



# The Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago

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DDH Bulletin

Spring 2018

## Kagiwada and Williamson named Honorary Co-Chairs for 125th Anniversary Celebration, May 24-26, 2019

JoAnne H. Kagiwada and Clark M. Williamson have been named Honorary Co-Chairs for DDH's 125th Anniversary Celebration. The celebration will be held May 24-26, 2019, Memorial Day weekend, in Chicago.

"JoAnne Kagiwada and Clark Williamson have given exemplary leadership to the Disciples Divinity House," said April Lewton, President of the Board of Trustees. "Their life contributions also exemplify what we are grateful for and why we are celebrating 125 years of the Disciples Divinity House."

As honorary co-chairs, Ms. Kagiwada and Mr. Williamson will preside

over a weekend filled with special events. The 125th Celebration will feature a DDH StoryHour, lectures and discussion, music and worship, a gala dinner at the Quadrangle Club, preaching by Teresa Hord Owens, the second annual Amy Northcutt Lecture, food, festivity, and time to explore the University and the neighborhood.



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## 18 years to the day: Peeler set to retire



Marsha G.-H. Peeler

On July 6, eighteen years to the day that she began serving as Administrator of the Disciples Divinity House, Marsha G.-H. Peeler will retire.

During those eighteen years, she has ensured the day-to-day financial and physical well-being of the Disciples Divinity House. Her daily oversight has guided major capital projects, including the restoration of every window in the building and, in process now, replacement of the entire roof; she has managed unplanned events with aplomb, such as electrical outages, minor floods, and more.

Her tenacity and resourcefulness stood DDH in good stead during financial downturns and upturns. She

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## 2018 Graduates

On June 8, Disciples Divinity House marked the conclusion of its 123rd academic year and celebrated its graduates. These individuals, nine Disciples and one ecumenical resident, received their degrees from the University of Chicago Divinity School in June or will receive them later this year.

**Jonathan Cahill** (MDiv) will be a chaplain resident at the Cleveland Clinic. His senior ministry thesis, *Can Two Walk Together?*, explored "partnership" between the Disciples of Christ and the Community of Disciples in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It built on his summer 2017 travel fellowship, an opportunity

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## Honorary co-chairs

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JoAnne Hirasuna Kagiwada is currently the longest serving member of the Board of Trustees, having first been elected in 1984. A graduate of UC Berkeley Law (Boalt Hall), her distinguished career has focused on non-profit organizations. As Executive Director of the Legislative Education Committee of the Japanese American Citizens' League, she helped to ensure passage of a \$1.25 billion redress program on behalf of Americans of Japanese ancestry who were unconstitutionally deprived of their civil liberties and incarcerated in concentration camps by the US government during World War II. From 1978-88, she was Director of International Affairs for the Christian Church. She has served on numerous nonprofit boards, including as a vice president of the National Council of Churches.

Ms. Kagiwada first came to know the Disciples Divinity House through her husband, David Tamotsu Kagiwada, an alumnus and 1954 BD graduate of the Divinity School. Pastor of Crestview Christian Church in Indianapolis at the time of his death in 1985, David Kagiwada was perhaps best known for leading Disciples of diverse and historically antagonistic

Asian cultures into the formation of the American Asian Disciples (now NAPAD). In 1995, JoAnne Kagiwada created the David T. and JoAnne H. Kagiwada Fund at DDH.

Clark M. Williamson is the Indiana Professor of Christian Thought Emeritus at Christian Theological Seminary, and a BD and PhD alumnus of the Disciples Divinity House and the Divinity School. A pioneering architect of post-Holocaust Christian theology, he is an impassioned advocate for theology that is intellectually credible, morally plausible, and consistent with love of God and neighbor.

He has said that "the purpose of Christian theology is to bring the church to self-understanding and self-criticism," and those purposes find compelling expression in two of his most acclaimed books, *A Guest in the House of Israel: Post-Holocaust Church Theology*, and *Way of Blessing, Way of Life: A Christian Theology*.

Mr. Williamson has been a trustee of the Disciples Divinity House since 2007. He and his late wife created the Barbara and Clark Williamson Fund at the Disciples Divinity House. In 2015, DDH's Alumni/ae Council honored Mr. Williamson with its Distinguished Alumnus Award. ☞

### THE DISCIPLES DIVINITY HOUSE of the UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1156 East 57th Street  
Chicago, IL 60637  
773.643.4411  
ddh.uchicago.edu

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A native of Puerto Rico, she is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez. In 1981 she moved to New York City, where she completed two Master's degrees at the City College of New York while teaching middle school in impoverished areas in Manhattan and the Bronx. She embraced the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at La Hermosa Christian Church and gave leadership in the Northeast Region. In 2002, she moved to Omaha, Nebraska. There, she and her spouse were representative plaintiffs in a major Lambda Legal/ACLU lawsuit for marriage equality.

