Keeping in Touch
A Magazine for United Alumni/ae

Evangelism and Discipleship in a World

Read Reflections on Leonard Sweet’s Light the Fire! Lectures

Featured Inside

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Spirit Led, Renewing the Church!
United Theological Seminary • 4501 Denlinger Road • Dayton, Ohio 45426
Stepping up for Service and Renewal!

Letter from the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

At the start of our 141st year, United Seminary is stepping up in our commitment to recruit and educate leaders who will be faithful in serving Christ and renewing the Church!

With deep gratitude, we celebrate those who are stepping up to new leadership roles, including Dr. David Watson, Dr. Harold Hudson, Dr. Peter Bellini, Dr. Alicia Myers and Bishop George Bashore. This summer we will inaugurate two new academic programs carefully crafted by our Faculty: the United Methodist FLEX M.Div. and the M.A. in Christian Ministries. Meanwhile, we are preparing to announce a dynamic new resource for the whole Church, a parallel website for Church Renewal, created by Dr. Jason Vickers and Ms. Michele Engling. With a revised strategic plan in hand, the United trustees are stepping up to study a Capital Campaign that will prepare the school for the bold future God holds in store!

This past year we graduated scores of fine church leaders who have stepped up to join the ranks of the faithful in Christ’s ministry. Meanwhile, we praise God that the size of our incoming classes has increased by more than 300 percent in three years and more than 500 have applied for admission in the coming year. Thank you for stepping up with prayers and support for these students!

We are humbled and excited to share your joy in the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ in the world. United is proud of you and we continue to keep you in our prayers of thanksgiving!

Thank you for your prayers and devoted support, and for letting us know how we can best serve you in the ministries to which you are called!

With joy in Christ,

Wendy J. Deichmann, President

United is a seminary of The United Methodist Church that welcomes students from many faith traditions.
Dr. David Watson Named Academic Dean and VP for Academic Affairs

Dr. David F. Watson III has been named Academic Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, effective July 1, 2011. This announcement follows unanimous votes of approval from the Search Committee, President and Faculty for his deanship, and the Board of Trustees for his vice presidency.

He is currently Associate Professor of New Testament and Associate Dean for Masters Studies. A native of Texas, he received a B.A. from Texas Tech University, an M.Div. from Perkins School of Theology, and a Ph.D. from Southern Methodist University. Recently he published a monograph entitled “Honor Among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret,” and he is currently co-editing a book with Joel B. Green on Wesleyan interpretation of scripture. His ongoing research interests include the Gospel of Mark and the Bible and disabilities. David is also an ordained elder in the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. He serves on the West Ohio Inclusive Body of Christ Ministry Team for People with Disabilities and the Miami Valley District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

“I am deeply committed to United’s program around church renewal,” said Dr. Watson. “I believe that all renewal, whether of individuals, churches, or the Church universal, is the work of the Holy Spirit. Our job, then, is to learn to follow the Spirit’s leadings. I am honored to be the dean of a school that is so committed to the work of the Spirit in church renewal.”

David’s wife, Harriet, is a native of England. They have two children, Luke and Sean, and a dog, Boots.

Dr. Harold Hudson ’03, Named President’s Associate for Enrollment

Dr. Harold A. Hudson ’03, was recently promoted to the position of President’s Associate for Enrollment. In addition to his current responsibilities as Associate Dean for Doctoral Studies, Dr. Hudson will assume oversight for student recruitment and admissions at United and will serve as a member of the Executive Staff. Dr. Hudson brings to this work extensive corporate management experience, a history of remarkable recruitment results for the Doctoral Studies program, and his deep love for United, Jesus and the mission of the Church in the world.

Dr. Hudson was honored as a “Dayton Community Ambassador” at the National Tourism Week Celebration and Awards Breakfast at Dayton’s Schuster Center on May 11. The Dayton community and the United community are proud of Dr. Hudson’s excellent leadership.

