Crisis, anyone? A model for stewarding change

Imagine yourself going to church—online. Not a video recording of last week’s sermon, but an interactive experience of praise, inspiring sermon and even an offering using your credit card. An online pastor chats with you about your week and upcoming prayer needs. Other online friends “run into you” in the virtual lobby for conversation after the service. You sign up for a summer mission trip to Costa Rica.

The small group you joined last fall continues to be a place for honest sharing and vulnerable exchange. It meets each week at the Alphonse’s house with a web-cam for those who are out of town. The only adjustment is to remember to talk more slowly so the distant members can keep up with the discussion. It was weird at first, but the technology is easy to get used to after a few times.

Sound like science fiction or too impersonal? Hundreds of web-based church members would disagree. LifeChurch.tv and Northland: A Church Distributed are congregations at the front edge of this innovation. They understand that online church is not for everyone, but it is an increasing reality for many Christ followers.1

Ready or not, change is happening, in technology and in every other niche of our world. How do we steward it well for the sake of God’s mission?

The trajectories of legacy

Every congregation carries a legacy. Whether a new start or a centuries old cathedral, each church bears the marks of the people of God gathered. The Spirit moves committed disciples to take steps of faith. Depending on the circumstances, the risks they face might be overwhelming. Yet, the call of God compels spiritual leaders to move away from the familiar toward the unknown. Those shifts become the inspiring stories for ensuing generations. We marvel at the holy courage and creativity of our forbearers. Our own faith is bolstered by their precedent-setting faithfulness.2

Mapping the eras in a congregation captures the highs and lows, the seasons of great growth and those of decline. Sometimes blame is placed on a seemingly ineffective pastor for a downward trend. Sometimes the credit is given to a particularly beloved minister when the ministry improves. In the more honest moments of recollection, a pattern emerges of lay and clergy leaders responding to the windows of God’s leading. There are clear signs of missed opportunities as well as wonderful gratitude for the “leaps of faith.” Connecting the dots along the timeline creates the dips and turns of life in a local church.

David Hurst and others picture this organizational journey using a cyclical model. Rather than the deterministic nuance of the life-cycle concept—an
From the editor
Tammy L. Cesna

The broad theme of this issue of The Asbury Alumni Link is change. I took a class last year on Asbury Seminary’s Kentuckiana campus that covered the subject of being a change agent, and how to help others navigate change. I never gave much thought to this subject before I took the class, but when you think of it, all Christians are called to be change agents in this world. Our message, our mission is to effect change. Then I began to think of many forefathers in our Christian heritage who impacted their generation for Christ. The heroes of the faith were not absorbed by society and its bent toward sin, but instead had the courage to proclaim a message that was counter-cultural. They unabashedly shared the love of God, His plan of salvation and His desire for a personal relationship with all. They declared in the highways and byways His longing for believers to grow in relationship with Him, resulting in righteous living and holiness.

A list of heroes emerged in my mind: Jesus Christ, His disciples, early church fathers, Susanna Wesley, John and Charles Wesley, Francis Asbury, Henry Clay Morrison... and the list went on. All dedicated (and many gave) their lives to declaring the gospel message. All were “pilgrims in a strange land.” All were change agents.

In this issue, you will read articles about change. You will meet fellow alumni who are being change agents in several ministry contexts in different parts of the world. In the feature “Asbury’s Top Ten,” Dr. Ken Kinghorn highlights 10 beloved professors who are no longer with us, but dedicated countless years teaching others to become effective change agents for Christ.

In the feature “Wisdom of the Ages,” we have found what I consider a precious gem. The article is by the seminary’s first president, Henry Clay Morrison. We went into the depths of the library to retrieve this old, almost forgotten, publication by him. We even found a rare picture, apparently taken in his 30s, where his locks are still brown instead of the familiar stunning white of his older age. The article is titled, “Holiness is Aggressive.” Dr. Morrison knew all too well that the message entrusted to him was counter-cultural. He had a rare boldness and anointing to share aggressively the necessity for sinners to repent and change, to become holy, because he had a passionate love for the lost.

My prayer is that you, God’s deployed change agents, Asbury Seminary’s valued alumni, might find something in this issue to encourage your hearts; to re-ignite your passion; to bless you in a particular way that you specifically need.

