Dear Friends,

Yesterday marked the first Sunday in Advent in the life of the Church, the beginning of a new year in our liturgical and faith lives. Right on the heels of our Thanksgiving celebrations, we turn our hearts and minds to Bethlehem and prepare to meet Christ once again. It is a season for new things. At Pittsburgh Theological Seminary we are very excited to introduce you to our new promotional website during this special season. While the Seminary has had a very functional website for quite some time, the site has been given a major overhaul and is now much more interactive and will provide you with reasons to return for a visit on a regular basis.

Incorporating our theme "Bridging the Word and the World," the website provides us with new opportunities to build bridges with our alumnus/i, friends, and prospective students. In addition to the menu on the left that provides links to admissions information, academic programs, outreach programs, and other resources, there are four feature areas that display prominently on the front page. The first, "Learning the Word," will always point you to a story about something that is going on in the classroom, with our faculty, or with our educational programs. The second, "Reaching the World," will share stories about what our alums are doing in ministry. The third, "Hearing the Word," connects you to a wealth of audio recordings from faculty, students, and guest lecturers that you can download and enjoy. The fourth, "Meeting the World," gives you a comprehensive listing of where our PTS faculty and administrators will be out and about preaching and teaching around the world. All of these features will be updated frequently so I hope that you get in the habit of stopping by the website on a regular basis to explore the exciting materials that will be available for you. For those of you who are really into technology, you can sign up for RSS feeds to receive notifications about all of our updates. Visit the site at www.pts.edu.

During this Advent season, I especially want to encourage you to make use of the online Advent devotional that is available on the website. We invite you to read and listen to daily messages written by faculty, staff, and students of the Seminary. Detailed instructions about how to sign up for the devotional are outlined below. Each day's message will be based on one of the lectionary passages for the day. I'm sure that you will enjoy them and that the devotional will help to prepare your heart and mind to celebrate Christ's birth.

Every day we are reminded that God is still at work in the world; our task is to figure out how to be a part of that work. We rejoice that God is at work through Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, even through these new ventures in web technology. This is the season of joy and hope and both are growing in abundance here on our campus! May Christ's blessings be with you and yours throughout this special season.
Advent Devotional "Expect the Unexpected" Available Online

The Advent Devotional is featured on the front page of the Seminary's new website, www.pts.edu. You can access the information from the revolving picture. When the "Expect the Unexpected" slide appears, click "read more." From there, the daily message can be seen and heard. Consider bookmarking this page in your web browser. Or, make the devotional available on your MP3 player following your individual device configurations. From this page on the website, you can also sign up for daily delivery of a print version of the devotional to your personal e-mail.

An archive of past message will be available, so even if you miss one, you can always catch up. We hope you'll follow along daily, be inspired by the words, and throughout Advent come to expect the unexpected.

Five Board Members Take Office

During the Board meeting last month, five members were appointed as directors. New members include Kimberly Tillotson Fleming, the Rev. Dr. James Miller, Stephanie Simmons, Alumnae/i Representative the Rev. Dr. Robert L. Kelley Jr. '51, and Senior Class Representative Dr. W. Allen Hogge '08.

Kimberly Tillotson Fleming is president of Hefren-Tillotson Inc., a privately held Pittsburgh-based firm offering comprehensive financial planning and investment advisory services for individuals, foundations, trusts, and qualified retirement plans. She is a graduate of Northwestern University and holds several professional designations. In 2003, she was honored by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development as one of "Pennsylvania's 50 Best Women in Business." This honor is awarded to women who are shaping the economic future of Pennsylvania and who share a commitment to business growth, to professional excellence, and to the community. In addition, Fleming is a session member at Hiland Presbyterian Church and a youth leader. She is married with two sons.

The Rev. Dr. James Miller is head of staff of the 2700-member First Presbyterian Church, Tulsa, Okla. He earned his degrees from Wheaton College, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the University of Edinburgh (Scotland). An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Miller has served a number of churches in Oklahoma, Indiana, and Scotland. In service to the larger church, Miller was the moderator of the Eastern Oklahoma
Presbytery in 2005 and 2006, commissioner to the 209th General Assembly, PC(USA), and has served on a number of committees. Miller is married with three children.

