

### **Applications Soar, Columbia Responds to the Challenge**

Applications for the M.Div. program reached a record number well before graduation this year, according to a report from Director of Admissions Ann Clay Adams. "We had 135 applications by mid-May," Dr. Adams says. "That's 60% more than we had four years ago."

Dr. Adams says several factors are contributing to the increase. "Several initiatives are working throughout the church right now to identify candidates for seminary." As examples, she cites programs like "Pulse" [PLSE] and Advocates for Ministry. PLSE began four years ago as the brainchild of John Aldridge, a member of Columbia's Board of Trustees. PLSE invites churches to nominate youth for membership in a network that encourages them to consider ministry. President Emeritus Doug Oldenburg developed the Advocates for Ministry program before he retired from the seminary. Throughout the country college students and young adults are invited to consider ministry at dinner events hosting by advocates and young pastors. Vernon Hunter, a former trustee, has served as one of the advocates.

"Current students are doing wonderful word-of-mouth recruiting," she says. She also credits the influence of Columbia alumni/ae. "Many prospective students say that their lives have been profoundly affected by the ministry and mentoring of Columbia graduates."

Dr. Adams emphasizes that college GPAs are but one factor in determining admission to Columbia. "We are looking for prospective students who demonstrate commitment to the church and who show that they have some leadership experience in the church and community. "We see tremendous potential in the group accepted for next year," she says.

Seven entering students have been awarded a fellowship from the Fund for Theological Education, an ecumenical program supporting numerous faith traditions. The Fund for Theological Education is the parent organization for several of the initiatives that serve to encourage more young persons to consider ministry. Four entering Columbia students were named Ministry Fellows. This prestigious, competitive fellowship is awarded to the most promising entering students identified nationally and ecumenically. In addition three out of 25 Congregational Based Recruitment fellowships went to entering Columbia students.

Increasing enrollment does present a challenge for the seminary, as President Laura Mendenhall explains. "This is a balancing act," she says. "More and more people want to prepare for ministry at Columbia, and the church needs leaders . . . but we have to consider faculty teaching load, availability of classroom space and affordable student housing, *and* the financial aid budget."

With Columbia's mission of providing pastoral leadership for the church, Dr. Mendenhall acknowledges the difficult decision made recently by Columbia's Admissions Committee. "In our planning last fall, we had to put a cap on the entering class for 2005. By mid-May we had filled the class," she says. "We could not admit as many students into next year's class as we would like to have to meet the needs of the church."

Meanwhile, professors are adding extra sections of courses, and, wherever possible, making exceptions to class size limits. "At the same time," Dr. Mendenhall says, "this faculty is maintaining their commitment to intensive one-on-one work with students. This is the way Columbia does theological education."

"Professors are responding to the challenge—and so is every other area of the seminary—with diligent stewardship of the seminary's resources. In some areas, we find that we can spend less without compromising quality. But in other areas, we know that we need to invest more to meet the needs of the church."

Dr. Mendenhall says Columbia's administration and Board of Trustees are carefully considering the seminary's long-range enrollment potential and how to sustain the quality of programs and services offered to students. "We know that we need additional faculty members in critical areas, such as preaching, and we are developing plans to expand campus housing and improve classroom spaces." She also emphasizes the ongoing need for support of student financial aid programs. "We do not want

students to be burdened with overwhelming debt by the time they graduate from Columbia. We want them to be able to serve those congregations that are most in need of pastors."

### **Columbia Seminary Launches New Online Senior Placement Site**

Columbia's Office of Student Services has launched a new online placement service for graduating seniors and recent graduates. Their profiles are listed on Columbia's Web site both alphabetically and according to the type of positions they are seeking. Each student's or recent graduate's "Candidate Seeking a Call" form, which gives an introduction to their background and vision for ministry, is also available for viewing at the site.

You can visit the senior placement site at [www.ctsnet.edu/senior\\_placement.asp](http://www.ctsnet.edu/senior_placement.asp). If you have an open placement or know of a ministry opportunity, we invite you to consider one of our graduates.

### **Online Giving Now Available**

If you like to keep in touch with Columbia via our Web site, you can now support our students there too. Simply go to [www.ctsnet.edu](http://www.ctsnet.edu) and click on "Supporting the Seminary" to make a gift or pay a pledge using our secure server. The site allows you to support several different programs at Columbia, as well as make a gift in honor or memory of someone important to you. Gifts made with your credit card online are particularly helpful to the seminary because they are processed quickly and can be used to meet our immediate needs. And if you make a gift by June 30 (the last day of our fiscal year), you'll be

listed with your class in our Annual Report!