Please feel free to email us at alumni@asburyseminary.edu to let us know how we are doing. As I have mentioned before, this is your newsletter. We desire The Asbury Alumni Link to be relevant for you.

Asbury Seminary announces a new president

Timothy Craig Tennent, Ph.D., of Ipswich, Mass., has been elected the eighth president of Asbury Theological Seminary by the Board of Trustees.

Tennent, 49, comes to Asbury Seminary from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Mass., where he has served as professor of world missions and Indian studies since 1998.

Dr. Dan Johnson, chairman of the Board of Trustees stated, “The board is very excited about the unanimous election of Dr. Tennent. Dr. Tennent is a scholar’s scholar, a professor’s professor. He is a world Christian with world vision who will take Asbury Seminary into wonderful new arenas.”

“I am honored to have been selected to be president of Asbury Theological Seminary,” Tennent says. “We are delighted to be moving to the historic and beautiful garden area of central Kentucky. My wife, Julie, and I have always said that wherever God sends us, we will go. God has taken us to China, India, Nigeria and many beautiful churches in the southern United States and in New England. Now we have the great opportunity to help Asbury work with a global constituency and play a stronger role in preparing ministers from around the world for God’s work around the world.”

Tennent received his M.Div. in 1984 from Gordon-Conwell; a Th.M. in ecumenics, with a focus on Islam from Princeton Theological Seminary; and did graduate work in linguistics (TESL) at the University of Georgia. He completed his Ph.D. in non-western Christianity with a focus on Hinduism and Indian Christianity in 1998 at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. Tennent is an ordained pastor with the North Georgia United Methodist conference. He has pastored churches in Georgia, and preached regularly in churches throughout New England and across the country.

He is also one of the first four graduates from a new leadership development program funded by the Lilly Endowment and developed by the Lexington Seminar.

“During the three-year program, I met with dozens of deans and many presidents from schools across the theological spectrum, and learned a great deal about many of the unique challenges that we are facing today,” Tennent says.

Tennent is passionate about classical, orthodox theological education.

“I am alarmed by the growing trend away from serious theological reflection and do not believe that the church will be adequately prepared to face the challenges of pluralism and post-modernism without a more robust theological preparation,” he says. “I am also passionate about the emergence of the Majority World Church. I believe that the Western church continues to have an important role in global missions, in partnership with the increasingly vibrant Majority World Church.”
The leaders of Simpsonville Church were on retreat with their church consultant. She had just led them through an exercise of mapping their 120-year history. As they focused on the last three decades, they noticed a tendency to spiral in health and growth the first years after a new pastor arrived. Then the newness seemed to wear off and the congregation stalled until the next pastor came. The consultant probed: “Do you know what you need? You need a new pastor every couple of years or a healthy crisis … to call you to action every 24 months.”

Organization researchers continue to observe the tendency to spike in health and growth with their church consultant. She had just led them to probe: “Do you know what you need? You need a healthy crisis … to call you to action every 24 months.”

“Time for a good crisis” Change looks great on paper: How do we move from a worthy strategy to workable implementation? William Bridges suggests four key questions to ask along the path of change: What is the purpose of the change—why change? What is the plan for change—where are we headed and how will we get there? What is the picture of change—what will the new reality look like? What is my part in the change—will I have a role to play as we live into this new reality? Managing the emotional dynamics of change necessitates monitoring feelings and reactions, then addressing concerns at each stage. Frequently churches will establish change teams to gather wisdom from all parties and discern the way forward. Compassionate leaders relentlessly seek feedback while communicating responses to Bridges’ four questions. Every dialogue is framed by biblical principles and allows for candid debate.

Organizational researchers continue to observe the efficacy of wholesome jolts to the status quo. They may come in the form of a change in leadership, financial crunches or market challenges. In the best organizations, they foster a sense of urgency and mobilize leaders to step up to the challenges. They mark the forks in the road that force careful decisions about the organization’s future. In New Testament terms, the call to evangelize the Gentiles or to meet the financial needs of a distant congregation can provide kairos moments in the life of a congregation.

Particularly when a church is stuck in rigid structures and resistant to new ministries, a redemptive crisis can be used of the Spirit to open leaders to new ideas. Cherished ways of doing things come under review. “Because we have always done it this way” morphs into “Maybe it’s time to try something new.”

