopped recognizing, affirming, and valuing other cultures. It was a very gradual process. I stopped learning about other cultures, which also led me to stop learning about myself, God, and the Christian life in general. The kairos moment I needed came through my exposure to the concept of cultural humility in conjunction with the use of cultural competency tools.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is a cultural competency tool, or, as I call it, an awareness tool, that measures the readiness and openness of individuals to engage with other cultures using both a group and an individual feedback session.

The IDI helped me see that I was not as culturally competent I thought I was. In fact, the IDI revealed my tendency, especially during challenging interactions with other cultures, to focus on the universal values, the commonalities, and the points of connection with other cultures.

At this point, you might be thinking, Wait, isn’t that what we are supposed to do as Christians? Isn’t that what Paul urged early Christians to do? In the letter to the Ephesian church, he writes: “I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be

3 More information about the tool can be found here: https://idiinventory.com/generalinformation/the-intercultural-development-inventory-idi/
patient, bearing with one another in love. ... There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:1–6, niv).

Unity is at the center of the gospel, and the values of the kingdom that Jesus came to establish are found precisely in tearing down the dividing walls among ourselves and, more importantly, between God and humanity. But if we ignore the fact that historically one dominant group has dictated to minoritized groups what constitutes universal values, commonalities, and similarities, then we will be blind to the tragic consequences of minimizing and dismissing cultural differences.

The posture of ignoring or downplaying cultural differences is often rooted in cultural arrogance: the belief that one culture is superior and other cultures need to adjust and assimilate to it. Cultural arrogance leads to other forms of dehumanization that are visible in our current society, including xenophobia and racism, which are intimately connected with culture.

The challenge for the church is that many people have internalized cultural arrogance and assumptions about a superior culture without realizing it. Our cultural arrogance gets confused with our attempt to be faithful in seeking the unity of the body, as reflected in Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians; often it opens up the church to allow space and even permission for xenophobic and racist gestures.

I have had to learn how to recognize my own cultural arrogance. I had learned how to navigate complex systems that are Eurocentric, including how to get ordained, get my education, get a job, and get my U.S. citizenship. I had to become aware of the ways I had grown arrogant toward other cultures, how I had used my influence unwisely, and how I had become critical without integrity toward the institutions that reflect cultural arrogance. My exposure to the concept of cultural humility and the use of cultural competency tools have helped me.

DEVELOPING CULTURAL HUMILITY

Although I had been exposed to the effects of systemic oppression, I had not reflected on how hurtful it was to experience oppression or learned about the causes of systemic oppression. The first principle of cultural humility is lifelong learning and critical self-reflection, which allowed me to start this journey. Interestingly, one Scripture passage that had strongly influenced my ministry was from the book of Revelation: “a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9, niv). The principle of critical self-reflection led me to realize that I could not expect this beautiful, biblical, and theological image to be a reality if I did not first do the work in myself. I needed to unmask the areas in my own life that were distorting me from God and others if I really wanted to be an active and authentic participant of the one body Jesus came to establish. Being aware of my own needed growth led me to adopt a posture of constant learning and discovery.

The second principle of cultural humility is challenging power imbalances. This expands our critical self-reflection to an examination of our interactions with other cultures. This principle helped me not only to lament the ways I had been a recipient of oppression but also to think about my own privilege, even as a member of a marginalized group in the U.S. I came with a tourist visa, I had access to education, and I had access to a path to citizenship; I could not just ignore this privilege in my interaction with others.

After a few years of being a cultural humility practitioner, I have seen how my view of myself, others, and God has improved tremendously. Now, the belief in the imago Dei leads me to see my interaction with other cultures as something sacred—as a means of grace. My interactions with other cultures, including the dominant culture often identified as oppressive, offer an opportunity to learn and discover something about God that I do not know.

The work of critical self-reflection and the assessment of how I use power and influence over others have contributed to my spiritual growth, specifically in the way I love others (including those who are difficult to love). In addition, cultural humility has created in me a posture in which I can easily receive from others but also feel confident to contribute to others. Contributing to others can take the form of institutional accountability, which is the third principle of cultural humility. The journey toward cultural humility is a lifelong journey, but we can see glimpses of significant progress if we remain faithful.

GOD'S GRACE AT WORK

To illustrate how I have used the principles of cultural humility in my work, I will share the story of Rev. Ted Brum. Rev. Brum has a supervising and mentoring position at a theological institution. He was among a group of leaders in theological education to whom I offered IDI group feedback and one-on-one sessions. What I want to illustrate with his story is that our challenging interactions with other cultures can significantly affect our journey toward cultural humility.

Rev. Brum was introduced to the cultural humility principles and the use of the IDI on two different occasions about two years apart. The first time, the results of his inventory revealed...
that he held a cultural orientation in which he had a healthy self-acceptance of his own culture but also acknowledged and appreciated other cultures. He was ready to become a cultural bridge builder; he just needed to pay attention to how he could become a recipient of other cultures and how he could consider others better than himself (Philippians 2:3).

