Dear Friends,

It is a wonderful day on the Seminary campus as graduates return to celebrate our annual Alumnae/i Days. This year is particularly special. The Class of 1959, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, was the first class to graduate from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary following the consolidation of Western Theological and Pitt-Xenia Seminaries into one school. Members of this class are enjoying being on campus getting reacquainted with each other, visiting familiar spaces, while also meeting new friends and delighting in the changes on this campus over the past 50 years. What a joy it is to spend this time with them!

During the festivities, four persons will be honored with Distinguished Alumnae/i Awards, an annual tradition at PTS. Each year, the Alumnae/i Council struggles to select just a few awardees out of the large pool of amazing graduates. This year’s recipients come from diverse and inspiring ministries.

The Rev. William B. Anderson ’50 served as a missionary in Africa from 1951-2000, along with his wife, Lois. There, they taught and trained pastors in the Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda. In January 2007, tragedy struck while the couple was visiting in Kenya, as they were involved in a carjacking incident during which Lois and their daughter Zelda, were killed. Carrying on their ministry, Bill remains active in local and international mission endeavors. He is being honored for his excellence in world mission.

A familiar face on the Seminary campus, the Rev. Dr. James E. Davison ’69 is the second honoree. Jim is director of Continuing Education and a lecturer in Greek language and exegesis at PTS. He has served at the Seminary since 2001. Previously he served as senior associate pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, and was an associate professor of religion and philosophy at Sterling College. He is the author of the national congregational program, The Year of the Bible and four other books. He is being honored for his contributions in the area of academia. We are very proud of him and glad to have him as part of our team.

The Rev. Dr. Myles W. MacDonald ’55 is being honored for excellence in pastoral ministry. MacDonald served three congregations as senior pastor throughout this career: First United Presbyterian in Wilkinsburg, Pa., Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church, Pa. and First Presbyterian Church of Port Charlotte, Fla. Upon his retirement he was named pastor emeritus of the Port Charlotte Church. In his pastoral service, he was a strong advocate for world mission, senior citizen housing, and saw 28 young people from his congregations enter church vocations.

Last, but certainly not least, the Rev. St. Paul Epps ’42 is being honored for excellence in a specialized ministry at the inspiring age of 91. A “quiet pursuer of Jesus and justice,” Epps was
one of the first African Americans to rise to top leadership in the hierarchy of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. He spent his long career leading churches, helping the poor, and promoting integration. We are delighted that he is able to make the trip to campus to receive this award.

It has been inspiring to meet these and other alums who are visiting our campus. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary grads have really changed the world through following Jesus Christ and through their lives of faith and service. Now, in just a few weeks, the Class of 2009 will join this great parade of faithful graduates. As I have taught and shared life with this senior class over the past three years, I know that even in the face of the great challenges that they will meet, God will use them to do amazing things. On behalf of our graduates from long ago and soon to be, thank you for your prayers and support which has made their seminary experience possible.

To God be the glory!

Bill
The Rev. William J. Carl III

Seminary Celebrates Commencement May 28

The Seminary will celebrate its 213th Commencement Thurs., May 28 at 7:00 p.m. at East Liberty Presbyterian Church. Dr. Russell E. Richey, professor of church history at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, will be the speaker. Baccalaureate services will be held Wed., May 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Hicks Memorial Chapel. The Rev. Dr. Charles Partee, P.C. Rossin Professor of Church History at PTS, will preach.

The Alumnae/i and Awards brunch will also be held on campus Thursday. Outstanding members of the graduating class will be honored with awards for various accomplishments in specialized areas including pastoral care, homiletics, church polity, church history, and international ministry among others. The annual Calian Award will be given to a member of the faculty, staff, or student body who has enhanced the community in a significant way. Last year’s recipient was Pat Beam, long-time employee at the Seminary.

Praise God for our graduates and their future service to God’s church!

Two CE Events Held in May for Psychologists, Social Workers, and Therapists

This month the Office of Continuing Education will host two events for psychologists and social workers. The first, “Reflections of Ministry”, will be held May 8; second is “Medications of Compassionate Communion and Presence” and will be held the next day. During the May 8 presentation, Fr. Lama John Makransky, professor of Buddhism and comparative theology at Boston College, and Bonnie Thurston, ordained minister and former professor of New Testament at PTS, will share insights into the way meditation forms Buddhist and Christian spiritual practices. This dialogue complements the workshop that will be offered the following day by
Makransky on the relation of meditations of compassionate communion and presence in clinical work. Registration for both events is $135 ($30 for just Friday and $125 for just Saturday). Visit www.pts.edu/Spirituality_and_Psychology, call 412-441-3304 ext. 2196, or e-mail ConEd@pts.edu for more information on either event.

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. 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 $125 by May 15 and $140 after that date. For more information about this event, contact the Office of Continuing Education at 412-441-3304 ext. 2196 or ConEd@pts.edu.

Conference Brochure

Spiritual Direction Program Continues to Accept Applications

The Seminary recently introduced Pneuma, a two-year, ecumenical program in spiritual direction and spiritual leadership. This program offers educational and supervised training of pastors and laity in the dynamics of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius Loyola while engaging in Reformed, Catholic, and other diverse theological perspectives on growth in faith and the Christian life. Participants select between two tracks: Spiritual Direction or Spiritual Leadership. Spiritual Direction emphasizes ministry with individuals and small groups while Spiritual Leadership emphasizes ministry with groups and larger institutions such as congregations, judicatories, nonprofits, or corporations. The first group begins in August.

To learn more about the program, visit www.pts.edu/pneuma or contact Dr. Martha Robbins, director of Pneuma, at 412-441-3304 ext. 2125 or mrobbins@pts.edu.

Your Support is Needed

One month from now the Seminary’s fiscal year ends. As of today 47 applications for financial aid from current students and potential incoming students sit on Director of Financial Aid Cheryl DePaolis’s desk. Cheryl tells me that an additional $400,000 in aid is necessary to meet their financial need.

The Annual Fund is a primary source for financial aid and we need your help this year to assist these 47 students waiting for aid.
This is such an important priority because:

- it allows these students to pursue and fulfill their call to ministry.
- it provides our faculty with bright and passionate students to educate.
- most importantly, it prepares leaders for the Church who will share the good news of Jesus Christ in a world desperate for healing.

I trust that you will consider a generous gift to the Annual Fund prior to May 31 to help these students. This year the economic situation in our country has made this need even more significant and we appreciate your sacrifice so that these men and women can serve as pastors and leaders for the Church. 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:
PTS Development Office
616 N. Highland Ave.
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 me, Tom Pappalardo at tpappalardo@pts.edu.