The shift will start slowly. It will require frank prayer and study, luxurious communication, an unvarnished assessment of the present state of the church and an abandonment to do whatever the Lord directs. As people consider the radical claims of the gospel for their own lives and their mission as a congregation, the Spirit builds momentum toward holy risks—choices based more on God’s purposes than our preferences.

Choosing change

Twenty-first century Christians live at the intersection of discontinuity and constancy. God calls us to grow deep in the love and understanding of our Creator and Redeemer. The missionary God expects us to live out the missio Dei in our communities and beyond. At the same time, our unpredictable global society keeps changing the rules. Wars break out, jobs fail, relationships get redefined. What we thought we knew and could trust fades into a default position of mistrust and cynicism. What worked in the past no longer can be expected to serve us well in the future. Changing times demand changing tactics. Didn’t Jesus make some allusion to winemaking somewhere?

The trauma of crises can be diminished as churches choose to grow before getting too unbending. Like my 75-year-old organist friend who would knit as a hobby to keep his hands flexible, congregations can choose to begin new ministries sooner rather than later. The time to begin something new is before the existing ministry peaks. One sign of vibrancy in a local church is a disciplined approach to “staying ahead of the curve.” At the first signs of stagnation, the leaders evaluate and explore what God might be trying to show them. They embrace the old adage: “we can do this hard or we can do this easy.” Better to make the choice for emergent initiatives while there are still multiple options to consider. Doing so lowers the pain levels and fosters awe-inspiring acts of faith.

The Asbury Alumni Link

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Keeping people at the center

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A fairly traditional congregation realized they were not reaching the unchurched in their area. They wrestled with the need to serve the saints while inviting God-seekers to explore faith. Their pastor and lay leader began a six month study of how to be faithful to those already in the congregation while reaching out to those who were not. Using some of the resources cited in this article, they studied and prayed. Gradually the fog of amnesia lifted as they remembered the stories of how faithfulness.

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Wisdom of the Ages
Holiness is Aggressive
Henry Clay Morrison

Many suggestions are being offered with regard to what the holiness people should do. Very good; in a multitude of counsel there is wisdom. Let all bear patiently, think carefully, pray earnestly, and act deliberately.

Let it be borne in mind that when the holiness movement ceases to move, it will also cease to be holiness. Holiness is aggressive.

Holy people are active people, over planning and striving to push forward the work of salvation from sin. The person who claims to be sanctified wholly, and sits down with hands folded in idleness proves by actions which speak louder than words that they do not possess what they claim. Any sort of plans which contemplate a retrograde movement, or a time of suspension of vigorous campaigning for souls is not of the Lord. The person, who ceases to move because of opposition, will soon find that the Spirit of God has ceased to move within them.

The history of true spiritual life in this world has opposition written at the top of every page. We need expect nothing else. It has always been so, and will ever remain so under the dispensation in which we are living. No person who has God’s message can afford to stop and wait or dally with the times until it ceases to move, it will also cease to be holiness. Holiness is aggressive.

Ministers can be unfaltering, true and aggressive, without being impudent or rash. The most intense earnestness should characterize the lives and efforts of those who are wholly sanctified. Let us press the Lord’s work, and trust Him to take care of us. Let no one deceive you into inactivity. If you have the truth to proclaim, proclaim it today, you may be dead tomorrow.

Let those who do nothing and suffer nothing, be sure that they will have nothing over which to rejoice when our Lord shall appear in the glory of His second advent. On with the revival at every point. Let us seek new territory and lay broader plans for future operations.

Undertake more for God and expect more from God.

*modified slightly to use inclusive language
Article taken from the Pentecostal Herald Wed., Nov. 2, 1898.

OneATS Resources
Doug Penix, Executive Director of Information Technology

Information Technology is very excited to offer alumni access to its newly developed portal called oneATS. More than a year ago, the daunting task of developing the technology needed to create a communication tool for the wider Asbury Seminary community—students, faculty, staff, alumni and the board of trustees—began. The challenge was to have a form of communication that could be accessed from anywhere the worldwide web is available with a standard web browser.

Single login was another goal during development. Users only have to login once to gain access to systems such as the Virtual campus and Asbury Information System from the oneATS homepage. The homepage layout is completely user defined; in fact, when users log in to the system for the first time, they are presented with nearly a blank page on which to build. There are only a few required blocks of content. Some of the module options include Alumni Community, Praying Community, Asbury Coffee House, a variety of news feeds from around the world, unlimited custom user defined RSS feeds, live video from Kentucky campus chapels, random quotes from various authors, Bible search and local weather.