His second inventory results revealed that his cultural orientation had shifted: when experiencing challenging interactions with other cultures, he could become overly critical of his own culture. This shift from being comfortable with who you are and your own culture to becoming very critical of yourself often happens after difficult cultural interactions.

When I invited Rev. Brum to reflect on why he thought he had experienced such a change, he affirmed my suspicion. He shared how, after an incident that involved other cultures, his confidence to interact with them decreased, to the point that he decided to disengage in order to avoid offending anyone.

My response was to emphasize how, in the journey toward cultural humility, when we fall short, God’s grace kicks in. I invited him to keep trying and reminded him of the importance of the second principle: paying attention to how we use our power and influence in relating to others. In his reflection, he acknowledged that he needed to pay more attention to the reality that he is an educated white male, a member of the clergy, and a higher education administrator. He cannot ignore this in his interactions, especially with other cultures.

A way to practice critical self-reflection and challenge power imbalances is to adopt a posture of receiving, to the point of considering others better than ourselves. I have seen how he is applying the principles of cultural humility. Specifically, he reflects with me on his internal process as he interacts with other cultures (critical self-reflection). He is not afraid to become vulnerable with me and adopt a posture of receiving from me (with this gesture, he is challenging the power imbalance between the two of us).

More significantly, I have seen how he is holding institutions accountable by using his own privilege to create spaces for minoritized voices without trying to dominate the space as an “advocate” or “the voice of the voiceless.” In other words, he is sharing control and power and giving access to other cultures and marginalized groups.

The journey toward cultural humility is a formation process that requires the willingness to be vulnerable individually and communally, the intentionality to build and nurture trust, and the cultivation of relationships for the long haul. It also requires that the dominant culture and those who lead institutions that perpetuate the marginalization of minoritized cultures be willing to share control and influence. Ultimately, the journey toward cultural humility will lead us to constantly empty ourselves, just like Jesus did, for the sake of the imago Dei within humanity.

PARTNERS ON YOUR JOURNEY

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was developed as a tool to help assess intercultural competence of people and groups, including international travelers and different ethnic groups within the same nation, and has been used by organizations around the world. Duke Divinity School has four trained qualified administrators on staff: Rhonda Parker, senior director of ministerial formation and student life; Daniel Corpening, director of field education; Brad Thie, director of the Thriving Rural Communities initiative; and Ismael Ruiz-Millán, director of the Hispanic House of Studies, global education, and intercultural formation. (All are ordained elders in the United Methodist Church.)

What distinguishes the use of the IDI tool at Duke Divinity is the biblical and theological framework for understanding and pursuing cultural humility. The theological work and experience of Ruiz-Millán provides a pathway that makes the IDI even more relevant for churches, clergy, and other faith-based groups who desire to journey toward cultural humility as part of their faithful Christian practice. Rather than just provide an inventory and feedback to teach you a new skill or self-awareness, the qualified administrators of the IDI at Duke Divinity focus on the ultimate goal of cultural humility as a way to grow in our capacity to love God and love our neighbor.

This journey lasts a lifetime, but you don't have to undertake it alone! To learn more about how the resources at Duke Divinity School can assist you or your group in moving beyond competency to cultural humility, contact Ismael Ruiz-Millán at irmillan@div.duke.edu or 919-660-3545.
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NOTES

News, events, and updates on the work of Duke Divinity School

PHOTO BY LES TODD PHOTOGRAPHY
Course of Study in El Salvador

The Course of Study in El Salvador is intended to establish a more regular theological education for the Methodist Church in Central America. The three-year Spanish-language program is designed to prepare men and women who wish to study Wesleyan theology but are unable to attend a seminary. The course offers students the opportunity to explore theological study in a general way or through theological reflection on a specific theme for the purpose of enriching their Christian service as lay ministers and pastors in their own Methodist Churches in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

The program is also suitable for anyone seeking advanced training in Christian education or ordination into the Christian ministry. This is an intensive program, and certain classes are required. A group of teachers travels to El Salvador for one week each winter and spring. Teachers and students alike testify to the richness of this unique experience.

This program is possible thanks to the coordinated work of the Hispanic House of Studies, the Methodist Church in El Salvador, the General Board of Higher Education of the United Methodist Church, and the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

Guillermo Cuéllar-Barandiarán Performs at Summer Institute

On June 3, Guillermo Cuéllar-Barandiarán gave a concert during the Summer Institute for Reconciliation at Duke Divinity School. He is among the most prominent of Central American contemporary composers, and his “La Misa Popular Salvadoreña (Salvadoran Folk Mass)” served as a model for how to integrate the spirit of Salvadoran folk music into the structure of the Mass. Cuéllar-Barandiarán was also an associate of Archbishop Óscar Romero, the Salvadoran church leader who was assassinated in March 1980 after advocating for human rights in the war-torn country. His ties to Romero impacted his life’s journey, causing him to live outside of his native El Salvador for many years. Currently, he serves as a member of the Ministry of Culture of El Salvador and is a professor at the School of Anthropology at the Technological University of El Salvador.