Bishop George Bashore ’56 ’76, Elected Board Chair

At the May 6, 2011, Board of Trustees meeting, retired Bishop George W. Bashore ’58 ’76, was elected Chair effective July 1. Bishop Bashore was ordained in the former Evangelical United Brethren tradition, served as a pastor and district superintendent, and was elected to the episcopacy in 1980. As Bishop, he served the Boston Area from 1980 to 1988 and the Pittsburgh Area from 1988 to 2000. He enjoys the piano, singing and tennis. In retirement he serves as Bishop-in-Residence of Mt. Lebanon UMC Church in Mt. Lebanon, PA.

New board members elected at the May meeting include the Rev. Dr. Gary Olin ’67, Dr. Charles E. Booth ’90, Mrs. Ruth Daugherty, and the Rev. Jean Moorman Brindel ’76. Their terms will begin July 1, 2011.
Updates

Class of 1956

Russell N. Anderson, Saint Johns, FL, served UMC churches in Indiana until his retirement in 1984. He moved to Florida and served in churches and as a chaplain. From November 15-20, 2010, he went on a cruise with his family to celebrate his 83rd birthday, and had a great time. He would like to hear from seminary friends by mail, 1500 Bishop Estates Rd., Apt. 20A, Saint Johns, FL 32259, or by phone at 904.287.7141.

Class of 1957

Donald Shilling, Kent, OH, has been an active member of the Academy of Parish Clergy since 1969. He was pleased to spend several days at United this year in order to organize and donate Academy’s archives to the O’Brien Library.

Class of 1958

John Huether, Woodstock, ON, has been retired for 22 years and served as a visiting minister for awhile after retirement. His wife, Hazel, is living in a nursing home and John has had hip replacements and uses a cane and a walker. He still corresponds with some United graduates at Christmas and was pleased to hear from Bishop George Bashore during the 2010 Phonathon.

Class of 1960

W.F. Lantz, Lancaster, PA, was honored by both the Penn Southeast and Penn Center conferences of the UCC for 50 years of service since his ordination on January 5, 1960, in the EUB Church. Most of his ministry was spent serving UCC churches and health care facilities. At 80, he is still active in the Church of the Apostles, Lancaster, PA.

Class of 1968

Harry C. Sherry, Friedens, PA, has been retired for 16 years and serves on the boards of Meals on Wheels and a food pantry. He sings in the local church choir and has participated in the Western Pennsylvania Conference’s Master Chorus for 51 years. He has five children, 13 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Class of 1970

Richard (Dick) Storment, Chateau, MT, retired July 1, 2010, after serving as Superintendent of the Yellowstone Conference (Montana–Wyoming) for the last six years of his 43 years in ministry. He is looking forward to his wife Sandy’s retirement, after which they plan to move to their retirement home in Scappoose, OR, in July of 2012.

Class of 1980

Bill Duncan, Groton, SD, has been pastor of the Groton/Houghton Alliance Parish in South Dakota since 1988, and teaches special education at Groton Area High School. Bill and his wife, Jana, have seven children and 15 grandchildren and on November 28, 2010, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary with all 28 members of their family together for five days.

Class of 1981

Dixie S. French, Dayton, OH, is presently serving as Regional Elder for the Christian Church in Ohio with oversight responsibilities for District 8 churches.

Class of 1985

Margaret L. Turner, Dayton, OH, is enjoying her retirement, especially her membership in a book club with a diverse group of people. She is 84.

Class of 1987

Ruby J. Maisenbacher, Sonora, CA, a United Methodist for more than 35 years, is now a member of the Sonora 7th Day Adventist Church. After a vocal chord operation left her with voice problems, a kind Adventist friend began taking her to church. Ruby reports she is still a United Methodist at heart.

Class of 1993

James Lewis, Kent, OH, is a chaplain with the Army National Guard in Ohio. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at Kent State University.


Class of 1994

C. David Cottrill, Kettering, OH, is now fully retired from both the Episcopal Church he served and the Episcopal Center where he worked.
Class of 1996

Doris E. Hyland Smith and her husband, Roy, have retired from the Indiana Conference to Georgian Bay on Bruce Peninsula, Ontario, where they both occasionally fill the pulpit in the United Church of Canada.

Ozzie Smith, Jr., South Holland, IL, was the featured preacher January 23 on “Day 1,” the nationally syndicated radio program also accessible by podcast at day1.org.