The Alumni Community is a place where you can keep in touch with classmates. Alumni also have the capability to stay up to date with each other by using the profile link and communication via the email link. OneATS provides access to many resources from the Information Commons. The alumni office continues to dream up useful modules that will enhance the portal experience for alumni. Please watch for updates. We would also like to hear from you. Please send comments, questions and suggestions to alumni@asburyseminary.edu.

Information Commons

The relationship between Asbury Theological Seminary and our alumni is incredibly valuable. We realize that by investing in your success as our alumni, we are nurturing your professional growth. Therefore, we are pleased to announce that through oneATS (the portal) you now have access to ATLAS—a comprehensive online collection of major religion and theology journals selected by leading clergy, religion scholars and theologians. In addition, we have suggested a few other resources for your professional growth such as Directory of Open Access Journals, The Resurgence Greek Project, The ARDA and many more.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Information Commons (Library):
information.commons@asburyseminary.edu
Kentucky: 859.858.2233
Florida: 406.482.7670
Toll Free: 866.454.2733
Asbury Seminary’s Top Ten Adored Professors

Dr. Kenneth Cam Kinghorn

It is a challenging assignment to compile a list of just 10 of Asbury Theological Seminary’s “most well-loved professors in the school’s history.” Restricting the list to those who are now in heaven shrinks the pool. Still, the field is large, and choosing 10 worthies out of the pantheon of professors whose achievements and contributions commend them eminently is not easy. Nonetheless, my list appears below.

Henry Clay Morrison founded Asbury Theological Seminary and served as its president from 1923-42. Morrison did most of his seminary teaching through his powerful chapel orations. Students admired and respected this magisterial man for his vision, courage and prophetic proclamations.

Frank Paul Morris taught systematic theology at Asbury Theological Seminary from 1923-48. Morris brilliantly championed theological orthodoxy in a day when theological liberalism had come to dominate many of America’s graduate theological schools. His well-prepared lectures, delivered with poise and confidence, endeared him to his Asbury Seminary students.

Wilder Reynolds taught church history at Asbury Seminary from 1923-51. Students admired his practical wisdom, theological balance and warm-hearted approachability. Reynolds helped counter the tendency of some of the seminary’s early professors to take the school into a restrictive and rigid fundamentalism. He responded to uninformed and militant critics with poise, goodwill and grace—effectively shaping students by facts, reason and example.

Fred Halsey Larabee served as dean of theology from 1923-49. He was a beloved professor of New Testament language and literature. As dean, he managed the affairs of the seminary during President Henry Clay Morrison’s extended preaching and fundraising trips. Students responded positively to the warm personality and inherent dignity of this beloved professor.

William David Turkington was dean of the seminary from 1927-63, except for three years when he assisted in the administration of Asbury College. His personality, lecture content and practical wisdom gave life to his popular classes. When Turkington retired, he had served the seminary while about 90 percent of the school’s alumni had taken his classes. As dean, he signed the diplomas of approximately 75 percent of the seminary’s graduates up to 1963. It is now statistically impossible for any other dean or faculty member of the seminary to equal these marks.

Ada B. Carroll taught speech, music and elocution from 1937-38 and 1943-62. Carroll never married and regarded the seminary students as her “preacher boys.” She insisted they pronounce words correctly, speak in balanced cadences, breathe properly, project their voices and speak with authority. Students responded warmly to her “motherly” affection and firm standards of elocution and pulpit decorum.

Gaile J. Morris was the spouse of Frank Paul Morris. She taught Old Testament and Hebrew from 1937-48. After retirement, she encouraged President McPheeters and others through her many letters and faithful prayers. The Board of Trustees named Gaile Morris Parlor in Larabee-Morris Hall in her honor. Morris lived almost 100 years, continuing until her last days to encourage others through her well-crafted correspondence and holy life.

J.C. (Julian Chilton) McPheeters served Asbury Seminary as president from 1942-62. When McPheeters came to the seminary, the school had only one building, 73 students, no endowment, no certain income and an annual budget of $15,000. When he retired, the school had grown dramatically in enrollment, property and influence. Students esteemed him for his deep prayer life, unfailing cheerfulness, undimmed optimism and inspirational sermons.