Journeys of Reconciliation Course Takes Students on Pilgrimage

Beginning in August, Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the director of the Center for Reconciliation and Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology, and Ismael Ruiz-Millán, the director of the Hispanic House of Studies, have been teaching a new course at Duke Divinity School. The class, “Journeys of Reconciliation,” comprises about a dozen Duke Divinity students who committed to undertake pilgrimage journeys to Peru this summer and in Durham, N.C., this fall in addition to academic work in the classroom. In Peru, the students met with Peruvian church leaders and traveled to spiritually significant places of lament and hope. The pilgrimage in Durham will include a visit to the historic Stagville Plantation and the Duke Homestead.

“The Peru pilgrimage disrupted my previous understanding of reconciliation in some uncomfortable yet beautiful ways. I was forced to confront how we, as Christ-followers, are often called to suffer the debilitating effects of the world’s (and our own) brokenness so we might rely on a strength that incomprehensibly transcends our own,” said Casey Overton, D’19, M.A. in Christian Practice.
Encuentro Takes Students to Mexico Border

Encuentro is a summer program available to Methodist students, faculty, staff, pastors, and laity. It seeks to broaden relationships between Duke Divinity School and the Methodist Church in Mexico. The program includes stops along the U.S.-Mexico border, from Tijuana, Mexico, to Phoenix, Ariz. Participants have conversations with experts on immigration and visit ministries on both sides of the border that work with immigrants. Participants worship and share stories and meals with Mexican hosts. In 2019, 11 students participated in Encuentro. Encuentro is sponsored by the Hispanic House of Studies and the Thriving Rural Churches Initiative.

Field Education in Hispanic-Latino/a Ministry

As part of Duke Divinity School’s commitment to providing practical ministry experiences and formation in a variety of cultural and ecclesial contexts, field education placements are available in Hispanic-Latino/a ministry. These provide an opportunity for students to discern their vocational identity through contextual learning. The placements vary from parish to nonprofit and can also include Spanish-speaking settings in North Carolina. In 2018–19, seven Duke Divinity students had a field education placement in a Hispanic-Latino/a ministry setting.

The Divinity School’s summer internships in international field education take theological education and pastoral training out into an increasingly interconnected global community. The school has established summer field education placements in Spanish-speaking countries. These take place in El Salvador and Mexico, and they are available for students at a variety of levels of Spanish-language ability. In the summer of 2019, four students were in Latin America for field education.

Hispanic Summer Program

Duke Divinity students interested in learning about Hispanic theological perspectives attended the 2019 Hispanic Summer Program held June 15–29, 2019, at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. The program supplements and enriches theological and ministerial education with academic courses and other activities that directly address Hispanic history, ministry, and theology. It offers students the opportunity to take an immersive three-credit graduate course in a small-class setting and participate in a variety of community-building activities. Duke Divinity School is one of the sponsoring institutions.
**Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching Initiative**

Developed by Duke Divinity School’s Hispanic House of Studies, the Hispanic-Latino/a (H/L) Preaching Initiative provides an opportunity for H/L pastors and people involved in ministerial leadership to receive practical training for the work of ministry. The H/L Preaching Initiative is directed by Alma D. Tinoco Ruiz M.Div’13, Th.D. candidate.

Students take four courses during the year, two in the fall and two in the spring. Courses include “Marriage and Family Pastoral Care,” “Theology and Ethics,” “Church History,” and “Prophetic and Pastoral Preaching.” All courses are taught in Spanish by professors who have master’s or doctoral degrees in the field of study as well as practical experience in ministry. Upon completion of the program, participants receive an official certificate from the Hispanic House of Studies certifying their participation in the Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching Initiative of Duke Divinity School. The Festival of Hispanic-Latino/a Preaching will be held March 14, 2020.

**Hispanic House of Studies**

The mission of the Hispanic House of Studies is to assist the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences and Duke Divinity School in supporting and strengthening ministries to and with Hispanics and Latinos in North Carolina. To embrace the fastest growing population in North Carolina, the North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences of the United Methodist Church need trained, able persons to minister in Hispanic-Latino/a programs. Duke Divinity School has therefore joined The Duke Endowment and these conferences in the formation of leaders for Hispanic-Latino/a ministry. The Hispanic House of Studies serves as a resource center for these ministries.

**Latin American Reconciliation Initiative**

The Center for Reconciliation (CFR) has taken the first steps toward launching a Latin American Reconciliation initiative. Latino/a and Latin American representatives from both Catholic and Protestant churches attended the Summer Institute for Reconciliation, held at Duke Divinity School. Latino/a and Latin American communities are very diverse, but their conversations to discern the signs of the times in their communities converged on the need for an initiative in reconciliation that brings together the work of the academy, the church, and Christian nonprofit organizations.

In August, CFR director Edgardo Colón-Emeric, the Irene and William McCutchen Associate Professor of Reconciliation and Theology, spoke about the emerging movement of reconciliation to the annual gathering of Methodist bishops of the Caribbean and Latin America. “Their enthusiastic desire to add their churches to this effort surprised me,” Colón-Emeric said. “There seems to be a wind of the Spirit blowing through the continent that is seeking to mobilize the people of God to work for healing in these wounded lands.”