Class of 2000

Carl Chamberlain, Lockford, NY, was recognized in the Buffalo News for his advanced training focusing on major disaster preparedness. He is pastor of Warrens Corners UMC and is called “Disaster Pastor” because of his recovery work in the United States including floods, tornadoes, ice storms, and hurricanes. If you would like to read the article titled, “Pastor responds to disasters to serve others and learn life lessons” published on January 16, 2011, by Louise Continelli, you may visit the Buffalo News website at www.buffalonews.com/city/communities/lockport/article314020.ece.

Class of 2002

Thomas Ream, Warsaw, IN, was selected to participate in the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program. This program targets pastors with between five and ten years of experience and invites them to participate in a two-year program of leadership development and pastoral reflection.

Class of 2003

Judith Sigmund, Boston, MA, worked for four years caring for veterans at the Chelsea Soldier’s Home in Chelsea, MA, and is now is a psychiatrist on the in-patient psychiatric unit at Beverly Hospital in Beverly, MA. She works closely with hospital chaplains and students pursuing CPE experience. She finds a great deal of pain in this community related to the clergy abuse scandal and would appreciate hearing from any United alumni/ae who might have some ideas or words of wisdom about how one might help in the healing. She can be contacted at sigmundja@comcast.net.

PASSAGES

Our sympathy to:

The family of Lester R. Grove ’61, who died on May 8, 2010.

The family of Eugene Vincent Smith ’55, who died on June 29, 2010.

Florence Unger, whose husband, Allen L. Unger ’54, died on October 10, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 2044 Loveland, CO 80538-4051.

Ruth Fenstermaker Klinger, whose husband, Charles Klinger ’55, died on November 3, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 263 Willow St., Hummelstown, PA 17036-2623.

Penny Walters ’88, whose mother, Kathrynn Aulby, died on November 14, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 5471 Nesbitt St., Apt. 3, Elida, OH 45807.

Richard L. Pettys ’84, whose father, Howard B. Pettys, died on November 17, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 3365 S. Golden Lake Road, Pleasant Lake, IN 46779-9699.

Anna Bickhart, whose husband, Ronald L. Bickhart ’70, died on November 25, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 2900 Garfield Avenue, West Lawn, PA 19609.

Gwendolyn C. Roberts ’94, whose mother, Sara N. Claude, died on November 26, 2010.

Lee Ann Morris ’09, whose mother, Mary Jane Hinson, died on December 8, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 409 Beliefontaine St., Wapakoneta, OH 45895.

Dwight Bowers ’81, whose mother, Iona Plikerd, died on December 15, 2010. Condolences may be sent to 902 Wesley Ave., Bryan, OH 43506.


Bob Klingel ’64 and his wife, Judy, whose daughter, Jill Szul, died on December 16, 2010. She is survived by her husband and 12-year-old son. Condolences may be sent to 5784 Longbow Drive, Hamilton, OH 45011.

Caryn Dalton ’98 ’01, whose sister, Cindy, died on December 21, 2010. Condolences may be sent “Care of Ms. Iva Dalton,” P.O. Box 183, Boswell, IN 47921.

The family of E. Jack Horne ’84, of Dayton, OH, who died December 24, 2010.

Virginia Kraft, whose husband, L. Kenneth Kraft ‘48, died on January 4, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 1842 Weeping Willow Court, Lafayette, IN, 47905.

James V. Miller ’45, whose wife, Mildred Miller, died on February 23, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 1633 Mowry Square, Richland, WA 99354-2612.

Elmer E. Bosworth ’59, whose wife, Margaret Gertrude Bosworth, died on February 26, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 393 Woodview Drive, Noblesville, IN 46060.

Dan Glover ’87, whose mother, Virginia Glover, died on March 1, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 122 Maynard Dr., Tipp City, OH 45371.

Lois Heiser, whose husband, Elwood Heiser ’51 died on March 1, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 7772 Cross Creek Circle, Breinigsville, PA 18031.

Nancy Ratz ’88, whose 10 year-old granddaughter, Jaelyn, died on March 16, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 148 Dahlia Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45233.

The family of Ruth Ellen Crawford, of Avon, IN, who died on March 26, 2011. She was the spouse of the late Rev. Gene P. Crawford ’50.