Claude Holmes Thompson served the shortest tenure of the “most well loved” professors in the history of Asbury Theological Seminary—from 1946-50. His sanctity and scholarship quickly endeared him to the students and he became the most popular professor in the seminary. Thompson taught students to think theologically, to develop a devotional life and to form an intellectually honest faith.

Gilbert M. James was Asbury Seminary’s first professor of church and society. He served the school from 1965-80. James pioneered the seminary’s urban ministries programs and helped many students see the need for social justice and practical ministries for those who society neglected. His lectures, personal caring for others and insistence on justice left a permanent mark on his students and the seminary.

I end this restrictive list of 10 “most loved” professors, with a most sincere tribute to many other unlisted stalwarts, whose lives and ministries blessed and enriched thousands in the church militant and the church triumphant. In eternity’s arena we will have forgotten about lists, awards, degrees and tributes. We will, as Charles Wesley envisaged, cast our crowns before the risen Lord, lost in wonder, love and praise.  

Jerry Kaufman, 2007 Asbury Florida Alumnus

Change. It was a word heard frequently throughout the 2008 Presidential Election. With the United States and the world facing an economic crisis that many are calling the worst in generations, men and women, young and old are crying out for change. There are some, however, who cried out for change long before we began to hear about and feel the effects of an economic crisis.

There are 134 million orphaned children around the world—50 million of whom live in Sub-Saharan Africa. In my opinion, these are truly the “least of these.” Their bodies are vulnerable to disease and illness from lack of food and appropriate medical care. They experience emotional and psychological trauma because of what they have experienced at a young age. They are victims of sexual exploitation, rape, child slavery and abduction into armies. Their childhood is taken from them as they are forced to act as adults yet without the educational and vocational skills necessary to thrive. These children are crying out for changes to systems and structures that continue to leave them vulnerable and victimized. If the economic crisis is bad for banks, businesses and retirement accounts in the West, just imagine how bad it is for these children who, even when the global economy is “thriving,” wait for the scaps to fall from the table.

I have been involved in orphan care in Russia and Africa for four years with two organizations who work as a joint venture, Children’s HopeChest and Doma International. In my time leading trips and working with orphaned children, I have heard stories about and spent time with children whose lives have been changed. I have been able to see what is possible when communities come alongside these children to work for change.

I think of Natasha, who grew up in the worst orphanage in Kostroma Region in Russia. After “graduating” from her orphanage, she gained admittance into and currently attends university, an incredible accomplishment for a child coming out of the orphanage system in Russia. She also works as a mentor for orphanage graduates. There’s also Daniel, a young man in Uganda. Under the guidance and care of loving educators, he is currently taking his exams to enter secondary school. He is getting meals every day, getting the clothing that he needs and growing into a leader among his peers. He has even had the chance to cultivate his musical talents by learning guitar.

How is this possible? Because of hope. Hope, according to Princeton Professor Cornel West, is different than optimism. Optimism suggests that if we simply look for good amidst the bad and continue down the same path, things will get better. But with 143 million children who remain victimized, optimism is an enemy of change. Hope, on the other hand, recognizes not only the severity of the situation but also what is possible when we become active participants in manifesting the love, compassion and justice of the kingdom of God. Hope has mobilized Christian communities around the U.S. to partner with indigenous leadership to offer these children companionship, love and practical care. Hope is, at this very moment, bringing change.

As we hear the cries for change amidst the economic crisis, let us also hear the voices of the 143 million orphaned children whose cries for change have been longer and louder. Change is possible. I have seen it. I hear stories all the time. However, possibility only becomes reality when hope moves us with the love of Christ to struggle with these children for change.  

Dr. Ken Kinghorn, 1962 Asbury Kentucky Alumnus
Alumni news

Alumni updates

The Rev. Dr. Wayne A. Patton (1955) was named a "Kentucky Colonel" on June 8, 2009. This honor is given by the governor and secretary of state to individuals with outstanding service and accomplishments. This is the highest award given by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Patton was honored for his longtime service and his service to thousands of people.