In these early stages of the initiative, CFR is reaching out to more churches and Christian organizations to learn from them what they discern the Spirit is saying in their parts of the world. A regional gathering is being planned in the fall of 2020.
Caminantes means “walkers.” Through Caminantes programs at Duke Divinity School for students and for pastors, fellow sojourners encounter Christ while practicing and honing skills for ministry among Latinos. Caminantes for students meets every week for spiritual formation from a Hispanic Methodist perspective. In addition, participants have the opportunity to attend a spiritual retreat in the fall semester in preparation for an encounter with the Methodist church in Latin America during the spring semester.

The Pastores Caminantes, the Caminantes for Pastors, is for pastors with heart and passion who minister for and with the Hispanic-Latino/a community. Participants encounter Jesus through meeting new people in unexpected places and unpredictable situations. Pastores Caminantes comprises up to 12 fellow sojourners who seek to encounter Christ on the roads connecting the Western and North Carolina Conferences of the United Methodist Church with the Hispanic-Latino/a community. The group meets periodically for spiritual formation from a Hispanic-Latino/a Methodist perspective. In these meetings, participants have the opportunity to practice and hone skills for ministry among Latinos. Together the group reads the Bible in Spanish, discusses texts emerging from the Latino community, and engages in conversation with leaders already serving the Hispanic-Latino/a community in North Carolina.
**The Preacher’s Wife:**
*The Precarious Power of Evangelical Women Celebrities*

By Kate Bowler, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity in North America  
*Princeton University Press, 2019*  
368 pages, Hardcover, $29.95

*SINCE THE 1970s,* an important new figure has appeared on the center stage of American evangelicalism—the celebrity preacher’s wife. Although most evangelical traditions bar women from ordained ministry, many women have carved out unofficial positions of power in their husbands’ spiritual empires or their own ministries. The biggest stars—such as Beth Moore, Joyce Meyer, and Victoria Osteen—write bestselling books, have high ratings on Christian television, and even preach. In this book, Kate Bowler, a historian of religion and the author of the bestselling memoir *Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I’ve Loved,* offers a sympathetic and revealing portrait of megachurch women celebrities, showing how they must balance the demands of celebrity culture and conservative, male-dominated faiths.

Whether standing alone or next to their husbands, these leading women play many parts: the preacher, the homemaker, the talent, the counselor, and the beauty. Boxed in by the high expectations of modern Christian womanhood, they follow and occasionally subvert the visible and invisible rules that govern the lives of evangelical women, earning handsome rewards or incurring harsh penalties. They must be pretty, but not immodest; exemplary, but not fake; vulnerable to sin, but not deviant. And black celebrity preachers’ wives carry a special burden of respectability. But despite their influence and wealth, these women are denied the most important symbol of spiritual power—the pulpit. The story of women who most often started off as somebody’s wife and ended up as everyone’s almost-pastor, *The Preacher’s Wife* is a compelling account of women’s search for spiritual authority in the age of celebrity.

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**Ministry with the Forgotten:**  
*Dementia through a Spiritual Lens*

By Kenneth L. Carder, Ruth W. and A. Morris Williams Jr. Professor Emeritus of the Practice of Christian Ministry  
*Abingdon Press, 2019*  
192 pages, Paperback, $22.99

**DEMENTIA DISEASES** represent a crisis of faith for many family members and congregations. Magnifying this crisis is the way people with dementia tend to be objectified by both medical and religious communities. They are recipients of treatment and projects for mission. Ministry is done to and for them rather than with them. While acknowledging the devastation of dementia diseases, Ken Carder draws on his own experience as a caregiver, hospice chaplain, and pastoral practitioner to portray the gifts as well as the challenges accompanying dementia diseases.

He confronts the deep personal and theological questions created by loving people with dementia diseases, demonstrating how living with dementia can be a means of growing in faith, wholeness, and ministry for the entire community of faith. He also reveals that authentic faith transcends intellectual beliefs, verbal affirmations, and prescribed practices. Carder asserts that the Judeo-Christian tradition offers a broader lens, defining personhood in relationship to God’s story and humanity’s participation in God’s mighty acts of creation and new creation, which bolsters hope, community, and self-worth.

Pastors and congregations will be better equipped to minister with people affected by dementia, reader to receive their gifts and respond to their unique needs. They will learn how people with dementia contribute to the community and the church’s life and mission, discovering practical ways those contributions can be identified, nurtured, and better incorporated into the church’s life and ministry.

