Dear Friends,

I write to you still flying high from last week’s events at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. What a few days we had! On Wednesday, members of our Board of Directors began to gather on campus and that evening we shared with our graduating class in a wonderful baccalaureate service. Professor Charles Partee gave the message for the evening, and as usual he brought a combination of thoughtfulness, faithfulness, and great wit to his remarks. Dr. Partee is retiring after 31 years of service. We are so grateful for his faithful ministry at PTS. On Thursday the Board’s committee work was interspersed with a busy day of graduation activities. It was wonderful to have our Board share in the brunch where senior awards were announced, and then later in the inspiring graduation service when 66 graduates were sent out to serve. On Friday, the Board continued its work, and among other actions, approved a master campus plan that provides us with a vision for improvements and enhancements to our campus over the next 25 years. And this only touches on a few of the exciting things that took place!

To quote Charles Dickens, this is certainly “the best of times and the worst of times” for theological education. For many seminaries in North America, this is the worst of times. Some schools are closing. Many are having staff reductions. Programs are being cut. Faculty positions are being eliminated. Some schools are deeply in debt and a few are selling property. With sincere humility and gratitude to God, even in the midst of challenge we still believe that this is “the best of times” at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Despite the economy, our Annual Fund year drew to a close yesterday exceeding our goal of $735,000. Our alums blew right by their goal of $170,000 and ended the year with more than $177,000 in gifts! Our enrollment has remained steady. Searches to fill vacant faculty positions continue. While other schools have eliminated their Doctor of Ministry programs, we are increasing our program and starting a new cohort group at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Fla. Our faculty continues to be extremely productive and renowned. We are dreaming big dreams about how to enhance and improve our buildings and grounds. We are so grateful for the prudent financial management of our endowment which has put us in a position where these are not “the worst of times.”

That being said, we know that this storm will be difficult to weather. We have had a significant drop in our endowment base and the reduction in endowment revenue and current economic conditions will challenge us. We need to be creative and even entrepreneurial in our thinking about future programs. We need to continue to find ways to tighten our belt on expenses. We need to keep increasing our annual fund giving in order to make up for the decline in endowment revenue. We will do all of these things and we will trust in God to continue to guide us and provide for us, and despite the significant challenges, we will continue to rejoice and to see this as the best of times.
Your gifts, encouragement, and prayers make this possible. Please keep our PTS Class of 2009 in your prayers as they seek calls and transition into ministry. Remember, too, those new students who will come here to study in September. And please pray for our faculty and administration that we might continue to face our challenges with faith and joy. We are so grateful for your encouragement and support!

Bill

The Rev. Dr. William J. Carl III
President

Professor Charles Partee Honored with Calian Award

During commencement, the Seminary recognized the Rev. Dr. Charles Partee, P.C. Rossin Professor Emeritus of Church History with The Calian Award for Campus Community Service.

This award is given to an exemplary member of the Pittsburgh Seminary community who demonstrates excellence in carrying out responsibilities and volunteer assignments and also expresses a caring spirit of good will and hope essential in life together as a community. The award is in recognition that all members of the community are an important part of the success of the Seminary.

After more than 30 years of teaching at Pittsburgh Seminary, Partee retired this spring. Prior to coming to Pittsburgh 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. Recently he wrote *The Theology of John Calvin* (WJK, 2008). Partee has also written a book dealing with the pioneer missionary career of his father-in-law, a 1934 graduate of Pittsburgh Seminary, entitled *Adventure in Africa: The Story of Don McClure* (University of America, 2000) and with professor Andrew Purves *Encountering God: Christian Faith in Turbulent Times* (WJK, 2000).

Grads Honored with 16 Awards

Sixteen awards were given during the recent commencement activities. Honorees include:

*The Jennie Rigg Barbour Memorial Prize*, awarded to the graduate or graduates with the second highest academic rank, Randi Leigh Henderson, M.Div., Irwin, Pa.


*The Brooks Foundation Commencement Prize*, for highest standing in pastoral care, Rebecca J. Woomer, M.Div., Duncansville, Pa.


The Thomas Jamison Scholarship for the student with the highest grade average, Nadia Buzzelli Mullin, M.Div., Grove City, Pa.
The Michael Wilson Keith Memorial Prize in Homiletics, Stephen M. Franklin, Boardman, Ohio
The Sylvester S. Marvin Fellowship given for post-graduate study to the highest ranking member of the class, Nadia Buzzelli Mullin, M.Div., Grove City, Pa.
The John W. Meister Award in Pastoral Ministry, Edward Herman Blank, Collinsworth, N.J.
The Clara Edna Miller Prize in Pastoral Theology, Rebecca J. Woomer, M.Div., Duncansville, Pa.
The Richard J. Rapp Memorial Award in Doctor of Ministry Studies, John Edward Charnock, Mount Pocono, Pa. and Martha Murchison, Marquette, Mich.
The William B. Watson Prize in Hebrew, Douglas E. Holmes, Albany, N.Y.

