Dear Friends,

Although you will receive this letter on October 1st, I am sitting down to write to you on September 30th. Even though I’m a person who always looks at the bright side and really tries to live out that central theme of "the joy of the Gospel" that runs through the Seminary's mission statement, I know that these are anxious and trying days for our nation. We have no idea where the stock market is going. As individuals, we are naturally concerned about our retirement funds and our savings. As a theological seminary for which an endowment provides a major revenue source, we can't help but read the news and wonder what tomorrow will bring. These are certainly challenging times. So, as the Apostle Paul asks in his letter to the Romans, "What do we say in the face of all of this?"

Even though the reality that confronts us may make us want to look at the future through eyes of despair, the faith lens through which we view the world lifts our eyes to a hopeful future. At Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, that's really not so difficult. Despite economic downturns and financial stress, God continues to be at work in the world, and here in this place. Even as the market goes up and down, hope continues to grow here as we have welcomed our incoming class of theological students. Sixty four new students began their studies at PTS last month. Collectively, 18 denominations are represented in this incoming class. International students have come from Korea, India, and Nigeria. Seventeen percent of the class represents racial ethnic minorities. Twelve home states are represented by the class, including California, New York, and Alaska! They have come straight from college, they have come from successful careers, some have already been working in churches, others can't wait to get started. No matter what the politicians and the economic prognosticators might say, God is at work calling faithful people to share messages of hope and joy. What a great reminder to us that God is at work in the world and wants us to be a part of that work!

If these are anxious days for you, my prayer is that God will bless you with the gifts of peace, hope, and joy. If you're having trouble keeping the faith in the midst of such anxious times, feel free to give me a call or drop me a note. I'd be glad to share some time with you and perhaps together we can reclaim these gifts that God offers to us. For as Paul has reminded us, even in the face of all sorts of trials and tribulations, "nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." That was the good news yesterday. That is the good news today, and it will be the good news for tomorrow.

In Christ,

Bill
The Rev. Dr. William J. Carl III
President

Distance Learning Lectures Explore the Creation Story

PTS will host four lectures in the series "Beginnings: What Genesis Says and Doesn't Say," Wed., Oct. 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. Dr. Steven Tuell, associate professor of Old Testament at PTS, will lead the series.

With Internet technology at the Seminary, participants at three locations will receive live feed of the broadcast from PTS. Satellite locations include Vance Presbyterian Church, Wheeling, W.Va.; First Presbyterian Church, Bakerstown, Pa.; and Cypress Lake Presbyterian Church, Fort Myers, Fla.

Registration fee is $60 on campus and $45 off campus. Continuing Education units are available and certificates upon request. Members at the off-site locations are eligible for a discount on the cost. Contact the church for details. All others should register with the Office of Continuing Education at PTS by calling 412-441-3304 ext. 2196 or e-mailing ConEd@pts.edu.

Learn more online.

Answering Our Call Helps Students Answer God's Call
Annual Alumni Phonathon Held Oct. 13-17 and 20-24

Without the financial aid program at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, many students couldn't afford the education that prepares them to respond to God's call to ministry. Last year, qualified students were granted more than $1 million in student aid. Of this amount, $155,000 was contributed through the generosity of the Seminary's alumnae/i donors. These contributions underwrote financial aid packages including tuition, rent rebates, and book rebates.

A fellow alum will be contacting you during the annual Phonathon, Oct. 13-17 and 20-24. Regardless of its size, every gift is gratefully received and will make a world of difference to that one additional student who will receive financial aid because of our generosity. Join us in supporting tomorrow's leaders who proclaim with great joy God's message of good news in both word and deed.

Contact Director of Alumnae/i and Church Relations Carolyn Cranston '99 at 412-441-3304 ext. 2109 or ccranston@pts.edu with questions. You can give on the Seminary's website by following the "Donate Online" link to the left.

Thinking About Seminary? Attend the Open House Sat., Oct. 18
Explore ministry and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary's unique resources in fieldwork, urban issues, archaeology, dual degree programs, and more! Join us for a special OctoberQuest event for prospective students.

The event, held Sat., Oct. 18, will feature faculty-led workshops, tours of campus, information from our admissions and financial aid officers, and fellowship opportunities with current students.

Reserve your place at OctoberQuest using our online reservation form found at www.pts.edu/visit, e-mail admissions@pts.edu, or call 1-800-451-4194. Explore how your journey to "there" starts here.

WMI Hosts Annual Mission Event

The World Mission will host Discerning Your Call to Mission, Sat., Nov. 1 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the John Knox Room. This event is designed to instruct and guide those who may sense a call to missionary service. The Rev. Dr. Don Dawson, director of WMI, the Rev. Jen Haddox, associate director of WMI, Nancy Cavalcante, coordinator of mission recruitment for the PC(USA), and a missionary in Southeast Asia, will lead the sessions. Individuals and church groups are welcome. Admission and lunch are free. Register by calling 412-441-3304 ext. 2149 or e-mailing ddawson@pts.edu by Oct. 29.