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**Christ and the Common Life:**  
*Political Theology and the Case for Democracy*

By Luke Bretherton, Professor of Theological Ethics and Senior Fellow, Kenan Institute for Ethics  
*Eerdmans, 2019*  
480 pages, Hardcover, $49.00

**IN CHRIST AND THE COMMON LIFE,** Luke Bretherton provides an introduction to historical and contemporary theological reflection on politics and opens up a compelling vision for a Christian commitment to democracy.
In dialogue with Scripture and various traditions, the book examines the dynamic relationship between who we are in relation to God and who we are as moral and political animals. Bretherton addresses fundamental political questions about poverty and injustice, forming a common life with strangers, and handling power constructively. Through his analysis of debates concerning, among other things, race, class, economics, the environment, and interfaith relations, he develops an innovative political theology of democracy as a way through which Christians can speak and act faithfully within our current context. Read as a whole, or as stand-alone chapters, the book guides readers through the political landscape and identifies the primary vocabulary, ideas, and concerns of contemporary readers, showing through multiple examples that the critical interpretation of texts is provisional, open-ended work and requires collaboration across generations and cultures. Ultimately she offers an invitation into the more spacious world that the Bible discloses, which challenges ordinary conceptions of how things really are.

Opening Israel’s Scriptures
By Ellen F. Davis, Amos Ragan Kearns Professor of Bible and Practical Theology
Oxford University Press, 2019
464 pages, Paperback, $45.00

Opening Israel’s Scriptures is a collection of 36 essays on the Hebrew Bible (from Genesis to Chronicles) that provides insights into the complexity and inexhaustibility of the Hebrew Scriptures as a theological resource. Based on more than two decades of lectures on Old Testament interpretation, Ellen F. Davis offers a selective yet comprehensive guide to the core concepts, literary patterns, storylines, and theological perspectives that are central to Israel’s Scriptures. Underlying the study is the primary assumption that each book of the canon has literary and theological coherence, though not uniformity.

In both her close readings of individual texts and her broad demonstrations of the coherence of whole books, Davis models the best practices of contemporary exegesis, integrating the insights of contemporary scholars with those of classical theological resources in Jewish and Christian traditions. She also pays attention to the experiences and concerns of contemporary readers, showing through multiple examples that the critical interpretation of texts is provisional, open-ended work and requires collaboration across generations and cultures. Ultimately she offers an invitation into the more spacious world that the Bible discloses, which challenges ordinary conceptions of how things really are.

Accidental Preacher: A Memoir
By Will Willimon, Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry
Eerdmans, 2019
240 pages, Hardcover, $24.99

THIS LIVELY, INSPIRING book by Will Willimon, one of today’s best-known Christian preachers and leaders recounts memorable moments from his rich and full preaching life, with an afterword by Kate Bowler. A personal and vocational memoir filled with his signature wit and humor, Accidental Preacher portrays the adventure of a life caught up in the purposes of a God who calls unlikely people to engage in work greater than themselves. Beginning with his childhood in a segregated South and moving through his student years, Willimon gives candid, inspiring, and humorous testimony about his experiences as a seminary professor, rural pastor, globetrotting preacher, bishop, theologian, and writer. Above all, he shows how God has constantly had a call on his life. By turns poignant, hilarious, and thought-provoking—but always engaging—Accidental Preacher is a memoir that will encourage anyone following the call of God.

One Soul at a Time: The Story of Billy Graham
By Grant Wacker, Gilbert T. Rowe
Professor Emeritus of Church History
Eerdmans, 2019
256 pages, Hardcover, $24.99

FOR MORE than five decades, Billy Graham (1918–2018) ranked as one of the most influential voices in the Christian world. Nearly 215 million people around the world heard him preach in person or through live electronic media, almost certainly more than any other person. For millions, Graham was less a preacher than a Protestant saint. While remaining orthodox at the core, over time his approach on many issues became more irenic and progressive. And his preaching continued to resonate, propelled by his powerful promise of a second chance.

Drawing on decades of research on Billy Graham and American evangelicalism, Grant Wacker has marshalled personal interviews, archival research, and never-before-published photographs from the Graham family and others to tell the remarkable story of one of the most celebrated Christians in American history. Where Wacker’s previous work on Graham, America’s Pastor, focused on the preacher’s relation to the nation’s culture, One Soul at a Time offers a sweeping, easy-to-read narrative of the life of the man himself.

(reviews continue on page 38)
Thad Austin successfully defended his dissertation, “Social Entrepreneurship among Protestant American Congregations: The Role, Theology, Motivations, and Experiences of Lay and Clergy Leaders,” to earn his Ph.D. in philanthropic studies from the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University. He was awarded the William M. Plater Civic Engagement Medallion and the Premier 10 Award for graduate student excellence in campus leadership, scholarly work, and community engagement. His speaking and preaching engagements included the invited lecture “Pastoral Theology and Fundraising” at Dakota Wesleyan University (Mitchell, S.D.), Aug. 5; “Religious Fundraising: A Theologically Grounded Approach,” part of a leadership roundtable at a national gathering of Dominicans (St. Louis, Mo.), July 16; “Trust, Generosity, and Fundraising,” a roundtable seminar presentation for the Catholic Archdiocese of Hartford (Conn.), May 7; and the sermon “What Loving Each Other Means,” preached at Warren’s Grove UMC (Roxboro, N.C.), May 19.

