

ABOUT OUR ALUMS

Hope Italiano Lee '03 was ordained by the Presbytery of Tampa Bay January 5, 2003.

Wendy Neff '99 was married to Brian Shelby February 15, 2003.

Mary Margaret Yearwood '97 has just published a book *In Their Heart: Inspirational Alzheimer's Stories* about her ministry with Alzheimer's disease.

David Shelor '96 and wife Roberta are parents of a new daughter, Lille Parke Shelor, born February 6.

Steve Lindsley '97 has accepted a call to First Presbyterian Church in Mount Airy, North Carolina.

David Roquemore '01 is now senior pastor at Camp Hill Presbyterian Church, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

Wade Halva '01 has been ordained and installed as pastor of Three Rivers Presbyterian Parish, Gallatin County, Illinois.

Ben Trawick '93 has accepted a new call to be Pastor of North Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, North Wilkesboro, North Carolina.

Guy Griffith '00 (DMin.) became senior minister of First Presbyterian Church, Dalton, Georgia, in September, 2002.

Joon Lee '94 and Hyo Eun Lee have a son, Samuel Eunwoo Lee, born January 25. He says "We've been waiting for this moment for more than 9 years of our marriage, and God finally answered our prayers."

Julie Walkup '99 is now Julie Walkup Bird. She was married to Adrian Bird January 5.

Lisa '92 and **Ron** '93 **Nelson** are proud parents of a daughter, Audra Leigh, born December 12, 2002.

Jonathan Carroll '00 graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in '01 with the Th.M. in systematic theology. He is pastor of Forest Hills Presbyterian Church in Martinsville, Virginia.

Maetta Snyder '89 has served Westminster Presbyterian in Emporia, Kansas, for 7+ years. She was installed as Moderator of the Synod of Mid-America in January and served as commissioner to the 114th General Assembly. Maetta and husband Sam will become grandparents of twin grandsons in April, 2003.

Greg McMinn '93 is pastor of Pilgrimage Presbyterian in Lilburn, Georgia. Greg completed his Doctor of Ministry at Dubuque Theological Seminary this past May and accepted the call to Pilgrimage in November.

Stephanie Boardman '02 was ordained and installed as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian, Lincoln, Nebraska, June 2, 2002, and is to be married to Phillip Anthony July 12, 2003.

Laura Aull Johnston '90 is interim pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Charleston, Illinois.

Sid Burgess '90 is taking a 12-week sabbatical in 2003 from his position as pastor at Edgewood Presbyterian in Birmingham, Alabama. The sabbatical is being funded by a generous grant from the Lilly Foundation, through Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary's Louisville Institute. He plans to write the story of Edgewood Presbyterian's revitalization – from 25 in worship in 1990 to an average of 130 in 2002; to participate in the Alban Institute's "Clergy Institute" and to develop plans and resources to help facilitate the church's move from "pastor-centered to "program-focused" congregation.

Bill Hayes '84 (D.Min '91) remains Pastor of Wentworth Presbyterian in Wentworth, North Carolina, and has recently accepted the position of Director for the Reidsville Outreach Center in Reidsville, North Carolina.

John Thomson '77 and his wife Marlene moved to the Old Parish Church, Hamilton, Scotland in the Fall of 2001. John is still serving as chaplain in the Army Reserves, having done a three month tour in Bosnia in 2000. He was recently appointed divisional police chaplain and was also made a Justice of the Peace. Marlene has a career in Social Work as a "Home Help Organizer."

Robert '55 and **Mary Doom** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary August 11, 2002.

Mary Kay Scott Collins '97 and her husband, Rob are proud parents of a daughter, Maya Farmer Collins, born November 2, 2002.

Keith Riddle '91 is currently serving as Interim pastor of Community Presbyterian Church of Lauderdale by the Sea, Florida. Having stepped back from active ministry due to severe health concerns, Keith is serving as Interim, as well as leading support groups for various organizations within the Fort Lauderdale area.

John White '86, following a 12-year ministry at Westminster Church in Greenwood, South Carolina, has moved to Jackson, Tennessee, to serve as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Jackson.