Ms. Pérez currently lives in Orange, California with her wife, Nancy Brink; she is active in the Church of the Foothills and served for two years as president of the UCC/DOC congregation. ☞

## Pérez begins service as trustee



María Pérez has been elected to the Trustee class of 2020. She began service at the April 28 meeting. She is a member of the faculty at Chapman

University, where she is Lecturer in the Department of World Languages and Cultures.

She brings significant leadership experience throughout the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). She is the former chair of the Board of Directors of the Division of Overseas Ministries and of the Common Board of Global Ministries; former moderator of the Disciples National Hispanic and Bilingual Assembly and the Pastoral Commission for Hispanic Ministers; and former moderator of the GLAD (now the Disciples LGBT+) Alliance.

## 2018 Graduates

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made possible through Global Ministries and with DDH funding.

**Hannah Fitch** (MDiv) envisions pastoral ministry after one more quarter in Chicago. She served as Vice President of the Divinity Students Association (DSA) for two years, and as Director of Alternative-Worship at LaSalle Street Church. Her ministry thesis, *Posture and Praxis: A Role for an Evolving Church*, looked to sources from Hildegard of Bingen to Larry Bouchard for insight on constructing a spiritual path for the “unchurched” of current times.

**Burton Guion** (MA) will tutor elementary school children in inner-city Milwaukee through Americorps beginning in August. While at DDH, he has revived the fresh food garden in the backyard.

**Andrew Langford** received his PhD in New Testament and Early Christian Literature. His dissertation, *Diagnosing Deviance: Pathology and Polemic in the Pastoral Epistles*, was advised by Margaret M. Mitchell. He has taught and written on the Bible and disability. In addition to writing and teaching, he serves as Pastoral Associate at Emmaus Lutheran Church in Eugene, Oregon.

**Colton Lott** (MDiv) will be ordained June 30 in Ada, Oklahoma. He has been called as the minister of First Christian Church, El Reno, Oklahoma. He served as DDH’s Head Resident from 2016-18. His senior ministry thesis, *A Theological Exploration of the So-Called Dying Church*, combined theological perspectives with the Eriksons’ theory of human development, to suggest how churches can live the span of their existence to its completion, even with “generativity.”

**Joshua Menke** (MDiv), who is pursuing ordination in the ELCA, will move to Europe to complete a congregational residency. His senior ministry thesis, *The Eschaton Nearby*:



(l to r) 1st row Shelly Tilton, Andrew Langford, Colton Lott, Joshua Menke, Dean Kris Culp; 2nd row Burton Guion, Virginia White, Convocation speaker Pamela James Jones; 3rd row Luke Soderstrom, Associate Dean Yvonne Gilmore, Jonathan Cahill, Hannah Fitch.

*Contestations of Space and Time at Standing Rock*, highlighted implications of Christian eschatology for how communities inhabit place and relate to one another justly. He formerly taught near the Standing Rock reservation.


**Luke Soderstrom** (MA) will enter the PhD program in Theology at the Divinity School. He will explore questions of interpreting the non-linguistic and non-rational that arise in intellectual and developmental disability using resources from Christian mystical traditions. He serves Disciples Higher Education and Leadership Ministries (HELM) as an assistant to its president, Chris Dorsey.

**Shelly Tilton** (MA) has been admitted to the PhD program at the University of Virginia, where she will focus on religion, media, and culture. She has been awarded a summer study fellowship by the Disciples Divinity House to go to Heidelberg, Germany, to the Theologisches Studienhaus (TSH) and for language study. She served as the Divinity School’s representative to the Graduate Student Association.

**Virginia White** (MDiv) will continue as a PhD student at the Divin-

ity School. She will build on work from her senior ministry thesis, *Be Thou My Vision?: Moral Perception in a Neoliberal World*, to examine the intersections of political-economy and moral formation in religious ethics. During her MDiv studies, she served as the DSA Treasurer, and completed a DDH-supported internship focused on social justice ministries with the Oakland Peace Center and Week of Compassion in Oakland, California.

In addition, **Kristel Clayville**, who participated in a prior convocation, received her PhD for her dissertation entitled, *Responsible Hermeneutics: Interpretation of Religious Texts in the Environmental Ethics of Hans Jonas and Holmes Rolston II*. She is the Acting Director of the Zygon Center at LSTC, and Senior Ethics Fellow at the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at the University of Chicago. She was a visiting professor at Eureka College this year.