## **Distinguished Service Award Nominations**

Please consider making a nomination for our Distinguished Service Award for next year. We need the nominations by October 1, so the committee can consider them at the fall meeting of the alumni/ae council. Please print out the form from the Web site ([www.ctsnet.edu/alumni\\_ae/association/distinguished\\_service/index.asp](http://www.ctsnet.edu/alumni_ae/association/distinguished_service/index.asp)) and send it to Barbara Poe.

## **Meet David Bartlett, Our New Distinguished Professor Of New Testament**

David Bartlett was born in Syracuse, New York, and moved from there to the Midwest and the west coast as his father served in three different pastorates.

After graduating from Los Angeles High School, David went to Swarthmore College where he received his B.A., and from there to Yale. He received the B.D. from Yale Divinity School and the Ph.D. in religious studies from Yale University Graduate School.

His career has included teaching and pastoral ministry, often simultaneously. He has taught New Testament at the American Baptist Seminary of the West and the Graduate Theological Union and later as adjunct faculty for several of the GTU schools. He also taught New Testament at the University of Chicago Divinity School and served for a time as director of studies for its ministry students. For four years he taught preaching at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia and then for 15

years at Yale Divinity School, as Lantz Professor of Preaching, where he taught a great deal of homiletics and a fair amount of New Testament. For eleven of those years David was Dean of Academic Affairs for the Divinity School.

David is an ordained American Baptist minister. He served as pastor of the University Baptist Church, Minneapolis; Hyde Park Union Church, Chicago; and Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church in Oakland, California.

His most recent books are *What's Good About This News?*, an expanded version of the 2001 Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale, and *To All God's Beloved in New Haven*, a collection of Bartlett's Yale sermons edited by Ian Doescher. David wrote the commentary on I Peter for the New Interpreter's Bible and is hard at work on a commentary on Matthew for a lectionary study published by SPCK in the United Kingdom.

David's wife, Carol, is a clinical social worker at the United Methodist Children's Home, conveniently located across the street from Columbia. The Bartletts have two grown sons, both in graduate school. Benjamin is studying computer science at the University of Toronto, and Jonah is studying ethics and theology at Union Theological Seminary/PSCE in Richmond.

## **About Our Alumni/ae**

**Joseph Whitner '55** writes in 2003 he and his wife, Katherine, sold their retreat center in North Georgia and moved to Dallas, TX. He is serving as Parish Associate at the Trinity church in McKinney, TX, and plans to move there soon. He is active on the Congregational

Transformation and Nurture and Education Committees of Grace Presbytery.

**Jack Taylor '62** retired in Oct. '03 after 11 years as pastor of Westminster church, Lakeland, FL. He is part-time stated supply pastor of First church, Fort Meade, FL. He tells us that Gena, his wife of slightly over 39 years, is a retired public school teacher and works part-time as a Title 1 tutor at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist School, an African-American private school.

**Elizabeth Hains Ball '64** has moved to a continuing care community in a rural setting in Florida near her former residence.

**Ed Lanier '64** retired from the Army Chaplaincy (April '82) and the Veterans Administration (2002) where he was Chief of the Chaplain Service for over 16 years. Ed transferred from the Wesleyan church into the Presbytery of Chicago and serves as a Parish Associate at the First church, Wheaton, IL. He plans to attend Interim Pastor's classes at Montreat this summer.

**Don '68** and **Sally Wood** are completing their 27<sup>th</sup> year of service at Southern Wesleyan University – Sally as Assistant Professor of English, and Don as Professor of Religion and Golf Coach.

**Cecil Murphey '70** is making a name for himself as writer, "ghost writer," editor, and speaker to writers. He received the 2005 Silver Angel Award from Excellence in Media for *Committed But Flawed*. Also, *I Choose to Stay*, the book he "ghosted" for Salome Thomas-El, will receive the 2005 Blackboard

Book of the Year award for non-fiction. Disney will film the book as *The Mighty Bishops*. He has ghosted other books, including *90 Minutes in Heaven*. He is giving a keynote address and teaching a class on nonfiction at the Colorado Christian Writers Workshop, Estes Park.

**Stuart Thomas Wilson '78** has a book, *Sketching a Scheme, A Friendship Model of Ministry as a Mediating Structure*, soon to be released by University Press of America. In his book, he presents a friendship model of ministry that is both traditionally faithful and worldly pertinent.

**Joseph Cordero '79** is pastor, John Knox church, Houston, TX.

**Joanna Adams '79** was the 2005 recipient of the Friends of Odyssey Award in Atlanta. Following is information from Odyssey Consulting Center about the award:

"We present this award at our annual fundraiser to honor people who have made a continuous impact on the community. As a pillar of the Atlanta community, Joanna Adams continues to support our mission. She strongly believes in the power of the family and continues to avidly support the needs of all children."