Brad Smith '89 is now the full time Executive Director of The Souper Bowl of Caring. Passing through Columbia, South Carolina, the Friday before the Super Bowl I heard him interviewed about his unique ministry and then ran across this article in the Florence, South Carolina paper the following morning. I share it with you.

COLUMBIA - Legions of football-loving churchgoers will dig into their chicken wings guilt free Sunday night after donating to the Souper Bowl of Caring food drive during morning worship services.

Founded in 1990 by Columbia pastor, the Rev. Brad Smith, the concept of the program -- soliciting \$1 donations from church members on Super Bowl Sunday to benefit food banks and soup kitchens -- was so simple, it was hard for even Smith to imagine such humble offerings could make a widespread difference in the lives of others.

From citywide to statewide to nationwide by 1993, the youth-led effort has come a long way since initial collective donations of a few thousand dollars. Last year's totals: \$3.1 million from 10,000 U.S. churches,

"The Souper Bowl of Caring offers people in churches across the country a simple but significant way to join together in caring and unity," Smith said. "We believe this idea is a gift from God and we encourage everyone to join the team."

Though Sunday is the big day, youth groups across South Carolina and the country will kick-off the event by volunteering at soup kitchens and food banks like Harvest Hope.

"The entire mission of the Souper Bowl is to encourage young people to be involved in feeding the hungry" said Denise Holland, executive director of Harvest Hope Food Bank. "Volunteers are extremely helpful in keeping a busy place like Harvest Hope ready to serve the hundreds of hungry people that we see each day. Financial contributions to local hunger organizations are a tremendous blessing during these difficult economic times."

About 7,000 youth from 500 cities are expected to donate their services for what is called the Service Blitz. Congregations of any faith may participate.

For more information on the Souper Bowl of Caring, call (800) 358-SOUP or visit the Web site, www.souperbowl.org

Response from **J. Davison Philips** '43, President Emeritus to our December newsletter:

Bert, thank you for the excellent news from our graduates. Most of them I know, but really didn't know much about what they are doing. To a large degree, they are the reason for the existence of Columbia Seminary. Others read books by the faculty and so in some way CTS influences the whole Church.

As for me, I serve on the Presbyterian Historical Society Board for the Presbyterian Church, USA, and use its resources often. President J. McDowell Richards' papers and sermons are there. In his time, the phone was seldom used, fortunately, and so we have letters on almost all his experiences. I am in the final revision of a Biography of Dr. Richards.

By the way, graduates might not recognize Decatur. It is multiracial in the schools, the city officials, and the residential areas. It is not perfect, but it is a good place to live and work. 70% of the land is occupied by City, DeKalb County and non-taxable entities such as Columbia Seminary, Agnes Scott College, offices of Emory University and Hospital, and many churches. The redesigned and rebuilt commercial areas downtown are attractive and useful.

IN MEMORIAM

J. Wesley Brock '84 died of a massive heart attack January 3, 2003.

Anne Jenkins Sawyers '84 died January 17, 2003.

Lattie Collins '00 – died January 8, 2003. George Stroup went to Flint River Presbytery in Albany to preach at that Presbytery's memorial service for Lattie Collins. Lattie entered the M.Div. program in 1991, took a five-year leave to do urban ministry in Mobile and get married, and then returned here and graduated in 2000. He had been the minister at the Donalsonville, Georgia, church for the last three years, but was killed in an automobile accident. Lattie and Shelley have a 7-month-old daughter, Hannah. At the Presbytery meeting it was announced that the Presbytery is accepting contributions for a Hannah Collins Scholarship Fund. If you are interested in contributing to this fund, you may obtain further information from Paul Luthman,

the Presbytery Executive at 800-411-8029 or 229-435-9726. Check the web site listed below for an article about Lattie from the Volunteer Fire Council.

<http://www.firefightinglinks.com/1collins.html>

Keith and Marie Nickle were serving a church in Bali at the time of the terrorist bombing there. Following is an account of their ministry during that time. Keith is a former New Testament Professor at CTS who now lives in the mountains of Northeast Georgia.

A Bali High

My wife, Marie, and I returned several weeks ago from a three-month sojourn on the island of Bali. We were there when the terrorist bomb attack occurred. This is a brief report on some of our experiences there.