Gary Rode ’84 whose mother, JoAnn Rode, died on March 27, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 865 Ashington, Perrysburg, OH 43551.

Timothy Burden ’83, whose mother, Leora Burden, died on April 1, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 403 E Crawford St., Van Wert, OH 45891-2011.

William Bellmore ’79, whose wife, Cecile Clair Bellmore, died April 6, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 1881SW 83rd Ave., Davie, FL 33324.

The Family of Earl McCall ’79, who died on April 24, 2011.

Randall McQueen ’05, whose father, Leslie McQueen, died on April 24, 2011. Condolences may be sent to 933 Harvey St., Griffith, IN 46319.

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First Annual “Light the Fire!”
Church Renewal Conference:

HELD MARCH 27 – 28, 2011

Keynote: Dr. Leonard Sweet

United Theological Seminary was energized and blessed by the 118 people who attended our First Annual “Light the Fire!” Church Renewal Conference on March 27 – 28. We welcomed home former United president Dr. Leonard Sweet as our keynote speaker on the topic, “Evangelism in a TGIF (Twitter, Google, iPhone and Facebook) World.” Retired Bishop Violet Fisher also participated at a Sunday evening gathering at Ft. McKinley United Methodist Church, Dayton.

The three short articles that follow are reflections on the conference contributed by three United alumni/ae.
Reflections: Light the Fire! Conference
by Meshach Kanyion ’11

One of the highlights of attending United is the opportunity to attend the conferences and lectures that are open to the community. This year’s Light the Fire! event featuring Dr. Leonard Sweet was classic for its own reasons. I was personally convicted by the exhortation to us, as the church, to stop trying to live in an ancient time, especially when society is progressing rapidly. We have been trying to communicate the gospel in an ancient tongue, and then we wonder why we get quizzical looks from the hearers. If we are going to be the herald carrying the good news, then we need to make sure we are speaking the language that the people understand.

Something else that impacted me was Dr. Sweet’s discussion on “Followership.” The so-called leaders of the church should be following Christ as others follow them following Christ ... if you get my drift.

I especially enjoyed this conference because it dealt with a pressing contemporary issue. There are enough conferences where theological topics are re-visited that make little impact on our current situation. In the future, I would like to see the same template used that created this conference; that is, naming current issues that the church has been closing her eyes to, then discussing how the gospel speaks to them. The jury is still out on whether a fire has been lit, but the conference definitely supplied all the kindling that is necessary.
Reflections:
Light the Fire! Conference
by Dave Kepple '98, Pastor of St. Paris UMC, St. Paris, OH

Some time last fall I received information from United to protect the dates of March 27 – 28, 2011, for something called the “Light the Fire!” program. I’m glad I did.

Pastor Dave Hood and Director of Music Rusty Eshelman – ministry leaders of Ginghamsburg’s Fort McKinley campus in Dayton – got things started Sunday evening with an overview of the remarkable rebirth that has occurred over the last two years at “The Fort.” Although my small-town parish in a rural county has little in common with Fort McKinley on the surface, the need to reach out to our communities with Christ’s love is imperative wherever we serve.

On Sunday evening, retired Bishop Violet Fisher moved everyone gathered for opening worship with her fiery proclamation of the gospel. The bishop ended with an impassioned chant, repeating – “It only took 12!” – pointing to what God can do when we open ourselves to the Spirit’s leading.

Leonard Sweet’s three keynote presentations on Monday were superb and anchored the conference. I had not heard Len speak since the 1990s, and I’d forgotten what a gifted speaker he is – and what a dynamic prophet.

Dr. Sweet’s messages about the urgent need for churches to speak the “TGIF” language of digital culture could not be more timely. Though my own congregation has a thriving Facebook family, there are so many other opportunities we need to embrace if we’re going to have any meaningful interaction with younger generations.

Perhaps the most memorable image Dr. Sweet left us with was a YouTube video, featuring the four-handed, Brazilian guitar-playing of “Tico Tico.” The joyful collaboration of the two musicians on one guitar was the perfect metaphor for the life of the Risen Christ manifesting itself in those who follow Him.