Jeremy Begbie spoke at several venues in the U.K. in June and July: a public lecture on music and theology at the Oxford Centre for Creativity and Culture; the public talk “Are We Singing the Right Tune?: The Theology of Church Music” at All Saints’ Church, Horsham; and a public keynote, “Circling around the Triduum: James MacMillan’s Musico-Theological Vision,” for the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology and Cambridge Theological Federation Summer School. In September, he hosted a three-day conference for theologians, artists, pastors, and laypeople celebrating the 10-year anniversary of Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts on the theme “Creation and New Creation: Discerning the Future of Theology and the Arts.” The conference included a lecture performance with a full orchestra of invited professional instrumentalists from around the country, who performed in Baldwin auditorium under Begbie’s direction.

Kate Bowler has released season three of her podcast Everything Happens, which includes guests Jayson Greene, Kelly Corrigan, John Green, B.J. Miller, John Swinton, Jerome Adams, and Andrew Solomon. Her book Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I’ve Loved was published in paperback, and her op-ed, “Living a Chronic Life in a Fix-It-Now World,” appeared in The Washington Post in June. That same month she spoke in the plenary session “Life Will Break Your Heart” with David Brooks at the Aspen Ideas Festival, and her TEDMED Talk and her conversation with Wajahat Ali at the Washington Post Live Chasing Cancer event, “Cancer Chronicles: Finding Light in Life’s Dark Moments,” were made available online. She was interviewed on the spiritual myths of health for America magazine in May and was featured in the July 1 Atlantic article “How to Speak to Someone Who’s Suffering” by Taylor Lorenz.


Christine Parton Burkett served as faculty for the PEP II (Preaching Excellence Program) national preaching conference for parish clergy sponsored by the Episcopal Preaching Foundation held June 4–7 at the Trinity Retreat Center, West Cornwall, Conn. Her two lectures were entitled “View from the Pew: Empathy and Embodiment” and “Goldilocks’ Dilemma: Image, Illustration, and Story.” She also gave the Maundy Thursday sermon, “Object Lessons,” at Duke Chapel in April.

Kenneth Carder published Ministry with the Forgotten: Dementia through a Spiritual Lens (Abingdon), with a foreword by Warren Kinghorn. He co-authored (with Norma Smith Sessions) a chapter in Dementia-Friendly Worship: A Multifaith Handbook for Chaplains, Clergy, and Faith Communities (Jessica Kingsley Publishers).

Mark Chaves delivered two invited lectures: “American Religion” for the Dipartimento di Filosofia, Sociologia, Pedagogia, e Psicologia Applicata, Universita degli Studi di Padova (Padua, Italy), May 6–8, and “The Changing Church” for the Episcopal
Church Pension Group Faculty Convocation (Denver, Colo.), July 11.

Edgardo Colón-Emeric’s 2018 book *Óscar Romero’s Theological Vision* won first prize in the Catholic Press Association Book Awards for the category newly canonized saints, and his article “A New Pentecost” appeared in *Christian History*. He taught in the Central American Methodist Course of Study in El Salvador and gave lectures on the theology of reconciliation at the Christian Forum for Reconciliation in Northeast Asia in Jeju (Korea), the Duke Summer Institute for Reconciliation, the Mexican Methodist Annual Conference (Mexico City), and the annual gathering of Hispanic Nazarene pastors (Point Loma University, Calif.). Together with Ismael Ruiz-Millán he co-led a travel course to Peru with Duke Divinity students, and in conjunction with the Duke Summer Institute for Reconciliation, which was offered bilingually for the first time, he hosted a gathering of Latino/a and Latin American church leaders for the purpose of envisioning a Latin American Reconciliation Initiative. He participated in a Methodist-Catholic ecumenical dialogue meeting in Philadelphia and was elected by the General and Jurisdictional Conferences to serve as a delegate to the upcoming North Carolina Annual Conference.

Jeffrey Conklin-Miller served as editor for volume 33 of *Witness: The Journal of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education* and as faculty advisor for the field education Community of Learning cohort in Chatham County, N.C. In his role as faculty advisor to the Course of Study for Ordained Ministry at Duke Divinity School, in July he presided and preached at worship services and taught two courses, “Evangelism” and “Forming Disciples in the Wesleyan Tradition.” He participated in the meeting of the executive team of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, June 13–14, at St. Mary’s College (Notre Dame, Ind.), and his speaking engagements included serving as the invited preacher at Bald Head Island Chapel (N.C.) on May 31, addressing Duke Divinity alumni at the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference on June 3 (Montgomery, Ala.), and presenting “Reimagining Evangelism” to the Rural Church Leadership Incubation Lab at the Turner Center at Martin Methodist College on Aug. 16.

Farr Curlin was awarded the Pellegrino Medal for pioneering leadership in the fields of medical ethics and palliative medicine. The award is presented by the Healthcare Ethics and Law (HEAL) Institute at Samford University.

Ellen Davis published *Opening Israel’s Scriptures* (Oxford University Press).

Matthew Floding presented the lecture “Theological Reflection for Integration” and the workshop “Pastoral Imagination and Leadership Formation” for the Baptist Association of Ministry Guidance Professionals on May 21 in Raleigh, N.C.