Faculty Promotions Approved During May Board Meeting

During last week’s semi-annual Board meeting, the Seminary’s Board of Directors approved the following faculty promotions. The Rev. Dr. John E. Wilson was appointed to the P.C. Rossin Chair of Church History. The Rev. Dr. Ronald E. Peters and the Rev. Dr. Scott W. Sunquist became full professors, Henry L. Hillman Professor of Urban Ministry and Professor of World Christianity respectively. Associate professor of Old Testament, the Rev. Dr. Steven S. Tuell, was awarded tenure. We thank God for the continued outstanding work of our faculty!

Six New Members Appointed to the Board

Six new Board members were appointed during the May meeting. They include the Rev. William H. Curtis, D.Min., Robert L. Dawson, Victor G. Vogel, MD, MHS, and Scott Harrison, MD. In addition, Alexandra Joachim ’09 was elected as the senior class representative and the Rev. Candace Veon-Nyiri ’96 became the Alumnae/i Council representative.

Curtis is the senior pastor of Mt. Ararat Baptist Church in Pittsburgh. He earned his bachelor’s from Morgan State University, M.Div. from Howard University School of Divinity, and D.Min. from the United Theological Seminary. Curtis’ spiritual wisdom and influence has earned him participation in a national "think-tank" with former President Clinton, inclusion in the book Outstanding Black Sermons, Volume Four by Dr. Walter S. Thomas, and the opportunity to minister in a municipality of political and community forums throughout Pittsburgh.

Dawson is a nationally recognized healthcare business leader who has served in senior roles of managed care companies, physician, and hospital organizations and technology companies. He is currently president and CEO of HealthSpring of Alabama Inc., one of the nation’s leading coordinated care companies serving Medicare populations. He provides leadership for a unique
physician engagement business model and is responsible for all aspects of business operations in Alabama, Mississippi, and Northern Florida.

Vogel became the national vice president for research at the American Cancer Society earlier this year. Prior to his current appointment, Vogel was professor of medicine and epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and was co-director of the Magee-Women's Hospital/University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Biochemoprevention Program. He has earned numerous awards and honors including the Impact Award from the National Consortium of Breast Centers in 2009 for outstanding dedication and exceptional accomplishments in the fight against breast cancer.

Harrison is president and CEO of CURE International, an organization he founded with his wife in 1996. His decision to start CURE International was the direct result of his passion to cure the neediest disabled children in the world and to train others to do the same. His experience is extensive, ranging from a year of medical service in the Vietnam War to personally treating 3,000 disabled children in Malawi. Harrison has practiced orthopedic surgery for 26 years since graduating from the University of Pittsburgh Medical School.

Joachim earned her M.Div. from the Seminary this year. She earned her bachelor's from Miami University, Ohio studying speech communication. At the Seminary, Joachim led the Preaching Association, coordinating student preaching opportunities in community churches. She was also the co-founder of the Green Committee at PTS. Joachim traveled on World Mission Initiative cross-cultural trips including Southeast Asia and the Bahamas. While in Seminary, Joachim also served as a public relations intern with Homewood-Brunston Community Ministries.

Veon-Nyiri holds her bachelor's from Grove City College, M.Ed. from the University of Arkansas, master's level teaching certificate in elementary education from Westminster College, and M.Div. from the Seminary. She served as hospital chaplain in a Clinical Pastoral Education residency program at Hershey/Penn State Medical Center. Veon-Nyiri serves as the designated associated pastor for contemporary worship and small group minister at Gettysburg Presbyterian Church. She is married to fellow PTS alum the Rev. Louis Nyiri II ’96 and daughter of the Rev. Robert L. Veon ’61/’96.

Keynoters Address Healthy Christian Spirituality during Annual Summer Leadership Conference

The annual Summer Leadership Conference will be held at PTS June 7-10. Participants will explore "Healthy Christian Spirituality" while attending daily workshops and worship services. Keynote speakers include Pete Scazzero, pastor of New Life Fellowship Church and Andrew Purves, professor of Reformed theology at the Seminary. The preacher is Nancy Lammers Gross, associate professor and dean of student life at Princeton Theological Seminary. Worship leaders include George Tutwiler, organist-choirmaster and instructor in church music and United Methodist Studies at PTS and J-La Von Kincaid Sr., pastor of Laketon Heights United Methodist Church.
Registration fee is $140. For more information about this event, contact the Office of Continuing Education at 412-441-3304 ext. 2196 or ConEd@pts.edu. Conference Brochure