And what a clever way to end the closing worship, with an online benediction (via Skype) by Elaine Heath, one of the speakers for next year’s Light the Fire! conference on “New Monasticism.”

The inaugural “Light the Fire!” was the best continuing education program I’ve attended in recent memory.

Bishop Violet Fisher at the Light the Fire! conference
Reflections:
Awaken the City in a TGIF World
by Sara B. Thomas ’04, Associate Pastor, Hyde Park UMC, Cincinnati, OH

Editor’s Note: Rev. Thomas’ reflection focuses on how the TGIF World is impacting her community’s ministry in Cincinnati.

Seven weeks each summer I have the privilege of serving with five young adult interns who shepherd the Summer Program for Awaken the City, a year-long ministry designed to equip, empower, and mobilize people to serve by uniting the gifts of the church with the needs of the city.

Enter the TGIF world: a connected web of people living in a new village commons where Twitter, Google, iPhone, and Facebook (TGIF) invite us to communicate the gospel in new ways.

The young adults I serve with are leading us toward living in this new commons. No longer is faith separate from career, or calling identified only with pastoral ministry. We’re reclaiming the priesthood of all believers. By integrating faith and life, we are weaving a connection of people with gifts to share in the city. Educators who intentionally seek to teach in under-resourced communities. Engineers who desire to create products to enhance the quality of life for others. Medical professionals who integrate faith with patient care. Architects who seek to create structures that are sustainable models for communities to thrive together.

These are people we affectionately call “city lights.”

City lights are the people and places we see waking up to Christ’s love in our city.

With eyes to see the way cities impact our world and completely unfazed by the complexity of ministry in the city, we step together into the city center, where needs are great and gifts are overflowing. At the center we encounter people provoked by Christ to engage the world. The story is shared through five second text messages, five minutes on Skype, fifteen minutes on Facebook. The web of connection is growing. Christ’s light is being carried into the world.

From the glow of my iPad and laptop emerges a network of people I live with in this new village commons. I smile, thankful, for ways the TGIF world brings ‘city lights’ into my living room. I lean back into my couch, even more thankful that the more we connect in the TGIF world, the more we will connect face to face.

When we recognize that the opportunity to transform the world has never been greater, may each of us courageously leverage the connections of the TGIF world to reflect the light we encounter in Jesus Christ.

You can follow Awaken the City on the web, Facebook, and twitter @awakenthecity.
August 1 – 12  
**FLEX Residency Weeks**

August 9 – 11  
**9th Annual Preaching Retreat**

“Preaching the Gospel of Mark for Today: Speaking into the Silence” featuring Dr. Luke Powery, Assistant Professor of Homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary. To register or for more details please visit www.united.edu or contact cwpa@united.edu | 937.529.2256.

August 15 – 20  
**Doctor of Ministry Intensive**

“A Ministry of Spirituality and Aging,” held at United’s campus and the Dayton Marriott Hotel.

September 7  
**Opening Convocation**

Speaker: Dr. David F. Watson, Academic Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs; 11:15 a.m., Precious Blood Catholic Church

September 14  
**Women in Leadership Prayer Breakfast**

Harriet Miller Women’s Center, 7 a.m.

September 26 – 30  
**Gathering Week**

Institute for Applied Theology 2011 Events

For more information visit www.united.edu and select Lifelong Learning.

**July 11 – 15**

Church Music Workshop featuring Carol Cymbala of the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir

**July 15 – 16**

Healing Communities: From the Pulpit to the Pew (Center for Urban Ministry)

**August 8 – 13: UMC Certification Intensive Week**

August 9 – 12: Specialized Music Skills Development

August 9 – 13: Hymns in Public Worship

August 10 – 12: Spiritual Formation Practicum (continues June 22 – 23, 2012)

August 10 – 12: Spirituality in Ministry and Practice

Floyd and Elaine Flake Certificate in Music Ministry

The second offering of United’s new certificate program, the Floyd and Elaine Flake Certificate in Music Ministry, will begin in August 2011. This six-course certificate program is geared to enhance one’s ability to provide outstanding leadership of music ministry in the twenty-first century Christian church.