David Emmanuel Goatley published the foreword of *The Spirit among the Dissenters: Other Voices in Understanding the Spirit of God* by William H. Brackney (Cascade Books) and “Making Room to Serve: Separation as a Strategy among African-American Baptists” in *Come Out from among Them, and Be Ye Separate, Saith the Lord: Separatism and the Believers’ Church Tradition* (Pickwick Publications). He was quoted in a *Washington Times* story (April 18) by Christopher Vondracek on church “theology on tap” initiatives. He participated in several conferences: Global Forum for Theological Educators, Orthodox Academy (Crete, Greece), May 20–24; Baptist World Alliance Annual Gathering (Nassau, Bahamas), as commissions chair, July 8–12; Duke Divinity School National Alumni Council, Aug. 8; and Missions Conference, Christ Baptist Church (Burlington, N.J.), as lecturer, Aug. 27–28. His preaching engagements included Mt. Olive Baptist Church (Hackensack, N.J.), May 19; White Rock Baptist Church (Durham, N.C.), June 9; Mt. Vernon Baptist Church (Durham, N.C.), June 23; Bethlehem Baptist Church (McKeesport, Pa.), July 21; Greenleaf Christian Church (Goldsboro, N.C.), Aug. 4; Elba Baptist Church (Gretna, Va.), Aug. 25; and Heritage Fellowship Church (Reston, Va.), Sept. 29.

Richard Lischer published “A Chaplain, His Cerebral Palsy, and the Philosophy That Guides Him,” a review of *Christianity and the Art of Wheelchair Maintenance* by Stephen Faller, in *The Christian Century* (May 7). His speaking and preaching engagements included a presentation on his book *Open Secrets* to rural ELCA clergy participating in the Moses Project (funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.) in Des Moines, Iowa; a lecture on preaching at Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary; and preaching in churches across North Carolina, including Duke Chapel.

Randy Maddox presented the Wordsworth Holiness Lectures on “Healing for Broken Lives and a Broken World” at Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho (Feb. 27–March 1), and a lecture on “Millennial
Hopes in the Wesley Family: Samuel Wesley Sr.’s Bequest” at the Wesleyan Theological Society annual meeting, Wesley Seminary, Washington, D.C. (March 15), where he also was awarded a lifetime achievement award.

Luke Powery published, as series co-editor, Connections: A Lectionary Commentary for Preaching and Worship: Year A, Volume 1, Advent through Epiphany, with Joel Green, Thomas Long, Cynthia Rigby, and Carolyn Sharp (Westminster John Knox). He delivered the lecture “Preaching the Gospel and the Gift of Tears” and gave the convocation address “Dreamers” for the Knox College 175th Convocation at the University of Toronto on May 8. His speaking and preaching engagements included Whitworth University (Spokane, Wash.), June 24–27; Lakeside Chautauqua, (Lakeside, Ohio), July 27–Aug. 3; University of Redlands (Redlands, Calif.), Aug. 6–9; and Providence Baptist Church (Greensboro, N.C.), Sept. 9–10.

Meredith Riedel’s book Leo VI and the Transformation of Byzantine Christian Identity: Writings of an Unexpected Emperor (Cambridge University Press) has been nominated for the Gladstone Prize of the Royal Historical Society (U.K.). In June, she delivered a public lecture series on Christianity and Islam and preached two sermons at Triangle Grace Church in Durham, N.C., where she also taught a summer adult education series on the Minor Prophets from May through August.

Lester Ruth preached on Christ’s crucifixion and lectured on the radicalness of the resurrection at Kingswood University (Sussex, N.B.), April 16–17. He was a plenary speaker and workshop leader on contemporary praise and worship at the “Gathered as One” symposium at the Methodist School of Music in Singapore, June 20–22, and a plenary speaker and panelist on contemporary praise and worship at the “Contemporary Worship across Time and Space” symposium at the Christian & Missionary Alliance Hebron Church in Hong Kong, June 29–July 1. His book (with Swee Hong Lim), Lovin’ On Jesus: A Concise History of Contemporary Worship (Abingdon), has been translated into Chinese.

Will Willimon published his memoir, Accidental Preacher (Eerdmans), with an afterword by Kate Bowler. He also published a review of Gil Rendle’s book Quietly Courageous in The Christian Century (May 8) and a humorous essay, “Kleptomania Homiletica,” in The Journal for Preachers (42.4, 2019). He had the joy of hooding 23 doctor of ministry graduates at Duke Divinity School, the largest graduating class since the inception of the program a decade ago. In May he was a featured speaker and workshop leader at the Festival of Preaching in Minneapolis, and in June he preached “Sent, Together” at the Florida Annual Conference and attended the Virginia and North Carolina Annual Conferences, where he assisted in the ordination service of a number of his students at the Divinity School. He preached at the Massannetta Springs (Va.) Bible Conference in July and, in August, at the Dune Church, Southampton, N.Y. In September, he preached and led workshops on preaching for a group of Episcopal churches in Dallas, conducted workshops and preached at the First UMC in San Diego, Calif., and preached a series of sermons at the Pinnacle Presbyterian Church in Scottsdale, Ariz.