Bali is one island among the 13,000 islands that make up the nation of Indonesia. (Actually, there are 17,000 or so islands, but only 13,000 are inhabited.) It is a small, volcanic island – 48 miles N-S and 97 miles E-W – separated by 2_ miles of water from the large island of Java to its west where Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, is located.

Indonesia is Islamic, having the largest Muslim population of any country in the world. Bali is unique in that its population is over 90% Hindu. But Balinese Hinduism, having merged in its early stages with the animistic religions entrenched on the island, has existed in comparative isolation for over 400 years, thereby developing distinct features. When a Hindu from India visits Bali, much of what he encounters in the island's Hinduism is unrecognizable to him.

The people of Bali are hospitable and graciously welcoming. They genuinely delight in the interest others show in them, their island and their culture. When visitors enjoy themselves in their midst they are immensely gratified, and are eager to introduce their guests to places, events and vistas they may not have yet experienced.

The Protestant Christian Church of Bali, under whose sponsorship we made the trip, is a relative newcomer to the island. Because of economic and political considerations it had its beginnings on the Bali scene only in 1929. A meager start (initiated by two missionaries from China) shortly gained momentum. By 1942 there were 200 members, by 1960 2,000. Today there are 40-50 congregations with a membership somewhere around 28,000. There are other Christian bodies on the island – four Roman Catholic parishes, a couple of Methodist and a couple of Lutheran congregations, a vigorously expanding and irenic Pentecostal movement – but the Protestant Christian Church of Bali is the primary Christian presence.

Appended to Indonesian-speaking congregations are some English-language congregations, mostly located in the southern part of the island where the tourist industry is concentrated. I was invited to come and serve for three months as pastor of such a one that worships in a strikingly beautiful, new building grouped with four other houses of worship (Hindu and Buddhist temples, Roman Catholic church and Muslim Mosque) on the Bukit Doa (the "Hill of Prayer") in the south most peninsula of Nusa Dua, where many of the 5★ hotels are located. of this last. The congregation is small – circa 60 regular members, mostly expats (business people and residents) from various countries and their families, also Balinese and other Indonesian Christians with some facility in English. But on any given Sunday we would have folks from Germany, Scandinavia, Greece, the United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, - even Detroit!

Typical of congregations of the Protestant Christian Churches of Bali our congregation incorporated aspects of the Balinese culture in its worship as well as its architecture. I wore a white "preaching jacket" vaguely reminiscent of the Nehru jackets of the 1960's. All of us wore colorful waist sashes. A basin of water for purification stood by the entrance. A Balinese gong signaled the beginning of worship, music from a gamelan (xylophone-type) orchestra and a Balinese flute were regularly included, frequently Balinese dance groups performed, at the conclusion of the service worshippers filed forward to receive a flower blossom from the pastor to wear behind their ear symbolizing the blessing of God they had received that day.

The terrorist bomb blast occurred on the Saturday evening before our second Sunday there. Actually there were three blasts: two in crowded tourist night spots across the street from each other (about 1/2 miles down the main street from the hotel where our apartment was), and the third in a vacant lot next to the U.S. Consulate. First reports drastically underestimated the severity of the calamity – 20-30 dead they guessed, instead of the eventual tally of 192 mostly Australian and Indonesian fatalities. A macabre twist was revealed when the accused terrorists disclosed they thought they were killing Americans.

The area surrounding the sites was cordoned off for investigative purposes but scheduled and supervised demonstrations were permitted. A Protestant Christian Church of Bali march that included both Indonesian and English-speaking congregations in the Denpasar area held a ceremony at the bombsite the following Sunday after morning worship. Three weeks later a "Love Conquers Fear" conference that included participation of representatives from Australia and elsewhere was held.

Several United Kingdom Embassies and Consulates (England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) requested the use of our church building for a memorial service at which some of the families and friends of victims would be present. Since the Balinese pastor of the Indonesian congregation was uncertain about his facility with English he asked me to join him in hosting the service. Because of that contact I was later asked by the supervisor of the U.K. Investigative Team to conduct a brief memorial ceremony by the casket in the cargo hanger of the Denpasar Airport of the identified remains of the final of 15 English victims. He was a 27-year-old professional cricket and rugby athlete whose team had traveled from Singapore to Bali for an end-of-the-season celebration. His family, come to accompany the casket back, had requested such a service.

