Keeping in Touch
A Magazine for United Alumni/ae

UNITED IN MISSION
THE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST
FAITHFUL LEADERS
RECRUIT AND EDUCATE

DECADENCE ON DENLINGER
RENEWING THE CHURCH
CULTIVATION OF HOLINESS
HISTORIC CHRISTIAN FAITH

Featured Inside
United in Mission
Page 3 – 6
Faculty – Staff News
Page 11

News and Notes
Page 7
Alumni/ae on the Frontlines
Page 14

Spirit Led, Renewing the Church!
United Theological Seminary • 4501 Denlinger Road • Dayton, Ohio 45426
Dear alumni/ae and friends,

Warm greetings in the name and Spirit of the Risen Christ!

United in Mission, the theme for this issue, has a rich, double meaning. First, United serves a compelling, exciting mission, which is our God-given purpose: to recruit and educate faithful leaders for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world! Second, we perform this mission as a community united in faith and learning.

Yet within this unity there is great diversity. United is among the most diverse theological schools in North America in its racial, ethnic, gender, denominational and theological makeup. This diversity has the effect of generating a capacity for unity across the United community and also across the Christian church among our graduates. We believe it is a good thing to recognize, accept and celebrate that our deepest unity is in Christ alone.

In the pages that follow, we are pleased to illustrate just a few ways the United community, especially our alumni/ae, students and faculty, are United in mission!

Thank you, as always, for your faithful service in the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ and for your prayerful support for United’s continuing, exciting ministry of theological education. We are grateful for and proud of you!

Gratefully yours in the service of Christ,

Wendy

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A Christian seminary affiliated with The United Methodist Church, United is a community of learning and faith with representation from many ecumenical traditions.

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Faithful Leaders Must First Be Faithful Followers of Christ

by Rev. Peter Belin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Evangelization in the Heisel Chair

During the 46th session of the West Ohio Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church this summer, I attended the Evangelical Fellowship of West Ohio dinner with other pastors and laity. The person next to me recognized my name and asked about United and what makes us distinct. Of course, I shared our three missional commitments: the historic Christian faith, the cultivation of holiness and the Spirit-led renewal of the church. He seemed to latch onto the Spirit-led piece of the statement, and inquired about how the Holy Spirit is evident in our seminary, specifically our curriculum. Those who know me know this was a nice slow ball thrown right down the middle of the plate, and I, with bat squeezed tightly in hand and feet dug into the batter’s box, was ready to swing at it.

I shared about our church renewal focus, including a course in church renewal that masters students are required to take. I spoke about our option for a Master of Divinity concentration in Church Renewal and how one can even take it with an emphasis in Global Charismatic Studies. Since this person already had a Master of Divinity and was inquiring into doctoral programs, I shared about one of the largest doctoral programs in the country right here at United, and how some of the cohorts are focused on supernatural ministry, healing and church renewal. Yet above all of these programs, I think he was most taken by what is United’s greatest asset — the presence of the Holy Spirit working among faculty, staff and students.

At United, faculty are committed to training and educating students to be faithful leaders who can offer Christ. This mission is best practiced when we model and offer Christ in the classroom by laying the biblical, theological and historical foundations for ministry and mission as well as by cultivating the presence and power of the Spirit in our classes through worship, prayer and times of ministering in the Spirit. In these ways, we hope to demonstrate that being a faithful leader of Jesus Christ first means being a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. One who is able to share what Christ has done for him or her.

Out of the laboratory of our classrooms, United’s faculty is committed to not only teaching but also modeling and imparting Christ to students through the replaceable work of the Holy Spirit. We seek to embody what it means to be Spirit-led, renewing the church. Personally, I receive many testimonies from students about how courses they have taken with me have not only educated them with cutting-edge scholarship but also have been transformative in their lives and in their ministries. They see the results in the churches where they minister. Yet, we know that as faculty are not the ones responsible. The credit and the glory for the work is clearly God’s. To God be the glory.
Forming Faithful Leaders
Peer groups central to spiritual formation of future leaders

Editor’s note: Central to United’s mission of educating faithful leaders for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world are covenantal learning groups where students reflect theologically on ministry and share resources and knowledge. Masters students are placed in MINgroups led by trained facilitators and doctoral students meet periodically in focus groups with experienced mentors. The following articles focus on how these groups help United students become faithful leaders.

Rev. Ashley Valentine-Derrer ’00, MINgroup facilitator

The education students gain at United is one that stretches them academically but also spiritually — the two are seen as equally important. By wrestling with their own faith and understanding, students are better prepared to engage a world that is growing more secular and walking away from the church.