Speaking at the Convocation was Pamela James Jones, Vice President of the Board of Trustees and Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Central Michigan University. See her address in this *Bulletin*. 

## Hubert G. Locke: In memoriam

Hubert Gaylord Locke, former trustee, died June 2 in Seattle. He was 84.

An admired and consequential civic leader, scholar, and minister, Hubert Locke was the John and Marguerite Corbally Professor of Public Service Emeritus at the University of Washington, where he also served as Dean of the Evans School of Public Affairs and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs. Previously he taught at Wayne State University and the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

His scholarship delved into matters of conscience, religion, and public life, particularly, the Holocaust. He was a co-founder of the Annual Scholars Conference on the Holocaust and



the Churches and a former member of the Committee on Conscience of the US Holocaust Museum. He was the author or editor of eleven volumes, including *Searching for God in Godforsaken Times and Places: Reflections on the Holocaust, Racism, and Death* (2003), and his definitive *The Detroit Riot of 1967*, reissued on the fiftieth anniversary of the event with a new afterword.

Mr. Locke was born on the Old West Side of Detroit, Michigan, on April 30, 1934. He earned a BA (Latin and Greek) from Wayne State University in 1955; a BD from the University of Chicago in 1959; and a MA in Comparative Literature from the University of Michigan in 1961.

After graduating from the University of Chicago, he became the minister of the Church of Christ of Conant Garden in Detroit and executive director of the Citizens' Committee for Equal Opportunity, a civil rights organization. Even though Detroit had received "national acclaim as a model community in race relations in the United States," as Mr. Locke put it, black neighborhoods knew the reality of police brutality. In 1966, he was

recruited by the mayor to work with the Detroit police commissioner, and played a pivotal role in mitigating the effects of the 1967 riot.

Throughout his life, he continued to advise mayors, governors, and university presidents. His role in public life was once described as "a sort of civic-wise-man-in-residence, counseling patience and understanding in politicians and offering a voice of reason on contentious issues from race relations to growth management."

For his public service and scholarship, he was awarded seven honorary doctorates and numerous other honors. He was first elected a trustee of the Disciples Divinity House in 1998 and served consecutive terms until 2014. He made estimable contributions to Board deliberations, regularly engaged DDH students, and helped to attune DDH to the future.

He is survived by a sister, Joyce Bridgeforth; daughters Gayle P. Simmons and Lauren M. Locke; and by a grandson and two great-grandchildren. A memorial service will be held on July 28 at University Christian Church in Seattle, where he was a longtime member. ☞

## Mrs. Peeler

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has administered health insurance and student billing, and planned for Monday dinners, Board meetings, and new students by the dozens.

Mrs. Peeler came to the Divinity House having grown up around the University and with years of experience working in the University herself. She worked at the Divinity School as Assistant Program Coordinator of the Martin Marty Center and faculty secretary, in the Department of Medicine as a medical secretary, and in the Comptroller's office.

Head Resident Colton Lott reflects, "I am thankful for Mrs. Peeler, for the knowledge she has and the compassion she showed as she made the House our home."

House resident and office assistant Matthew Johnson celebrated her ability to tell long stories with humor and spirit. He observed that her devotion to the House, as a place and as a set of relations, is more than merely a matter of professional obligation.

Students and alumni/ae are central to her own reflections. "Look at the students and all of the places that they go. Look at all of the work that they go on to do," she noted.

We know that Marsha Peeler's work is embedded in the soundness of DDH's financial accounts and of its windows and walls. And surely part of her indomitable spirit has also accompanied graduates in their relations and vocations.

Marsha and Walter Peeler are the parents of three adult children,

Connie, Brandy, and Christopher, and the proud grandparents of Marsha, Grayson, and Kai'Aire. The Peelers plan to move to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to be near their grandchildren.

Daette Lambert has been named Administrator effective in August. She has served part-time as Assistant Administrator since July 2015. She brings six additional years of educational administration experience, including in the PhD Program Office at the University's Booth School of Business, and at Truman State University as Staff Assistant to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. She and her husband, Mark Lambert, a House Scholar and PhD candidate in Theology, are the proud parents of Hogan, Valen, and Mattie Mary. ☞

# Gospel dedication and bodily commitment

Convocation address by Pamela James Jones

Vice President, Board of Trustees

Assistant Professor, Central Michigan University

June 8, 2018

*Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God.... Romans 12:1-2*

Graduates, I know that you are tired, restless, anxious, and excited. Many of you may already have positions, and some of you will return for more graduate education. Others are still contemplating options. I know all too well what you have experienced. In fact, I could not get enough and came back for more.