(continued from page 35)

Connections: A Lectionary Commentary for Preaching and Worship (Year A, Volume 1: Advent through Epiphany)
Edited by Luke A. Powery, Associate Professor of Homiletics, Joel B. Green, Thomas G. Long, Cynthia L. Rigby, and Carolyn J. Sharp
Westminster John Knox, 2019
352 pages, Hardcover, $45.00

DESIGNED TO EMPOWER preachers as they lead their congregations to connect their lives to Scripture, Connections features a broad set of interpretive tools that provide commentary and worship aids for the Revised Common Lectionary. For each worship day within the three-year lectionary cycle, the commentaries in Connections link the individual lection reading with Scripture as a whole as well as to the larger world. In addition, Connections places each psalm reading in conversation with the other lections for the day to highlight the themes of the liturgical season. Finally, sidebars offer additional connections to Scripture for each Sunday or worship day. This nine-volume series is a practical, constructive, and valuable resource for preachers who seek to help congregations connect more closely with Scripture; this volume covers Year A for Advent through Epiphany.
OBITUARY NOTICES

50s
James Spurgeon McCartt D’50 died April 10, 2019.
Barbara Hardesty D’51 died Jan. 21, 2019.

60s
Estelle Chewning Prince D’60 died March 5, 2019.
Daniel Webster Jones Jr. D’64 died March 8, 2019.
Thomas R. Sigmon D’64 died April 5, 2019.
Richard Campbell D’67 died June 14, 2019.

70s
Henry Neal Lovelace D’71 died March 10, 2019.

80s
Laurence Landon Stewart D’83 died Feb. 6, 2019.
Robert Kenneth Eldredge D’87 died March 6, 2019.

90s

MINISTRY UPDATES

William G. Sharpe IV D’60 was honored as the first full-time chaplain at Elon University.


Tom Stephenson D’86 recently completed a two-year term as the moderator for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Ohio.

LeDayne McLeese Polaski D’93 was given the Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace and Justice Award for outstanding work for peace and justice, courageous leadership, and compassionate Christian witness for and with individuals marginalized in the United States and around the globe. Since 2015, Polaski has been executive director of BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz, the largest network of Baptist peacemakers in the world and the first Baptist organization to formally incorporate Spanish into its identity.

Scott Bullard D’02 has been named the 11th president of Pfeiffer University.

Christopher Donald D’06 has been appointed university chaplain and director of the Office of Religious Life at Vanderbilt University.

Matthew Blake Kendrick D’06 was called to serve as the minister for adult discipleship at Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.

He previously served as associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Greenwood, S.C., for 12 years.

Nita Byrd D’12 has accepted the position of chaplain and dean of spiritual engagement at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Angela MacDonald D’19 was promoted to system director for mission integration at CHRISTUS Health in Irving, Texas.
Family News

Emily Hylden T’08, D’12 welcomed a son, Donald Grady Hylden, on July 17, 2019.

Andrew Wolfe D’14 and his wife, Amanda, welcomed a son, Warren Thomas, on July 19, 2019.

New Books

Edward Porter Armstrong D’60 published Impressions: Scriptures and Discussion for Bible Study.

S T Kimbrough Jr. D’62 published A Pilgrim with a Poet’s Soul: George A. Simons (1854–1952): A Pioneer Missionary in Russia and the Baltic States (Wipf and Stock), which traces the growth of Methodism under the leadership of Simons in this part of the world.


Gloria Aghogah D’99 published From Maintenance to Mission: Changing the Paradigm of a Small Church, with a foreword by William Turner Jr., James T. and Alice Mead Cleland Professor Emeritus of the Practice of Preaching.


J. Dana Trent D’06 published Dessert First: Preparing for Death While Savoring Life (Chalice Press).

Kendall Vanderslice D’19 published We Will Feast: Rethinking Dinner, Worship, and the Community of God (Eerdmans).

GOT NEWS? STAY IN TOUCH!
Email MAGAZINE@DIV.DUKE.EDU or visit WWW.DIVINITY.DUKE.EDU/UPDATE to submit alumni news or update your information.

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More on Social Media!
Be sure to follow the Duke Divinity social media accounts for updates from faculty, students, and alumni as well as the latest news and events—and beautiful campus photos!

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Alumni are the largest group of supporters to the Divinity Annual Fund. More than anyone, alumni understand the value of financial aid during seminary. You can partner with students preparing for ministry and make a gift to the Divinity Annual Fund at WWW.GIFTS.DUKE.EDU/DIVINITY.
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61 likes

dukedivinity "Baking for me is a point of connection with generations of women and men who have followed similar routines, a method of reflecting on the strength and wisdom of my own senses, and a tool for creating community in response to the hunger that surrounds me. It's a central metaphor of my own religious practice—the making and eating of it have long been central to my own awareness of God. When the world appears out of control, and my internal anxieties threaten to overwhelm, I find peace in a God that claims to be known in morsels of bread."
— Kendall Vanderslice, M.T.S.'19. #divinityvoices

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