Students come to learn that the role of clergy is not one-dimensional. Although it may be tempting at times, one cannot just learn the right things to say and do or the right way to teach a Bible study or lead a church meeting. Faithful leaders are challenged to understand and articulate their faith, live out that faith in accordance with their calling and strive to live a healthy life in mind, body and spirit. The MINgroup experience is designed to challenge students to grow beyond what they’ve always known and to work within a group where there are differing views and opinions. By participating in exchanges based in love instead of fear, students learn more about themselves and others. The MINgroup facilitator has the honor of walking with students and challenging them to stretch beyond where they’ve been to where they’re going.

Rev. Dr. Leroy Cothran ’99, ’02, Doctor of Ministry mentor

United Theological Seminary forms faithful leaders for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world by providing a spiritual and a professional atmosphere conducive to learning. Within this context, there is an intentional awareness and acceptance of diversity in denominations, cultures, ethnicities, theology and opinions. This approach helps students develop an attitude of flexibility that will be beneficial in pastoral ministry.

Focus groups and D.Min. mentors provide critical guidance and personal motivation to students and their peers as they matriculate the educational process at United. Mentors encourage each student to search within themselves and create a project that will inspire self-transformation and equip the student to readily accept the challenges facing the church now and in the years to come. The focus group/student/mentor relationships formed over the three years of the doctoral program often result in long-lasting professional relationships.

Due to the diversity of D.Min. students — their denominations, cultures and ethnicities — the mentors also engage in a continual process of self-education and spiritual growth in order to provide the best scholarly information about current trends, critical analyses and challenges that are currently affecting the church.
How did your experience at United help form your pastoral identity?

Mashack Kanyion ’11, M.Div.
While at United my eyes were opened to a world that was much larger than the one I previously knew. Soon after enrollment I experienced mental earthquakes that shook the ground of my understanding. Thankfully, faculty and engagement with other students helped me form a solid foundation from which to [re]build. Having graduated, I have become a lifelong learner with a desire to help others build on solid foundations, particularly with Jesus Christ.

Rosario Picardo ’14, D.Min.
United reinforced what God and the community of faith was calling me to, and that was vocational ministry. United confirmed what God and the context of community needed to help me believe what God wanted to do in my life.

Caleb Speicher, ’14, M.Div.
At United, the educational emphasis has always been on equipping and training pastors to lead churches into God’s preferred future. My United experience helped to broaden my vision of how God works through the local church (sometimes on a global scale) and brought to life a pastoral identity marked by doing no harm, doing all the good that I can, and cultivating a vibrant, disciplined life in God.

Jonathan Hanover ’12, M.Div.
My experience at United pushed me beyond easy theology into truly defining what I believed, both theologically and through my role as pastor. It forced me to acknowledge ways in which what I said I believed did not match how I approached my role. Challenging professors pushed me to more clearly define not only what I believed but also how I saw my role and actually lived it out in everyday ministry.

Penny Brink ’15, M.Div.
The most significant way in which United helped form my pastoral identity was through a greater understanding of caring for the soul of people. Through my immersion trip to Pemba, Mozambique, I learned the importance of stopping for the “one” despite their circumstances and our differences. Providing a space where the love of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit minister to the needs of all people is precious and transforming work.

Casey Irwin ’12, M.Div.
My time at United equipped me to hear a broad spectrum of theological voices without feeling threatened in my personal faith. I learned how to take the depths of the Scriptures and our history of faith and teach clearly and kindly in whatever context I find myself in. United also showed me that our churches really should expect renewal through the power of the Holy Spirit and that, as pastors, can lead with confidence that our redeeming God will bring new life in dark places.

Just celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary and are the parents of seven grown children and 20 grandchildren for which they praise the Lord!

Class of 1953
Robert Crosby, Seattle, WA, is the author of seven books, all of which are now available in both e-book and paperback editions on Amazon.com.

Class of 1955
Lawrence W. Althouse, Dallas, TX, celebrated in July 2014 the 50th year of writing his weekly syndicated newspaper column, “The Bible Speaks.” He reports, “After much thought and prayer, I have decided to continue so long as there are newspapers that want the column.”

James L. Harring, Mountain Top, PA, celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination in April 2015. For the past 16 years he has served Church of Christ Uniting, in Kingston, PA, as Minister of Pastoral Care. He and his wife, Doris, observed their 63rd wedding anniversary on April 10, 2015. The couple has two daughters and two grandsons.

Class of 1962
Donald R. Morgan and Ruby (Long) Morgan, of New Bloomfield, PA, celebrated their 60th anniversary on June 4, 2015.

Class of 1980
Bill Duncan, Groton, NY, has served as pastor of various United Methodist churches in Ohio and South Dakota for 37 years. Bill and his wife, Jana, have just celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary and are the parents of seven grown children and 20 grandchildren for which they praise the Lord!

Class of 1982
Dennis Keller, was appointed senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Mechanicsburg, PA.

Class of 1987
Scot Ocke, Maumee, OH, was appointed District Superintendent of the Maumee Watershed District in The West Ohio Conference of The UMC.