The effect of the tragedy on Bali was extensive and multi-faceted. Bali's economy is heavily dependant on tourism. It is estimated that one third of the island's three million population is directly dependant on the tourist industry. That industry, severely damaged by the drastic constriction of tourist travel after the World Trade Center assault, was just beginning to

recover. After the bomb blast the normally crowded beach behind our hotel was all but deserted. Restaurants, bars, shops, taxis all stood empty and unused. The manager of one of the large hotels who attended our worship reported that of their 450 rooms eight were occupied. Cancellations were pouring in.

The dramatic way the Balinese people responded to the assault was astounding. Collectively they assumed primary responsibility for its occurrence. Their Hindu shaped culture convinced them that such a disaster could only occur because they had allowed the spiritual forces impacting their lives to become drastically unbalanced. So the political and religious leadership of the island designated an entire weekend to be devoted to a "Purification Ceremony". Rites were held in all of the more than 4,000 village temples throughout the island. Thousands of Balinese gathered at the bomb site and were seated ten to a row for block after block in the streets radiating away. Since debris from the site would pollute any area on the island it was designated to be taken out and dumped in the ocean, and symbolic boatloads were consigned by the Hindu priests to begin that disposition that day.

Especially moving was the Balinese appreciation for our participation in their horror and grief. They were genuinely grateful that we had not fled on the next airplane out but had remained to be with them and to yearn together with them for the restoration of health and happiness in an island deeply injured by an uncaring blind destructive rage none of us anticipated or could comprehend. For us it was a time of somber and unusually intense blessing.

TRAVELS AROUND THE CHURCH

In January Jet Harper and I traveled to eastern Kentucky and visited our alternative context students and Cam Murchison at the Hindman Settlement School. We spent two days in the Isom and Blackey area visiting with **Tom '87** (DMin.) and **Ann Currie**. Tom is the pastor of the two churches that I served in the late sixties. They seem to love the area and the ministry. Tom is heavily involved in raising goats for the Heifer Project. We also visited **Jerry Utt '02** at the Buckhorn Area Lake Presbyterian Church (The Log Cathedral). It was good to see Jerry and hear about his ministry there.

The Columbia Seminary display and I traveled to Hartsville, South Carolina, for Harmonyfest, a presbytery leadership event. A highlight of the day was worshipping in the beautiful sanctuary of that church. **Jeri Parris Perkins '87** is the pastor there. She had to have emergency back surgery two days earlier and was unable to be there. I talked with her recently and she is recovering well.

Other recent trips include a leadership event of Cherokee Presbytery in Marietta and a meeting of Foothills Presbytery in Spartanburg, South Carolina. The highlight of that day was the examination of and sermon preached by **Mary Cunningham Gause '02** who has been called as an associate on the staff of Fort Hill church in Clemson. As I listened to her sermon, I was proud to be representing CTS.

Two days in January were spent in a meeting of the Synod of Living Waters in a snow-blanketed small town, Smith's Grove, Kentucky. I saw and visited with many alums there, including **David Snellgrove '73** who is the Synod Executive.

As I continue to travel around the church, I look forward to seeing you.

ABOUT BRIAN WREN- PROFESSOR OF WORSHIP

A Minister of the United Reformed Church (UK) and a Fellow of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, Brian Wren is the Conant Professor of Worship at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. His marriage partner is Rev. Susan Heafield (“Hayfield”), a United Methodist Pastor professionally trained in music education and theology. Susan grew up in Eastern Montana, Brian in England. They were married in August, 1991. Susan is an Elder in the New England Conference of the UMC, serving currently as Pastor of Owl Rock United Methodist Church, Atlanta.

Brian was born in 1936 and educated at Oxford University, where his undergraduate degrees were in Modern Languages and Theology. His doctorate (D.Phil = Ph.D.) was awarded in 1968, for a thesis on the Language of Prophetic Eschatology in the Old Testament. He served as minister of Hockley and Hawkwell Congregational (now United Reformed) Church in Hockley, Essex, then as Consultant for Adult Education to the Churches’ Committee on World Development (an ecumenical group through which Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches worked together on issues of international development, peace and justice). After serving as Coordinator of the college-student-based campaign, Third World First, Brian followed an extensive freelance ministry focused on worship enrichment, from which he was called to take up his present appointment.