**Robert Hess '81** was honorably retired (EPC) in 2002. He moved to the Birmingham area and says he is living out his Golden Years in perfect contentment. He is a part-time professor at Birmingham Theological Seminary.

**Paul Irwin '84** is pastor of the Fowler church, Fowler, CA.

**James Platt '84** announces the birth of his first grandson, David James Tallent, born March 23.

**Marcus Barber '88** has accepted a call as Associate General Presbyterian for Development in Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery and will begin June 1.

**Lori Knight-Whitehouse '90** successfully defended her dissertation and will be awarded the Ph.D. in November through the University of St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto.

**Earl J. Smith '90** is serving St. John and John Calvin churches in Tampa, FL.

**Tim Beal '91** is the Florence Harkness Professor of Religion and Director of the Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. He recently visited the CTS campus to speak about his new book, *Roadside Religion: In Search of the Sacred, the Strange, and the Substance of Faith* (Beacon Press). Part travel narrative, part religious study, and part search for the divine madness that is faith, *Roadside Religion* takes the reader on a tour of the strange and often wondrous ways people have tried to give outward form to their inner religious experiences.

**Aaron Fulp-Eickstaedt '92** is Head of Staff at Immanuel church, McLean, VA.

**Judith Fulp-Eickstaedt '92** is Associate Pastor, Trinity church, Arlington, VA.

**Ann Kelly '92** has a new call as Associate Executive Presbyterian for Camps and Conferences of St. Andrew Presbytery, effective June 7.

**Mike O'Neil '93** is pastor of First church, Mount Pleasant, TX, and Stated Supply for First church, Pittsburg, TX.

**Joon Lee '94** is pastor of Korean Presbyterian Church of Columbus, OH.

**David Bradley '95** was married to Margaret Grace Rada at First church, Asheville, NC, December 18. He finished the Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy at Louisville Seminary in December.

**David Cagle '95** is moving to Kingsport, TN, in June to become head of staff at First Presbyterian Church.

**Michael Chaney '95** is Chaplain on the USS Princeton. The ship is a cruiser in the NIMITZ strike group. He leaves soon for the Persian Gulf. He asked that we keep all sailors, marines, airmen, and soldiers in our prayers.

**Barbara Holmes '95** has been promoted from Professor of Ethics and African-American Studies to Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Memphis Theological Seminary. Congratulations to Barbara! Read the full story in [Alumni/ae Profiles](#) on the Web site.

**Jeff Hayes '96** has been called as Associate Pastor and Director of Christian Education at Mountain Brook church in Birmingham, AL.

**Pam Leach '98** is beginning part-time work as Director of Adult Ministries at First church, Tyler, TX, June 1.

**Sue Kim '99** and husband Joe have a son, Samuel Hyongsuk Ahn, born Feb. 27.

**Kitty Manson '00** serves in bi-lingual ministries at Grady Healthcare Systems (Atlanta) as a chaplain, assisting doctors in Guatemala, teaching Bible school in Spanish and serving as representative to the Cuba Committee in Worldwide Missions in Greater Atlanta Presbytery.

**Annette Rogers '00** married Bruce Vaughn on April 2 and has moved to Franklin, TN. After getting settled, she will start on her Th.D. dissertation.

**Rachel Winter '00** is the new Associate Pastor at Auburn Presbyterian Church, Auburn, AL.

**Don Brown '01** was ordained March 6 in Grosse Pointe Farms, MI, and is pastor of First church, North Haledon, NJ.

**Rix Threadgill '01** is associate pastor of Buford church, Buford, GA.

**Phillip Dennis '02** and wife **Caroline**, a CTS student, have a son, William Jacob, born May 6. Phillip is pastor of Monticello church.

**Tina Sweet '04** was ordained at Palms church in Jacksonville Beach on Feb. 20, and has been installed as pastor of Bethel church in Walterboro, SC.

**Mike Garrett '02 (D.Min)** was recently installed as senior pastor of Westminster church, Snellville, GA.

**Mary Cunningham Gause '02** and husband Bill are proud parents of a son, William Grey, born January 18.

**John Blewitt '03 (DMin.)** is pastor, Faith church, Baton Rouge, LA.

**Sam Bridges '03** was named Air Force Outstanding Company Grade Chaplain of the Year. Read about his award in [Alumni/ae Profiles](#) on the Web site.

**Andrew '03 and Caroline Kukla** are excited to announce they have a son, Warren Paul, born April 6.

**Jeri Parris Perkins '87** serves as pastor and head of staff at First church, Hartsville, SC. This summer the church breaks ground on a \$4 million expansion and renovation project. Jeri serves on the Alumni/ae Council and moderates the CPM for the Presbytery of New Harmony. Michael York '06 is a member of the church.

**Rita Cochrane '94** reports: "I'm still in Mississippi and to my utter amazement, I really am enjoying it here—so much so that I recently moved into an older house on Main Street and am overseeing the remodeling.