Class of 1990
Otis Moss Jr., Bratenahl, OH, received the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Award in January 2015. A respected pastor, speaker, author and activist, Rev. Dr. Moss is well known for his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and has been honored with numerous awards for his life’s work.

DeForest Blake Soaries Jr., Monmouth Junction, NJ, was named an independent director to the Board of Directors for Ocwen Financial, a provider of loan servicing and asset management services. Dr. Soaries has served as senior pastor of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, NJ, since 1990.

Class of 1991
Dana Little Hitz, Lexington, KY, was recognized with the Citizen’s Spirit Award from the Lexington Fire Department for saving a man’s life in May 2014. Her Emergency Medical Tech training provided her with the skills to respond calmly and quickly to an injured citizen.

Class of 1992
Daryl Farchild, Dayton, OH, is one of four candidates in the race for two open seats on the Dayton City Commission, which will be filled following the November 2015 general election.

Class of 1994
Sally Carpenter, Moorpark, CA, was confirmed in the Catholic Church and serves as a lector for Holy Cross Church, Moorpark. She also works full time in the editorial department of a community newspaper.

Class of 1995
Robert L. Johnson, Abingdon, PA, has been appointed senior pastor of historic Tindley Temple United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, PA.

Class of 1997
James M. Harrison, Surry, VA, has been elected Regional Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of the South.

Class of 1999
Linda Middelberg, Columbus, OH, was appointed District Superintendent of the Capitol Area North District in The West Ohio Conference of The UMC.
United Alumnus a Candidate for Bishop in the AME Zion Church

Rev. Dr. Lester McCorn ‘11 is a candidate for Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. The AME Zion Church will elect bishops at the denomination’s General Conference in 2016. After graduating from United’s Doctor of Ministry program in 2011, Rev. Dr. McCorn now serves as a mentor for the doctoral focus group, “Gardner C. Taylor Scholars in Prophetic Leadership, Social Justice and Political Action.” He is the author of Standing on Holy Common Ground: An Africentric Ministry Approach to Prophetic Community Engagement (MMGI Books, 2013).

Class of 2008
Robert B. Lancia, Cranston, RI, was elected to the Rhode Island General Assembly as a member of the House of Representatives.

Teresa Snoton, Birmingham, AL, was the commencement speaker for Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury, NC. She is the presiding bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

Class of 2003
Keith Manry, Great Falls, MT, was honored as the 2014 Air Force Chaplain Corps Company Grade Office Chaplain of the Year for his service in the 341st Missile Wing at Minot Air Force Base in Montana as well as his deployment to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

Judith Ann Sigmund, Marblehead, MA, has recently published articles exploring the intersection of medicine and ministry. She currently works part-time as a hospital psychiatrist, and volunteers her time teaching students in United’s CPE program and at the Boston University School of Medicine.

C. Dennis Williams, was appointed chair of the new Religious Studies program at Paul Quinn College, Dallas, TX, beginning in January 2015.

Class of 2004
John Dorhauer, Phoenix, AZ, was elected as the ninth general minister and president of the United Church of Christ during the denomination’s 30th General Synod, which took place June 24-30.

Matthew Leftfer Sr., Ft. Wayne, IN, was appointed Associate Director of Leadership Development–Ministerial Services for the Indiana Conference of The UMC, effective July 2015.

Brice Thomas, Xenia, OH, is a new contributor to Vital Signs and Statistics, the blog of the United Church of Christ’s Center for Analytics, Research and Data (CARD).

Sara B. Thomas, Cincinnati, OH, joined the staff of Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church in December 2014, as Chief Strategist for Vital Congregations. In this role she will ensure that the agency’s ministries are in alignment with vital congregations.

Class of 2007
James Wilcox, Cibolo, TX, became director of the San Antonio Mass Ministries of The United Methodist Church in December 2014, as Chief Strategist for Vital Congregations. In this role she will ensure that the agency’s ministries are in alignment with vital congregations.

Class of 2009
Johnny M. Wilson, Springfield, MA, was selected by Black Theology Leadership Institute to attend “A Balm in Gilead: Toward a Theology of Healing and Wholeness” at Princeton Theological Seminary in July 2015.

Class of 2011
Meshach Kanyion was appointed Senior Pastor of Friendship United Methodist Church in Wyoming, OH.

Class of 2012
Janie Dowdy-Dandridge, Shelbyville, TN, became pastor at Woodford Chapel AME Church in January 2015. She has served as a pastor, life coach, motivational speaker, entrepreneur and women’s ministry conference leader. Her areas of focus are congregational development and the development of new faith communities in urban and rural ministries.

Class of 2015
Rev. Dr. Lester McCorn ‘11 is a candidate for Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Class of 2016
Emmett Anderson, ‘58, who died November 13, 2014. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Barbara Anderson, at 150 Grace Village Dr., Winona Lake, IN 46590.

Vance Dimmick, ‘66, who died November 20, 2014. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Ann Dimmick, at 944 Grindle Dr., Lowell, MI 49331.