I know the highs and lows of this place, I also know that you have created deep bonds in this House through dinner, classwork, and late-night discussions. These bonds are a permanent part of your life. Nourish them and keep them strong. You are each other's lifelines in the work of ministry, teaching, and community building. May God bless these ties that bind us.

I know also that you are hoping that what you have learned here will be complemented by challenging and meaningful work. As a student, I used to plead with God, "please make it good." I can report that God made provisions, and it has been "good enough." Because this house community and my graduate education prepared me, I have learned how to survive and thrive. So, take courage and do not fear the future.

Every semester I feature a segment on "Freedom Summer" in my courses. Freedom Summer took place in 1964. It was an innovative program sponsored by the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, the student arm of the Southern Christian Leader-

ship Conference. One thousand students, the majority of them Northern Whites, volunteered to work in Mississippi in over forty local projects. They lived in Freedom Houses or in African American homes, openly flaunting the mores of racial segregation. Their principal job was to register African Americans to vote and teach poor African American children in Freedom Schools—children who had been deprived of an adequate education under Mississippi law and racist tradition.

In his book, *Freedom Summer*, Doug McAdam analyzed the experiences of these young people. He wanted to know what drove these young, mostly white, economically and socially privileged students to participate. What motivated these community and political organizers, future lawyers, physicians, teachers, and bankers to risk their lives for people they did not know, for those whose cause of freedom did not seem, at least on the surface, to intersect with their own in any tangible way? What was the spiritual and intellectual drive that prompted them to put their bodies in harm's way, and work in a Southern state that was a racial minefield of death and destruction?

Let me offer you an exemplary case that tells a story not only of civic and moral activism, but of one young person's struggle for self-liberation. The applicant wrote:

*A century ago the proclamation of emancipation was signed. A decade ago, the desegregation of schools was ordered. Today the Negroes of Mississippi still await their emancipation from the bondage of manifold segregation. No longer, though, are they resigned to accept the injustice of their political and*



*economic, social and educational thrall-dom. Now they are impatient and will act.*

*Now, I, too, am impatient and will act because for too many years I have been passively waiting. In endless discussion, I have philosophized about the essence of man, and attempted to establish fundamental principles of moral action.... Such ethical and intellectual dedication, without any bodily commitment, rings hollow, however, and is surely of no avail in the struggle against intransigent injustice in Mississippi. The time for empathy without action is long past. I am impatient and will act now.*

Another student participant shared that she went to her church for monetary support for that summer and experienced full resistance from her pastor who did everything to talk her out of going to Mississippi. She said, "I was just stunned. His whole rap seemed to be 'good Christians don't rock the boat.'" She found the money anyhow. She was willing to "rock the boat."

For these young people the work of social change was more than a moral and philosophical endeavor. Many of them were taught the Golden Rule and to love one's neighbor, and it seemed evident that some physical commitment had to match their intellectual and spiritual life. The necessity of such a bodily commitment

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## Graduates

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became an important ingredient to their understanding of how beloved communities are to be formed and sustained.

McAdam makes two important observations about these young people. First, they reached a point where they could no longer reconcile what they had been taught in school, what they had discussed with peers and mentors, with others' experiences of oppression. They could no longer reconcile the faith that had been modeled to them at home with the oppression of fellow human beings while they lived insular and privileged lives in their Northern communities.

Second, many of them had already been involved in seemingly insignificant forms of service and activism in their local communities and churches. They had participated in tutoring programs at the YWCA, voter registration, mission trips sponsored by their churches to communities down South, and other forms of active service. These activities had already set them on the search for greater meaning and purpose. Through these smaller acts of service, they were being prepared for larger forms of activism—for what would become the most monumental, courageous, and life-changing program of many of their lives, Freedom Summer.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus proclaims his followers as "salt and light," reveals that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets, and declares the stringent ethical demands required by the Kingdom of God, including practicing the Golden Rule and loving one's enemies. Jesus says that we will be judged by our good fruit, and that only those who are doers of the will of God will be part of God's Kingdom. In Matthew 7:24, Jesus proclaims that those who practice the Word of God are to be commended as "wise" because they will grow and mature with their lives

firmly planted in the will of God.

Likewise, the Apostle Paul teaches the followers of Jesus in Rome that their reasonable service to God for the grace and mercy that have been bestowed, is that they live in the will of God by practicing the non-conformity of the Gospel. It is reasonable to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God and allow our minds to be continually transformed in order to test and approve what is God's will.