Dr. Barry L. Callen (1969) will be honored by The Wesleyan Theological Society with a Life-Time Achievement Award. Dr. Callen has authored or edited more than 30 books. He has served as professor, college dean and seminary dean at Anderson University. This business provides work for more than 1,000 people. Dr. Callen has also been selected to receive the "Distinguished Service Award" from the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), the largest pastoral care organization in the world.

Dr. Paul L. Yeun (1972) was selected by the United Methodist Association of Health and Welfare Ministries to be "The Chaplain of the Week 2009." The award will be presented in March 2009 in Indianapolis, Ind. Yeun has also been selected to receive the "Distinguished Service Award" from the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), the largest pastoral care organization in the world. This award was given on Feb. 1 in Orlando, Fla.

Chaplain Mitchell Morton (1979) will soon be retiring, after more than 26 years of service as a chaplain in the United States Army.

Dr. David Oshline (1980) is director of youth ministry at Columbia International University in South Carolina. Besides full-time teaching, he also serves part time at Mt. Horeb United Asbury Seminary Church as one of the teaching pastors. Oshline is co-founder of Youth Ministry Coaches, which consults churches and helps them find youth pastors (youthminicoaches.com). He is married to Rhonda Weisman Oshline (1982) and they have four grown children. The couple is looking forward to space constraints.

Dr. David Soesilo (1980) contributed an article on "Reception of the Bible in Asian Diaspora" published in The Encyclopaedia of the Bible and its Reception (Walter de Gruyter) and an article in Non-theological Society, "The Bible and its Reception of the Bible in Asian Diaspora." He is one of the leading experts in the field of religious studies.

Dr. Charles H. Webb (1980) was inaugurated as President of Spring Arbor University in Spring Arbor, Mich., on Oct. 24, 2008. The theme of the inauguration was "Globalization through the eyes of faith." Webb hopes to introduce a more global perspective to the university and its programs as well as increase student opportunities to study abroad.

Natesha Smith (2008) was selected to receive the Career Development Recognition Award for her article "Military to Civilian," which was published in the "Career Development Recognition Award" in August 2008. The editorial committee voted to recognize the article, which Smith wrote while she was a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Counseling from the Asbury Seminary, because of its connection to a unique population.

Deceased alumni

The Rev. Clare S. Hall (1934) was a United Methodist Minister for 45 years. He attended First United Methodist Church of Fort Myers, Fla., and was its last minister for more than 10 years. He was also an executive and board member of the Community Cooperative Ministries soup kitchen. Hall founded the computer ministry at his church and was a member of the Florida Conference of United Methodist Churches.

The Rev. Wilbur B. Meiser (1958) was born Oct. 20, 1915. He graduated from Asbury College in 1938 (A.B.), from Asbury Seminary in 1938 (B.D.) and from Western Reserve University in 1950 (M.A.).

The Rev. Orman P. Sloat (1941) was born in Newark, N.J., where he graduated from Newark College of Engineering with a degree in architecture. The Lord called him to go into the ministry. He earned a degree in Divinity from Asbury Seminary. He was voted most outstanding student in his class. He served the Lord for more than 60 years.

Dr. William E. James (1944), a native of Louisville, Ky., was a retired United Methodist minister, former president of Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro, Ky., and president of the Florida Independent College Foundation. James also served as Board of Regents' Trustee and superintendent.

The Rev. Benjamin C. Anibal (1950) was born Sept. 27, 1925 in Fenton, Mich. He pastored for 43 years in Free Methodist Church of Southern California. Anibal earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree at Greenville College in Greenville, Ill., and his Bachelor of Divinity at Asbury Seminary.

The Asbury Alumni Link

American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AACPC)

American Public Relations Association (APRA)

American Society of Journalists and Writers (ASJW)

American Society of News Editors (ASNE)

American Society of News Photographers (ASNP)

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Dr. David Oshline (1980) is director of youth ministry at Columbia International University in South Carolina. Besides full-time teaching, he also serves part time at Mt. Horeb United Asbury Seminary Church as one of the teaching pastors. Oshline is co-founder of Youth Ministry Coaches, which consults churches and helps them find youth pastors (youthminicoaches.com). He is married to Rhonda Weisman Oshline (1982) and they have four grown children. The couple is looking forward to space constraints.