Frank A. Nickell, Jr., ‘55, who died November 22, 2014. He was a resident of Elizabethtown, PA.

Paul Eichar, ‘61, who died November 23, 2014. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Joyce Eichar, at 5586 Wingston Rd., Cygnet, OH 43413.

Julie Liggelt, ‘69, who died November 28, 2014. She was a resident of Lebanon, OH.

William C. Boyer, ‘62, who died October 7, 2014. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Betty Jane Boyer, at 100 Bent Creek Blvd., Suite 20, Mechanicsburg, PA 17070-1833.

David Davis, ‘58, who died October 13, 2014. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Barbara Davis, at 4762 Orange Grove Way, Palm Harbor, FL 34684.


Judy Rife, who died October 20, 2014, after a long bout with cancer. She was the wife of Carl B. Rife ‘46. Condonleses may be sent to Carl at 351 Pine Hill Lane, York, PA 17403.

Ray Warren Sims, ‘79, who died July 16, 2015. He was a resident of Bois Blanc Island, MI.

James Foster, ‘74, who died on March 27, 2015. He was a resident of Frankford, DE.

Jaime Alvarez, ‘75, ‘87, who died on April 29, 2015. She was a resident of Somerset, PA.

Wayne E. Lee, ‘00, who died May 5, 2015. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Joyce Lee, at 1620 Tower Court, Newark, OH 43055.

Seth Oiler, ‘12, who died May 22, 2015. Condonleses may be sent to his wife, Joyce Oiler, at 1620 Tower Court, Newark, OH 43055.

Dennis Heffner, ‘73, who died June 2, 2015. He was a resident of Sicklerville, NJ.

Marc Wolff, ‘91, who died on June 23, 2015. He was a resident of Fairlawn, OH.

Elizabeth Hendrickson, who died on March 18, 2015. She was the wife of Earl Hendrickson, ‘53, who died in 2004. She was a resident of Glenside, PA.
Romaine Frey
February 12, 1915 – December 22, 2014

Romaine Frey died on December 22, 2014, at Emcuff of Washington Township. Born near Glenville, PA, she was the wife of Rev. Dr. George W. Frey, long-time professor at United. She is survived by son Robert (Patricia) Frey of Miamisburg, daughter Connie (John) Schaefer of Sarasota, FL, four grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. Romaine’s unique gift was teaching and caring for children. She demonstrated this through the years by teaching in almost every type of children’s program operated by the church. Her collection of dolls kept her closely connected with her Belong interest in children as did her four grandchildren who live in nearby Centerville. Romaine was a member of St. James UMC in Miamisburg. Condolences may be sent to Robert Frey, 1356 Hidden Creek Rd., Miamisburg, OH 45342-6746.

Donna June Wert
September 19, 1934 – January 10, 2015

Donna June Wert was invested in their success. Donna is survived by her husband Newell Wert, United’s longest-serving academic dean. They loved United, the community and its mission that would be fulfilled in the ministries of its graduates. Donna also leaves her children, Kevin (Jill) Hitt, Michael (Jennifer) Olin-Hitt and Lisa (Don) Hartman; step-children, Susan Wert (James Moman) and Newell J. Wert, Jr., and seven grandchildren. Condolences may be sent to Rev. Dr. Newell Wert at 1709 Yalta Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45432.

John C. Wagner
April 4, 1931 – July 28, 2015

Rev. Dr. John C. Wagner, emeritus faculty member, died on July 28, 2015. He began his work at United in 1973 as Dean of Admissions and Assistant Professor of Administration. He later served as Director of Supervised Ministry and retired in 1996 as Professor of Administration. Prior to his service at United, Rev. Dr. Wagner pastored congregations in the West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church and served on the conference staff. In his ministry, he was known for his compassion and commitment to social justice. He protested the segregation of churches in 1963, demonstrated against the wars in Vietnam, Nicaragua and Iraq and was an advocate for the full inclusion of all persons and perspectives in The United Methodist Church.

Rev. Dr. Wagner is survived by his wife of 42 years, Miriam, and their children, Rev. John (JoAnn) Wagner of Middletown, OH; Rev. Patricia Wagner of Columbus; OH, and David (Jud) Wagner of Charlotte, NC. He also leaves six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be sent to Rev. Patricia Wagner at 7010 West, APT. 1038, West Reading, PA, 19613. Condolences may also be sent to Newell J. Wert, United’s Registrar at 100 Delaware Crossing West, Apt. 2025, Delaware, OH 43015.