Stephanie Simmons is the project director in the information services department of Giant Eagle Inc. She has worked there for nearly 25 years. Simmons is a graduate of ICM School of Business, University of Phoenix, University of Pittsburgh Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, and Robert Morris University. An ordained deacon at Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, Simmons is active in the Music and Worship, Evangelism, and Presbyterian Women ministries, past co-chair of the anniversary committee, and editor of the church newsletter. She is married with two step-sons.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Kelley is an honorably retired ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). A 1951 graduate of Pittsburgh Seminary, he earned his degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary and Princeton University before accepting a call as a professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1955. Upon his retirement in 1997, Kelley became the emeritus G. Albert Shoemaker professor of Bible and archaeology, the chair that he held while teaching. In 2000, Kelley was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award for outstanding service in academia. Since retirement, he has stayed active by teaching and preaching in many congregations. Kelley is married with two adult children.

W. Allen Hogge is professor and chair of the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh/Magee-Women’s Hospital. A graduate of the University of Virginia, Hogge completed his residency at the University of Virginia Hospital and postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California. Hogge is a member of numerous professional and scientific societies and the recipient of various awards. Having written abstracts, referred articles, published papers, books and book chapters, Hogge is well published. Hogge is married with two daughters.

Two PTS Professors Release Books

The Seminary’s P.C. Rossin Professor of Church History Dr. Charles Partee has released a new book *The Theology of John Calvin* (WJK, 2008). The theology of John Calvin (1509-1564) was given classic expression in his Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559). In this definitive work, longtime Calvin expert Charles Partee offers a careful exposition of Calvin's theology as it appears in the Institutes, paying special attention to the relation of Calvin's theology to the history of Christian thought and to the questions of Calvin's own time. Partee also examines the development of later Calvinism and the adaptations of Calvin's thought by his later followers. As Partee shows, Calvin's theology provides a profound exposition of Christian faith and a magnificent resource for theology today.

Partee holds degrees from Maryville College, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, University of Texas (Austin), and Princeton Theological Seminary. Prior to coming to the Seminary in 1978, Partee served as a pastor in Arkansas and New Jersey and as a professor at two colleges. Most of his scholarly writing concerns the Theology of John Calvin. Partee has written a book dealing with the pioneer missionary career of his father-in-law, a 1934
Robert C. Holland Professor of Old Testament the Rev. Dr. Jerome F. D. Creach has likewise released a new book, *The Destiny of the Righteous in the Psalms* (Chalice Press, 2008). The first chapter in the book of Psalms promises that the righteous will be secure and prosperous, "like trees planted by streams of water" (Ps. 1:3). In this thorough analysis of the book of Psalms, Creach expounds on his proposal that Psalms is centrally concerned with the destiny of the righteous.

Before joining the faculty of PTS in 2000, Creach taught at Barton College (1994-2000), the College of William & Mary (1993-94), Randolph-Macon College (1993), and the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (1992-93). He earned his degrees from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia (now Union-PSCE) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Creach is interested in Old Testament theology and the appropriation of the Bible to the life of the church. Psalms and Prophets are his primary areas of research. A minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Creach has served congregations in Virginia and North Carolina and preaches and teaches regularly in churches in the Pittsburgh area.

Creach's other publications include *Joshua: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (WJK 2003), *Psalms Interpretation Bible Studies* (Geneva 1999), and *Yahweh as Refuge and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (Sheffield Academic Press 1996).
• provide financial assistance to deserving and talented students,
• attract and retain outstanding faculty,
• maintain and improve campus facilities, and
• respond to the needs of the Church and world with creative and innovative programs.

Also, for those who are 70 ½ or older Congress has reauthorized legislation that allows you to make a charitable gift from your IRA account during the 2008 and 2009 tax years without incurring income tax on the withdrawal. You can give up to $100,000 in each tax year and this gift can be used to satisfy your Minimum Required Distribution (MRD). Please call Tom Pappalardo, vice president for strategic advancement and marketing, directly if you would like to make such a gift before year-end 2008.

We are grateful for partnerships with generous donors who are helping to make this work possible. May God continue to bless you as your generosity has blessed us.

Gifts may be made online using our secure transaction process.

Gift to the annual fund may be mailed to:
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Institutional Advancement Office
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

You may also call us at 412-441-3304 ext. 2107 to arrange to make a gift with your Visa or MasterCard. Gifts of stock are also welcome and encouraged and may be helpful at tax time. The Seminary is sometimes able to work with donors to accept gifts of personal property, goods, or services that will benefit the annual fund. For more information about how to make a gift, contact Tom Pappalardo at tpappalardo@pts.edu.

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