Courses include Teaching Biblical Faith and Ministry, Theology in Music: An Introduction, and Spiritual and Music Ministry Formation. Courses offered during a weeklong residency session are Congregational Songs, Technology in Music Ministry, and Ensemble Leadership. Tuition is $1,800 ($300 per course). For more information about this program, please visit www.united.edu or contact the program’s director, Jeremy Winston: 937.529.2261 | jwinston@united.edu.
Rev. Dr. Frank A. Thomas ’91, 30 Years of Service

Rev. Dr. Frank A. Thomas ’91, was honored for 30 years of ministry on Sunday, February 13, at his church, Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, TN. Dr. Charles A. Booth ’90, preached both services to honor Thomas. Dr. Thomas has taken his pastoral experience, his love of African American preaching and his ability as a scholar to McCormick Theological Seminary and North Park Theological Seminary, both in Chicago, where he has taught preaching in an adjunct capacity for many years. He has also been a co-mentor at United, helping to guide 16 students to their Doctor of Ministry degrees. Dr. Thomas is the author of They Like to Never Quit Praisin’ God: The Role of Celebration In Preaching (1997), What’s Love Got To Do With It? Love, Power, Sex and God (2001), and Preaching With Sacred Fire: An Anthology of African American Sermons, 1750-Present (2010). His sermons have been featured in The African American Pulpit and Patterns of Preaching, and he is in demand as a preacher, speaker, lecturer, and revivalist. In April 2003, he was inducted into the Martin Luther King, Jr. Board of Preachers of Morehouse College.

He is married to Joyce Scott Thomas, and they have a son, Anthony William, and a daughter, Rachel Sojourner Thomas. Dr. Thomas was the speaker at United’s May 21 Commencement at Precious Blood Catholic Church.

Two New Degrees This Fall!

Beginning this fall, United is offering a “flexible,” hybrid (part online, part in-residence) Master of Divinity degree designed especially for United Methodist students who are unable to relocate to another state or city for a theological degree. The Flex UMC M.Div. meets the latest (January 2011) residency requirements of the University Senate of The United Methodist Church and is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools and the Higher Learning Commission. We hope this program will be especially useful in those regions currently underserved by United Methodist schools, and that it will prove less disruptive and less costly for families and church bodies than traditional, relocation models of theological education.

Also new this fall is the 45-hour Master of Arts in Christian Ministries, which can be completed in two years. It is especially designed for those who are planning to serve in denominations that do not require a Master of Divinity degree and for those who are preparing for the work of Deacon in the UMC.

To learn more about either of these new degrees, please visit our website at www.united.edu or contact our Admissions Office at admissions@united.edu or 800.322.5817.

United Begins Second Year of UMC Certification Program

United is proud to be starting the second year of its United Methodist Certification Program, which is offered through the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) of the UMC. Certification requires five two-hour masters level courses, which United offers in a number of formats: online, hybrid, and traditional classroom experiences. Programs are available in Children’s Ministry, Christian Education, Music Ministry, Older Adult Ministry, Youth Ministry, Spiritual Formation and Urban Ministry.

For more information about certification, please contact Lori Reiber at treiber@united.edu or 937.529.2201.

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Dr. Lisa M. Hess, Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Contextual Ministries, was selected as one of ten Coolidge Scholars for the CrossCurrents’ Annual Research Colloquium, a yearly gathering of national and international scholars funded for intensive research, seminar collaborations, and publications development. Dr. Hess also published “Bread for Life and an Artisanal Way: Method and Pedagogy for Multifaith Learning in Higher Education,” which is forthcoming in an edited volume produced by the Auburn Brain Trust for Multifaith Education.


Dr. David Watson, Assistant Professor of New Testament, presented a two-week lecture series at Armstrong Chapel, Cincinnati, OH, called “The Cross: Then and Now,” exploring ancient views of the cross and the ways in which our contemporary perspective has changed.

Dr. Jason Vickers, Associate Professor of Theology and Wesleyan Studies, was recently elected President of the Wesleyan Theological Society (WTS). He will deliver the presidential address at Seattle Pacific University in 2013. WTS is an ecumenical and pan-Methodist scholarly society whose membership consists primarily of United Methodist, Free Methodist, Wesleyan, Nazarene, Church of God (Anderson) and Pentecostal scholars. It is the largest scholarly organization of its kind in the world.