FACULTY/STAFF NEWS

NEW FACULTY

Justus Hunter joined United’s faculty on July 1 as Assistant Professor of Church History. Dr. Hunter holds a Ph.D. in Religious Studies at Southern Methodist University. He completed his dissertation, “The Motive for the Incarnation: A Disputation with Thomas Aquinas,” in August 2015. Dr. Hunter holds an M.A. in Theological Studies from the University of Dayton, an M.Div. from Asbury Theological Seminary and a B.A. from Asbury College. His research and teaching interests include medieval theology, scholasticism, doctrine of God and Christology. His work has appeared in the journals Ecclesiology and Wesleyan Theological Journal, as well as the T&K Clark Companion to Reformation Theology and The Encyclopedia of Christianity in the United States (Rowman & Littlefield, forthcoming). He is a lay member of The United Methodist Church.

Lisa Hess. Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Contextual Ministries, co-led the winter session of the Mid-Career Theological School Faculty Colloquy for the Wabash Center. She also oversaw a new leadership team for the pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine through the Seminary’s Contextual Theology and Immersion Program. Dr. Hess also facilitated a conversation between Mary Elizabeth Mullin Moore, dean of Boston School of Theology, and Mary Pierce Brosmer, founder of Women Writing for (a) Change in Cincinnati, OH, which was published in the journal Teaching Theology and Religion vol. 18, no. 2 (April 2015).

Tom Dozeman, Professor of Old Testament, presented a lecture on “The Challenges of Writing a Commentary on the Book of Exodus” at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in San Diego, CA, in November 2014. He also presented on “Holiness and Ethics” at the Northwest Leadership Institute hosted at the Cathedral of the Rockies in Boise, ID, in March 2015.

Peter Bellini, Assistant Professor of Evangelization in the Heisel Chair, published the article “The Processio-Missio Connection: A Starting Point in Mission Trinitats or Overcoming the Immanent Economic Divide in a Missio Trinitats?,” in the Wesleyan Theological Journal vol. 49, no. 2 (Fall 2014). He was a featured speaker at United’s 3rd Annual Holy Spirit Seminar in December 2014, and he taught seminars at Grace UMC, Franklin, IN, and M. Olive Ministries UMC, Indianapolis, IN.

David Watson, Academic Dean and Associate Professor of New Testament, co-wrote with William Abraham the article “A Creedal Faith,” which appeared in Circuit Rider (Nov/Dec/Jan 2014–15). In July, he was a speaker at the 37th annual Aldersgate Renewal Conference.

Anthony LeDonne, Professor of New Testament, served on the steering committee for the Ryterband Symposium, which took place in November 2014. He also published a review in the Los Angeles Review of Books on The Lost Gospel: Decoding the Ancient Text that Reveals Jesus’ Marriage to Mary the Magdalene by Simcha Jacobovici and Barrie Wilson.

Luther Oconner, Assistant Professor of United Methodist Studies, published the article “‘ Keswickfied ’ Methodism: Holiness Revivalism and the Methodist Episcopal Church Mission in India, 1870-1910” in the Wesleyan Theological Journal vol. 49, no. 2 (Fall 2014). In January 2015, he taught a class on United Methodist polity at the Wesley Theological College in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
President Wendy Deichmann was a speaker at the AFTF Christmas Conference in Houston, TX, in January 2015. She lectured on the topic “What’s Right with Orthodoxy?” at Evangelical Seminary in Myerstown, PA, in April. In June, she was a guest speaker at the Iowa Annual Conference “Revive” Gathering and at the Annual Florida United Methodist Evangelicals (FUME) dinner at the Florida Annual Conference of the UMC.

Vanessa Ward, Lecturer of Biblical Studies, was a featured speaker at United’s annual Vision to Victory in April. This year’s focus was “Religion, Race and Revival.”

Sarah Brooks Blair, Assistant Professor of Church History, participated in the conference United Methodist Women’s History: Voices Lost and Found, hosted at the Methodist Theological School in Ohio in May. On a panel, she presented materials about women in the Methodist Theological School in Ohio in May. On a panel, she presented materials about women in the United Methodist Church.

Scott Kisker, Professor of the History of Christianity, published the article “Methodist Abroad: Matthew Simpson and the Emergence of American Methodism as a World Church” in Methodist History vol. 53, no. 1 (October 2014).

STAFF NEWS

The following people have recently joined United’s staff: Jimmy Mallory as Intentional Communities and Housing Coordinator, Natasha Harrell as Admissions Associate and Student Recruiters, Trent Hayes as Associate Director of Admissions, Debbie Roth as Director of the Policky Center for Supervision and Leadership Formation, Courtney Ward as Assistant Registrar, Callie Ricardo as Senior Director of Development Operations, Kayla Fallen as Graphic and Web Designer and Rachel Hurley as Communications Associate.

The following people have been promoted: Tesia Mallory as Coordinator of Alumni/ae Relations and Director of Worship, Dan Gildner as Dean of the Chapel and Co-Director of Contextual Ministries, Harold Hudson as Vice President for African American and Multi-Cultural Church Relations, Karen Payne as Chief Strategy, Administration and Assessment Officer, Monique Tremaine as Senior Director of Enrollment Management, Dean Bimline as Director of Student Success and Bridget Weather Spoon as Director of Student Recruitment and Advocate Marketing.