Dr. David Soesilo (1980) contributed an article on "Reception of the Bible in Asian Diaspora" published in The Encyclopaedia of the Bible and its Reception (Walter de Gruyter) and an article in Non-theological Society, "The Bible and its Reception of the Bible in Asian Diaspora." He is one of the leading experts in the field of religious studies.

Dr. Charles H. Webb (1980) was inaugurated as President of Spring Arbor University in Spring Arbor, Mich., on Oct. 24, 2008. The theme of the inauguration was "Globalization through the eyes of faith." Webb hopes to introduce a more global perspective to the university and its programs as well as increase student opportunities to study abroad.

Natesha Smith (2008) was selected to receive the Career Development Recognition Award for her article "Military to Civilian," which was published in the "Career Development Recognition Award" in August 2008. The editorial committee voted to recognize the article, which Smith wrote while she was a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Counseling from the Asbury Seminary, because of its connection to a unique population.

Deceased alumni

The Rev. Clare S. Hall (1934) was a United Methodist Minister for 45 years. He attended First United Methodist Church of Fort Myers, Fla., and was its last minister for more than 10 years. He was also an executive and board member of the Community Cooperative Ministries soup kitchen. Hall founded the computer ministry at his church and was a member of the Florida Conference of United Methodist Churches.

The Rev. Wilbur B. Meiser (1958) was born Oct. 20, 1915. He graduated from Asbury College in 1938 (A.B.), from Asbury Seminary in 1938 (B.D.) and from Western Reserve University in 1950 (M.A.).

The Rev. Orman P. Sloat (1941) was born in Newark, N.J., where he graduated from Newark College of Engineering with a degree in architecture. The Lord called him to go into the ministry. He earned a degree in Divinity from Asbury Seminary. He was voted most outstanding student in his class. He served the Lord for more than 60 years.

Dr. William E. James (1944), a native of Louisville, Ky., was a retired United Methodist minister, former president of Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro, Ky., and president of the Florida Independent College Foundation. James also served as Board of Regents' Trustee and superintendent.

The Rev. Benjamin C. Anibal (1950) was born Sept. 27, 1925 in Fenton, Mich. He pastored for 43 years in Free Methodist Church of Southern California. Anibal earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree at Greenville College in Greenville, Ill., and his Bachelor of Divinity at Asbury Seminary.

The Asbury Alumni Link

Alumni updates

The Rev. Wayne A. Patton (1955) was named a "Kentucky Colonel" on June 8, 2009. This honor is given by the governor and secretary of state to individuals with outstanding service and accomplishments. This is the highest award given by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Patton was honored for his longtime service and his service to thousands of people.

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Changing Phonathon  

We have just completed three weeks of Phonathon 2009. We want to thank you for sharing your lives with us!

This year our theme was “Trust.” We took a step of faith and used this year to focus on prayer ministry to you, our alumni. We did not use our time on the phone to ask for a pledge.

Every year Phonathon pledges support student scholarships. So, you may be asking yourself, “Will this hurt the Student Scholarship fund?” That is where “trust” comes into play. We are trusting God to provide. Typically Phonathon brings in approximately $180,000 for student scholarships. Thus far, from the pre-phonathon mailing and some alumni that are still pledging on the phone, we have received more than 370 pledges totaling more than $68,000—that’s 38 percent of our typical goal. We are trusting God to provide the other 62 percent through our follow-up mailings.

Let me share how Phonathon was from the spiritual perspective. There was a new attitude in Royal Auditorium this year. It was very reverent. It was all about ministry to our alumni. We were trying to reach more than 6,500 alumni on the phone this year. Thus far we have prayed with more than 2,000 alumni. That still leaves us with over 3,500 more alumni that we need to call. We will continue making calls through this spring semester as we try to reach each of you.

Are these calls making a difference? Let me share a message Dr. Kalas’ office received from one of you following the Phonathon call:

“A retired pastor, called to express his gratitude for the phonathon call he got last night. He said a young lady called him and asked for any prayer requests. He said she ‘seemed to know what she was doing’ and the Spirit of the Lord was evident in her. He said she prayed a wonderful prayer and after he hung up, he enjoyed a wonderfully warm feeling. He thanked Asbury Seminary for the lift they had given him.”

That is just one of the many wonderful responses we have received.

Thank you again for sharing your lives with us. If you have not heard from us yet, we will keep trying until the end of this semester. We pray that above all, God will be glorified.  ++)