Ministry at a church that was involved in a split with the denomination, is in an overwhelmingly Baptist community that does not know what to do with a woman minister at an integrated church, is interesting. However, this loyal remnant has done some remarkable ministry. Our membership may ebb and flow, but our heart for mission remains high. Because of our background, we are very

supportive of the larger church, and have the highest giving (per capita) of any church in St. Andrew Presbytery.

The church has done ESL classes for the local Spanish speaking community. We have a Book Group that meets monthly and that attracts members of the community as well as our own folks. We also have short-term spirituality groups that have met off and on for a long time. Our church school is studying Isaiah, and will continue with Jeremiah.

Locally, we are involved in Habitat for Humanity, the hospital, and individually or collectively in most ministries in the area. The members of First Presbyterian Church, West Point, Mississippi, are a remarkable group of people who know what they believe, are open to new ideas and new people, and stand up for what they believe when it is most important.

### **In Memoriam**

Van M. Arnold '38	2/22/05
Anderson W. Buchanan '53	2/03/05
Overton Currie '55	2/28/05
Larry J. Holt '76	3/20/05
Joseph A. McConnell '63	4/20/05
Glenn B. Robinson '58	2/17/05
Jack J. Wolf '54	5/02/04

### **Bert Carmichael's Travels Around the Church**

During the last few weeks I've enjoyed having lunch with and visiting the churches or other work settings of a number of our alums; **Ben Laughlin '95** in Jasper, GA; **Jake Marshall '93** in Canton, GA; **Lina Hart '89** in Chattanooga, TN; Randy Calvo in Atlanta; **Billy Wade '80** in Covington, GA; **Libba Fairleigh '74** in Decatur, and **Janelle Tibbetts '97** in Los Angeles. It's always good to hear "old"

seminary stories and learn of the many ways CTS has prepared our alums for ministry.

On May 1, I enjoyed preaching at the Beersheba church in Chatooga County, GA, where **Roger Martin '63** serves as the stated supply. It was good to visit with Roger and Julie, especially as we shared dinner on the grounds on a gloriously sunny spring Sunday afternoon.

Cam Murchison, executive vice president and dean of faculty, and I traveled a couple of weeks ago to the Montgomery Conference Center, just outside Starke, FL, for a meeting of St. Augustine Presbytery. We visited with many alums. It was good to have some time with **Mike Williams '69**, an associate on Presbytery staff who was here during my days as a student, and to "catch up" with **Gwin Pratt '82**, now serving a church in Jacksonville.

Bill Brown, professor of Old Testament, and I drove to Birmingham recently to a lunch at Stamford University. It was arranged by **Cary Speaker '76** and well attended by our alums who graciously welcomed Bill and I'm sure left knowing that CTS has called another well-qualified, gifted, personable professor. Those joining us were: **Elizabeth Goodrich '03**, **Frank Alexander '44**, **John Kirstein '48**, **Rick Atkerson '93**, **Manning Thornton '90 (D.Min)**, **Sid Burgess '90**, **Noelle Read '99**, **Cary Speaker '76**, **Denny Read '01**, **Sterling Edwards '52**, **Dan Stephens '04**, **Lucy Turner '91**, **David Rice '00**, **Robert Hay '84**, and **Ron Wilson '01 (Dmin)**.

This week **Sarah Erickson '03** and I traveled to Mobile for a tri-presbytery meeting – Florida, South Alabama and Mississippi. I enjoyed a seafood dinner on the bay with **Joe Johnson '85**, who serves the Evergreen church in Dothan, AL.

Sarah and I saw and visited with numerous alums. One of the highlights of the day for us was the examination for candidacy of two of our CTS students from Mobile, **Brandon Brewer** and **Reggie Weaver**. Our students made all of us associated with Columbia very proud. I'm sure you'll hear more of these two young leaders. Congratulations, guys!

I share these travels with you to make you aware of where some of our fellow alumni/ae are and what they're doing these days. Also, we'd be interested in knowing if any of you would like to host, with our help, a gathering of Columbia folks in your area. Please call 404-687-4668, 404-687-4566 or e-mail me at [Carmichaelb@ctsnet.edu](mailto:Carmichaelb@ctsnet.edu).

## **Staying Connected**

If you have moved to a new presbytery and would like to know of other alums in that presbytery or geographical area, let us know and we'll e-mail a list to you.

If you are interested in having your e-mail address listed in our e-mail directory on our Web page and haven't notified us, please e-mail Barbara Poe at [poeb@ctsnet.edu](mailto:poeb@ctsnet.edu). We will not list your e-mail address without your permission.

## **Stay in Touch**

Please help us stay in touch with you by e-mailing us 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 we can be of help to you in any way, please let us know.