Brian Wren’s hymn-lyrics are internationally published in hymnals of all traditions, from Roman Catholic to Southern Baptist, including (in North America) fourteen entries in the United Methodist Hymnal (1989), eleven in the Presbyterian Hymnal (1990), fifteen in The New Century Hymnal (UCC-1996), twenty in the Chalice Hymnal (Disciples of Christ, 1996), and eighteen in Voices United (United Church of Canada, 1997). Six of his hymns were translated into Japanese for the Hymnal 21 (United Church of Christ in Japan), and twenty-four appear in the 1999 Australian ecumenical hymnal, Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II.

Published works by Brian Wren include What Language Shall I Borrow? - God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology (New York: Crossroad Books, 1989), Piece Together Praise - A Theological Journey: Poems and Collected Hymns Thematically Arranged (Words only - Hope Publishing Co, 1996), Praying Twice - The Music and Words of Congregational Song (Westminster John Knox Press, 2000) and five hymn collections (words and music), comprising approximately 200 hymns.

Susan’s son Nathan is at the University of Southern Maine, in Portland, ME. Brian’s daughter Hilary (fiancé: Joe) and son Nicholas (spouse: Tomomi) live and work in London. Hilary is a Speech and Language Therapist; Joe is a Psychiatric Nurse; Tomomi is studying Accountancy; Nicholas works in the Compliance Department of the London branch of a Japanese Trust Bank.

Michael Kirby ’03 is a senior at CTS who has written an excellent article for *Christian Century* re: his experience at CTS. It appears in the February 22, 2003 issue. Six seminary students wrote of their seminary experiences. Here is Michael’s contribution.

WHAT I WISH I'D KNOWN

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED that I wish I knew before I came to seminary? I wish I had known that I'd be enriched far beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge by learning *in community*, particularly in *this* community. By engaging scripture, theology, the church and the gospel through the eyes and perspectives of my fellow students, faculty and staff, I have experienced the Spirit moving among us, molding mere knowledge into something that, hopefully, approaches wisdom.

The flippant response is that I would have saved myself a very embarrassing moment if I had known that professor emeritus and theologian Shirley Guthrie – a Columbia Theological Seminary legend – is a man.

The gut response is to wish that I had actually known *less*. As a middle-aged deacon and elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) who has spent a fair amount of the past 38 years in one church or another, I arrived at seminary with far too many opinions about how the church should be the church – from what constitutes proper worship to the appropriate roles of laity and clergy to the best kind of Christian education. Thirty months later, I understand that those opinions were preventing me from allowing the Holy Spirit to do a new thing, both in the church and in my future ministry.

But that doesn't really answer the question.

Ultimately, I wish I had known enough to have had realistic expectations of my seminary. I've had to learn that a seminary is not a congregation – no matter how faithful its board and administration, or brilliant and devoted its faculty, staff and students may be. Let me be clear: I love it here. I regularly experience this seminary community as one where the Spirit draws women and men together to love, nurture, support and serve God and one another – but that community is not the seminary.

Seminaries are unique institutions. While ideally their chief constituency is the church of Jesus Christ and their chief goal is to provide leaders for that church, in reality, seminaries serve many additional constituencies – denominational governing bodies, contributors, the faculty, the academy, alumni, ecclesial activists of every stripe, cranks, naysayers, students. Of all of these, only the students are transients, passing through in regular three – or four-year cycles. Paradoxically, we are both an essential “product” of the institution and, usually, its least influential constituency.

Recognizing this imposed humility is a hard lesson, but perhaps the process of building community within this context is the best training for future clergy – don't we go from this place to “transient” positions in the institution that is the church? Perhaps our status here will help us to more selflessly and faithfully join the Holy Spirit in the ongoing mission of crafting Christ-centered communities of love, justice and peace within that institution.

--Michael Kirby, a student at Columbia Theological Seminary.

STAY IN TOUCH

Please help Barbara and me stay in touch with you by emailing us any news of interest or changes in your address, life or work that you would like to share with the seminary community and other alums. If Barbara or I can be of help to you in any way, please let us know.

Blessings,

Bert