Dr. Alicia Myers will be joining the Residential Faculty on July 1 as Assistant Professor of New Testament. Dr. Myers recently earned her Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Baylor University in Waco, Texas. She brings a specialization in studies in the Gospel of John, the subject of her dissertation, and in general, fine competence in the field of Early Church History. She is a graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University with a Bachelor of Arts degree and holds a Master of Theological Studies from Duke University Divinity School. Alicia is married to Scott and we welcome them both to United and to the greater Dayton area. An active member of a Baptist congregation in Waco, Alicia also brings a family tradition rooted in the United Methodist Church.

Dr. Peter Bellini will be joining us on July 1 as Director of Urban and International Studies. In this position he will serve as Director of the Center for Urban Ministry, teach part time in the Masters Program as a fully affiliated faculty member, serve as a mentor in the Doctoral Program, and be responsible for general oversight of the intercultural trips and advisement of international students. Dr. Bellini is an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church and is a clergy member of the West Ohio Conference. Peter’s undergraduate degree is from Ohio State University and his M.Div. and Ph.D. were both earned at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Dr. Jason Vickers has been appointed by President Wendy Deichmann to serve as the President’s Associate for Mission Advancement. His responsibilities include coordinating events and resources that help United accomplish its mission: To recruit, educate and nurture faithful leaders for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.

Later this summer Vickers is planning to roll out a new website dedicated to church renewal. It will feature articles, blogs, book reviews and videos aimed at resourcing church leaders who are working for church renewal. In March of 2012, United will host its second Light the Fire! Conference with the theme “New Monasticism” featuring Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and Elaine Heath.
New Faculty Publications

Dr. Jason Vickers
Methodist and Pietist: Retrieving the Evangelical United Brethren Tradition edited by Dr. Jason Vickers and Dr. J. Steven O’Malley; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2011. Authors of the chapters include Dr. Wendy Deichmann, Dr. Kendall McCabe, Dr. Vickers, and Dr. Tyron Inbody.

“In 1968, the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) churches merged to form The United Methodist Church. More than forty years later, many United Methodists know very little about the history, doctrine, and polity of the EUB Church. To be sure, there are vestiges of the EUB, most notably the Confession of Faith, in the United Methodist Book of Discipline, but there is much more to be profitably explored.”

Dr. David Whitford

“David Whitford’s graceful new study does exactly what its title promises: guide readers who have only a vague notion of Martin Luther through his life, ideas, and key writings. The book explains complex theological issues in clear, but not overly simplistic, language, and does not avoid the controversies in which Luther was involved, many of which remain matters of debate today: Do humans have free will? Does religion allow one to oppose the government? How should Christians regard the Jews? How should Christians regard – and treat – each other?”

United Alumni/ae Publications

Keith H Adkins, M.Div. ’83
A Natural History of Scripture, CreateSpace, 2010
www.keithhadkins.com

Sally Dyck, D.Min. ’90 and Sarah Ehrman

Eugene Skipworth, M.Div. ’66
Wear Your Collar, Providence House, 2010

Stephen Wilson, M.Div. ’07
The Gifted: In the Beginning, OnRail Publishing, 2010
TheGiftedBookSeries.webs.com
StevenWilson0284@sbcglobal.net

Matt Thomas, M.Div. ’96

For more information: www.continuumbooks.com

To submit a publication, please visit www.united.edu and click on Alumni/ae. Select “News and Notes Form” from the left menu, fill out the form, and submit it to United.

Retired Faculty Updates

Elmer J. O’Brien’s book, The Wilderness, the Nation, and the Electronic Era: American Christianity and Religious Communication 1620-2000: An Annotated Bibliography, has been chosen by the Historical Materials Committee of the American Library Association as one of the three best historical reference materials published in 2009. The committee noted that “while this bibliography focuses on religion, much of American life is tied to religious beliefs and activities, and as such, this work is useful for a wide range of cultural studies.” Elmer served as director of library and information services and professor of theological bibliography and research at United from 1969-1996.
Spotlight on United Alums
Dr. Suzann Johnson Cook, D.Min. ’90, Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom

WASHINGTON – Dr. Suzann Johnson Cook ’90, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Thursday, April 14, as Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom at the Department of State’s Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and was sworn in on May 16 by Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, Maria Otero. The first woman and person of African American descent to hold this position, Dr. Johnson Cook was appointed by President Barack Obama, and will serve as principal advisor on religious issues globally to him and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. She will be supported by the office of International Religious Freedom in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.