Alumni/ae Publications

Donald R. Repsher ’54
Rev. Donald R. Repsher, Riverview, FL, has written Partnering with the Creator: A Deeper Look into the Creation Story of Genesis Chapter One (Xlibris, 2015).

Thomas Coffman ’57

Paul David Robinson ’70

George Reed ’80
George Reed has published a sermon collection, Counting the Cost: Cycle C Sermons for Proper 13 through Proper 22 Based on the Gospel Texts (CSS Publishing, 2015).

Sally L. Carpenter ’94

Susan Spencer-Smith ’94

Daniel Schramm ’00
Daniel Schramm Houston, TX, published Love Me Til I Die (TEACH Services, Inc., 2014).

Faculty Publications

Peter J. Bellini
Assistant Professor of Evangelization in the Heisel Choir
Truth Therapy: Renewing Your Mind with the Word of God, expanded ed.; Wipf and Stock, December 2014

Our world is inundated with war, poverty, disease, economic crises, terrorism, unemployment, fatherlessness, addictions, divorce, abortion, sex trafficking, racism, depression and anxiety, information and stimulation overload, and the list goes on and on. Truth Therapy provides a framework for identifying and evaluating the lies we believe and replacing those lies with the truth found in the word of God for every area of our life.

Thomas Dozeman
Professor of Old Testament
Joshua 1–12: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary; Yale University Press, August 2015

Written by leading experts in the field, The Book of Exodus offers a wide-ranging treatment of the main aspects of Exodus. Its twenty-four essays fall under four main sections, which include history and function; reinterpretation; textual history and reception; and theologies.

Alumni/ae on the Frontlines

Working toward transformation and liberation in response to social turmoil

Rev. Dr. Robert C. Scott ’97, D.Min.
Pastor, Central Baptist Church; St. Louis, MO
Board Member, United Theological Seminary

In the United States, where the virulent use of violence by a few police officers intersects with racism and power, we are a nation sitting on a powder keg waiting to explode. The barrel was set when Eric Garner was choked to death by New York City police officers. The fuse was lit on Saturday, August 9, 2014, when police officer Darren Wilson shot African American teen Michael Brown, whose body lay uncovered for over four hours in the sweltering August heat of Ferguson, MO. By the time the explosion hit on Tuesday, August 12, 2014, announced by militarized vehicles and police in riot gear filling West Florissant Avenue in Ferguson, a rapidly growing movement was prepared to respond.

I was putting the finishing touches on my sermon on Saturday, August 9, when my Facebook and Twitter feeds were inundated with posts about the shooting. By 6 p.m., the incident was trending worldwide. Crowds gathered at the site of Canfield Apartments. I knew this incident was going to be different from other episodes of police violence against African American men. Sunday morning, a call went out urging clergy to gather for prayer at the Ferguson governmental offices, and a movement began taking shape. There was no question that I would participate in this moment: as a graduate of United and having had Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker as my doctoral mentor, social justice was ingrained in my DNA.

During the several weeks following the incident, I participated in meetings with the Department of Justice, real estate developers and community leaders and activists, listening and providing critique about where we were heading. In fact, I gave a keynote address to the community when we had a mass meeting with Ferguson city leadership at Christ the King United Church of Christ.

There were other United graduates in the St. Louis area entrenched in this moment. Rev. Dr. Cassandra Gould ’12, pastor of Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal church in Jefferson City, MO, has been on the forefront of leadership in her area for social justice for some time, having led protests at the state capitol for Medicaid insurance earlier in 2014. A native of St. Louis, Dr. Gould drove nearly 120 miles to come to Ferguson and be in the streets during those tense moments.

In Luke, Jesus begins his ministry by quoting the words of Isaiah 61: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.” This has been a foundational text for those who believe the church should be a transformative agent in the world. The Scripture goes on to speak of bringing the good news to the poor, healing the brokenhearted, preaching deliverance to the captives, setting prisoners free. In a hurting world, in a desecrated creation and shifting culture, where else can we expect to find a catalyst for positive change but the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Rev. Dr. F. Willis Johnson ’11 pastors Wellspring UMC, a relatively new church plant. His ministry is less than five years old, but Dr. Johnson has positioned the church to be an epicenter for strategy, theological reflection and social justice conversations that otherwise would not have happened. On the weekend of the one-year anniversary of Mike Brown’s death, Wellspring hosted a black scholars’ colloquium dealing with the Black Lives Matter movement. This church now serves as the meeting place for the new initiative — the Center for Social Empowerment and Justice. His doctoral mentor, Dr. Ivan Hicks ’94, came to provide support and encouragement and participated in several demonstrations.

While unrest following the Mike Brown incident continued into the early fall of 2014, another situation was brewing on the East Coast. On April 12, 2015, in Baltimore, MD, Freddie Gray was transported in a police van while severely injured. Several days later, he died. His death sparked protests and civil disobedience similar to the response in Ferguson. Clergy and community activists began to give shape to a nonviolent resistance movement.