Upon her confirmation, Dr. Johnson Cook stated, “I am deeply honored by the trust that President Obama and Secretary Clinton have placed in me to serve our nation in advancing the right to freedom of religion abroad. I am similarly persuaded in my mind, heart, and soul that religious freedom is the birthright of all people everywhere; a foundation of civil society, a key to international security, and it must always be a pillar of U.S. foreign policy.” Dr. Johnson Cook plans to embrace the mandate of the International Religious Freedom Act, while aggressively promoting the growth of the Office of International Religious Freedom. Plans also call for Dr. Johnson Cook to provide oversight of the Annual Religious Freedom Report to Congress, a report that examines the state of religious freedoms in 198 countries throughout the globe.

A noted leader in the religious community, Dr. Johnson Cook is adept at developing interfaith synergies. Founder and President of Wisdom Worldwide Center, and a former advisor on President Clinton’s Domestic Policy Council, she is the first female and African American to serve as Chaplain to the New York Police Department, a position she has held since 1990, and has served as Senior Pastor of Bronx Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in New York City since 1996. Dr. Johnson Cook also served as the Senior Pastor to The Mariners Temple Baptist Church from 1983 to 1986. A graduate of Harvard University, Dr. Johnson Cook also holds a B.S. from Emerson College, a Master of Arts from The Columbia University Teachers College, a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry from United Theological Seminary, where she was a member of the Proctor Fellows. She was honored in 2007 as United’s Distinguished Alumna.

Through her international travels, Dr. Johnson Cook has had the privilege of engaging various religious beliefs through constructive dialogue that led to the accomplishment of common goals. She has traveled to five continents to engage Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Protestants, Jews, and practitioners of several other spiritual traditions. She has visited Zimbabwe and South Africa to meet with Zulu faith leaders to promote religious freedom and tolerance; worked with World Vision, in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, in its efforts to combat global poverty; and has led interfaith delegations to Israel, Jordan and Egypt. As a young woman, Dr. Johnson Cook worked with Operations Crossroads Africa, and participated in a cross-cultural exchange with many spiritual groups in Ghana. These experiences act as key elements of her brand and have uniquely prepared her for the task of stewarding religious freedom on a global basis.

Editor’s Note: Please watch our website, www.united.edu for an interview with Dr. Johnson Cook.

Moving in July?

Please update your contact information at www.united.edu and choose the Alumni/ae tab.
Doctor of Ministry Phase Five Students

Phase Five Doctor of Ministry students gathered with some mentors, faculty and staff for a picture following lunch with the President on January 27, 2011, during Intensive. This is a traditional gathering for D.Min. students who are finishing the program.

Former Presidents at Light the Fire!

President Wendy Deichmann posed for a photo with three former United presidents who attended the March 28 Light the Fire! conference. From left, Bishop Emerson Colaw, Rev. Dr. Daryl Ward, Deichmann, and Dr. Leonard Sweet, who was also the conference keynote speaker.

Thanks, Leipsic UMC!

Jackie and Bill Patterson ’75, (left) visited with President Wendy Deichmann and Vice President for Development, Tim Forbess recently. The Pattersons serve at Leipsic UMC, Leipsic, OH, which has been a strong supporter of United’s scholarship program for many years.

Willow Valley Alumni/ae Gathering: January 30, 2011


East Ohio Alumni/ae Gathering: February 28, 2011

In Memoriam

This issue of Keeping in Touch is dedicated to the memory of two beloved United employees.

Edna Marie Ebersole; Director of Finance/Student Accounts
November 11, 1951 – January 18, 2011

Gregory E. Hoskins; Director of Information Technology
August 19, 1950 – March 13, 2011

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2. Entry for News and Notes Section

Provide alumni/ae news to be included in the News and Notes Section of KIT.

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