Community meetings were held at New Shiloh Baptist Church where Rev. Dr. Harold Carter Jr. ’95 serves as pastor. Rev. Dr. Frank M. Reid III ’90 of Bethel AME met with city officials at his church to help them navigate through the ordeal it was facing. United alumni Rev. Dr. Lester McCorn ’11 of Pennsylvania AMEZ church and

Rev. Dr. Carl Solomon ’14 of United Baptist Church were integral in conversations because their communities were directly impacted by the “riots” that took place following the death of Freddie Gray.

In both Ferguson and Baltimore, the clergy have been on the frontlines, serving as a buffer between police officers and protestors. After the protests, however, clergy and the church must continue to be a people and a place of transformation and liberation while addressing prophetically and pastorally the systemic evils of culture and society. Ultimately, God, through the Holy Spirit, is the agent of change. However, we must not be afraid to be God’s conduit. And to do this work, we must have the Spirit of Christ, because it is not for the faint in heart.
A Decade on Denlinger

Celebrating a lifetime of faithful leaders at United

As United kicked off the 2015-2016 academic year in September, the Seminary began its 145th year of educating faithful leaders. This year also marks the ten-year anniversary of United’s relocation to the Denlinger Road campus.

Since this relocation, which was immediately followed by a curricular revision with an emphasis on renewal, United has graduated a thousand faithful leaders who are now serving in Christ’s ministry. We think that deserves some serious celebrating, so get ready for a year of festivities!

Check out the events we have planned to give thanksgiving for all that God has done at United, not only in the last ten years but since its founding in 1871. We can’t wait to see what the future holds!

“A leader is one who is willing to go out ahead of others, but a faithful Christian leader is one who goes out ahead in the path where Jesus himself is leading.”

— President Wendy Deichmann

Claim Your Space! Faithful Leaders Fund Naming Opportunities

We invite you to claim a space on our Denlinger Road campus! Help us celebrate and invest in God’s future by giving toward the naming of a space on United’s campus. Choose a giving level, shown below, and name a space in honor of a friend or loved one.

Not sure you can meet a naming level on your own? Pool your resources! President Wendy Deichmann is challenging each graduating class from 1950 through 2015 to combine its giving and name a space on United’s campus in commemoration of the class’s time at United.

Visit www.united.edu/faithful-leaders-fund to make an individual gift or to give toward your class’s space. Contact the Office of Development for further details: 937.529.2201 or development@united.edu.

Decade on Denlinger Celebration

Join the United community on campus on April 22, 2016, for the celebration of our ten years on Denlinger Road. During this time, we will dedicate newly named spaces and celebrate previously named spaces. You’ll have the chance to reconnect with classmates, tour the new facilities and sit in on guest lectures. We’re also looking forward to a reunion concert from graduates of the Seminary choir.

Save the date for this special event, and watch for more information about Decade on Denlinger in the coming months. To learn more about all the ways you can participate, contact the Office of Development: 937.529.2201 or development@united.edu.

2017 Alumni/ae Photo Contest

Alumni/ae are invited to participate in a year-long photo contest, culminating in the production of a photo calendar featuring alumni/ae in ministry. Between October 2015 and July 2016, alumni/ae may submit photos of their church congregations or ministries with the theme “United in Mission.” Special consideration will be given to photos that represent the variety of seasons and festivals celebrated throughout the church year.

Photo submissions must be in a digital format and at least 300 dpi (typically photos over 500 KB in size will be sufficient). Please provide the names of any persons who appear in photos, along with a signed release form for each person, which can be downloaded from our website.

Full details and requirements can be found at www.united.edu/photo-contest. All photos must be submitted by July 15, 2016. Calendars will be distributed and sold through United Bookstore. All whose photos are selected for inclusion in our 2017 “United in Mission” calendar will receive 10 free calendars.

Here are a few suggested photo themes for each month:

- January—Epiphany
- February—Black History
- March—Ash Wednesday, Lent
- April—Easter, Earth Day
- May—Memorial Day, Mother’s Day
- June—Pentecost, Father’s Day, Graduation
- July—Independence Day, Summer Camp, VBS
- August—Summer Camp
- September—Back-to-School

Christmas Card Competition

The children’s ministry program at Christ UMC in Kettering, OH, is co-hosting a commemorative Christmas Card competition with United. Senior Pastor, Rev. Barry DeShetler is a 1976 United alumnus, and Rev. Deb Egloff, who leads the children’s ministry for the church, attended United as well.

Children from Christ UMC’s children’s ministry will compete for the opportunity to have their drawing featured on United’s official 2015 Christmas Card. Finalists will be selected in four age groups: preschool, kindergarten through second grades, third through fifth grades and middle school. The United campus community will vote on these four finalists to determine United’s official 2015 Christmas card, which will be printed and mailed to all of our alumni/ae and friends.

Annual Report Correction

In our recognition of the Zimmerman gift on page 14 of United’s 2013-2014 Annual Report, we state that the Seminary was a beneficiary to a life-insurance policy. In fact, this was a substantial bequest from The Hershey Company on behalf of Mr. Richard Zimmerman.

Public Comments Requested for 2016 Reaccreditation Visit

United Theological Seminary will be hosting an evaluation visit on February 22-25 for reaffirmation of accreditation with the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools. The purpose of this visit is to review how well the school is fulfilling its educational mission in light of the Commission’s Standards of Accreditation (found at www.ats.edu/accrediting/standards-and-notations). In preparation for this visit, we invite any interested party to submit any substantive comments (positive or negative) on how well we are fulfilling our mission in light of these standards. Please email your comments (with your name, title, and address) at least one week before the visit to either of the following contacts:

- Joshua Reinders (Reinders@ats.edu), Administrative Assistant for Accrediting, ATS Commission on Accrediting, or
- JoAnn Wagner (jwagner@united.edu), Senior Assistant to the President, United Theological Seminary
Semester Six Reception

Students, mentors and staff pose for a group shot at the President’s Reception for Semester Six Doctor of Ministry students on August 18 during the Intensive in Dayton. These students are scheduled to graduate in December.

Dr. Sam Kim Receives Award

Byoung Sam Kim ’98 poses with President Deichmann after receiving United’s Global Leadership Award at A New Awakening, a conference held in May. The conference was a partnership between United and Wesley Fellowship Pastors of the Republic of Korea. Dr. Kim is senior pastor at Manna Methodist Church in Seoul, Korea.

October 19–24, 2015

ANNUAL PHONATHON

UNITED’S Pohly Center Directors Retire

Roger and Marilyn Evans ’89, ’95, pose with President Deichmann at a celebration of their service to United in the Pohly Center for Supervision and Leadership. They retired in June after serving for nine years as co-directors of the program.

Dr. Deichmann Visits the Mefferds

President Wendy Deichmann visited with Ted ’69 and Esther Mefferd on July 1 in Mount Gretna, PA. The Mefferds have given many years of faithful service to the church and in support of United.

Best Wishes to Dr. Richard Eslinger

Faculty, staff, students and alumni/a/e gathered on May 6, 2015 for a celebration in honor of Dr. Richard Eslinger on the occasion of his retirement from United Theological Seminary. Dr. Eslinger came to United in 2001 and for the last 14 years has served United’s students as Professor of Homiletics and Worship. In his retirement, he will continue teaching in the Course of Study Hybrid program and serving as a mentor in the Doctor of Ministry program.

COMING EVENTS

November 11–14

The Methodist School for Supernatural Ministry: Session 1

Sponsors: Aldersgate Renewal Ministries and United Theological Seminary

Speakers: Frank Billman, Peter Bellini, Margie Burger, Scott McDermott, Luther Oconer, David Watson, Ron Smitson

December 4

Holy Spirit Seminar

4th Annual Holy Spirit Seminar 2015:

PRAYER: TOUCHING HEAVEN, CHANGING EARTH

December 4, 2015

Holy Spirit Seminar

Theme: Prayer: Touching Heaven, Changing Earth

Speakers: James Goll, Mark Virkler

www.holyspiritseminar.org

December 18

Advent Commencement

Speaker: Kim Cape, General Secretary, Global Board of Higher Education and Ministry

May 20, 2016

Spring Commencement

Save the date!

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December 4

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4th Annual Holy Spirit Seminar 2015:

PRAYER: TOUCHING HEAVEN, CHANGING EARTH

December 4, 2015

Holy Spirit Seminar

Theme: Prayer: Touching Heaven, Changing Earth

Speakers: James Goll, Mark Virkler

www.holyspiritseminar.org

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February 22–25, 2016

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Save the date!

UNIVERSITY’S ANNUAL PHONATHON

October 19–24, 2015

Each year, the Phonathon is a valuable opportunity to reconnect with our alumni/a/e, share prayers and update contact information so that we can continue to “Keep in Touch”! We would greatly appreciate volunteers who can spend just a couple hours calling other alumni/a/e during this campaign to support United’s Faithful Leaders Fund. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Mandy Wood at aswood@united.edu or 937.529.2206.

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Keep In Touch with United

To submit any of the forms below, please do one of the following:
Visit www.united.edu and click on Alumni/ae menu, then select “Update Contact Information,” fill out the form and submit it to United. Or mail to:
United Theological Seminary, 4501 Denlinger Road, Dayton, OH 45426.

1. Update Your Contact Information
Please fill out the whole form if any of the information below has changed

Your Name:   Grad Year: 

Address:   

City:  State:  Zip:   

Home Phone: ( )  Office Phone: ( )   

E-mail:   

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