For many of those young people who went down South, the intellectual, moral, spiritual, and scriptural demands of the Gospel could not be separated from bodily commitments. We cannot say that we love God and neither love nor do anything to alleviate the suffering of others. Our Gospel dedication must have a bodily commitment. The two create the whole of what it means to be a part of God's Kingdom. Without both, we betray ourselves in the face of masses of people who wonder, "Is it true? Is the Gospel of Jesus Christ really true?"

I bring this message to you because what constitutes church today is often sermons offering counsel on being a great parent or spouse, being available for your kids, finding balance in your work life; a stirring message that "God's got your back," or that "your breakthrough is coming." Those sermons may have their place, but they are no substitute for the living waters of the Gospel. In many cases, these subjects are preached with no emphasis on communal outreach or activism. As theologian N.T. Wright comments, it is not unusual to hear sermons on Good Advice rather than the liberating and prophetic preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the one who conquered this world with the power of love and nonconformity to the patterns of this world.

We are, by mandate, those who follow the example of Jesus Christ, the ones who "rock boats." This is what it means to be doers of the Word of God; this is how we experience the richness that the Gospel brings to our lives.



Paul Steinbrecher and Andrew Langford

More than ever, we must hear this because we have an opportunity with a wide-open and ever-rising mission field that is comprised of skeptical generations—X, Millennials, and Generation Z—who now identify as unaffiliated with any form of religious institutional life in unprecedented numbers. They believe Christians are self-righteous, bigoted, uninterested in social justice, homophobic, and hypocritical. And the religiously unaffiliated demographic is growing rapidly. These generations are losing trust in the power of institutions to bring about social change, and a spirit of reconciliation and renewal. However, these generations bend toward the countercultural. I believe this makes the Gospel message of nonconformity and the call to express God's word in practice appealing and may help reverse some of this decline.

Challenging times like these present fabulous opportunities for your stellar academic preparation, along with your gifts of innovation, creativity, and energy, to redirect the future of our faith to more constructive engagement with these generations. I have great confidence that you are ready for this opportunity: to lead people into lived experiences of the Gospel with passion and loving compassion.

May the Lord bless you and keep you and sustain you in your new lives. And may you never lose passion for building God's Kingdom on earth. ☒

# The Fragrance of Truth: Theological Education and Religious Community

by Stephanie Paulsell, Harvard Divinity School

The First Annual Amy A. Northcutt Lecture

Washington, DC, May 5, 2018

It is an honor to be here in Amy's church, among her family and her friends, to celebrate the scholarship that will honor her commitment to supporting the theological education of women at the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago.

As a grateful recipient of a DDH education, I look forward to being led, challenged, and transformed by the women whose academic and pastoral leadership will be made possible by this scholarship. We don't even know their names yet, but they're out there, brilliant and creative, like Amy herself, and the opportunity this fund offers will be transformative for them and for us.

Craig, Henry, and Lei Lei, on behalf of all whose lives the Amy A. Northcutt Scholarship will touch, we thank you for your generosity and your vision.

At the memorial service last June, Amy's sister Nancy made available some of Amy's writing, including a sermon called "Certainties and Mys-

teries" that Amy had preached at the 50th anniversary celebration of Western Oaks Christian Church in Oklahoma City, the church in which she grew up and where she had served as a minister. Amy organized the sermon around words that were printed in the church bulletin every Sunday, words she described as being "etched on her heart." They came from Edward Scribner Ames, Dean of Disciples Divinity House from 1927-1945.

Every Sunday, when Amy opened her bulletin, she saw these words:

*This church practices union; has no creed but Christ; seeks to make religion as intelligent as science; as appealing as art; as vital as the day's work; as intimate as the home; and as inspiring as love.*

Imagine a little girl, sitting with her sisters in a pew in Oklahoma City, holding her bulletin in her two hands, and taking in a vision of a living faith that threads through every aspect of human life, from our creativity to our daily work to our life with one another to our questions about the universe and how it works.

Amy not only received that vision of a lively, engaged faith in her bulletin, but also in the life of the church itself—through, as she put it, "shared meals, summer camps and retreats, chancel drama, singing and dancing, crazy pranks, [and] Bible studies." And it took.

In her sermon, Amy offered a commentary on Mr. Ames's vision of

what the church could be. What did we learn, she asked, from trying to live out that vision in Western Oaks Christian Church? We learned, she answered, that life together is good. That to be human is to be vulnerable, both to suffering and to transformation. That our tears of grief and joy "loosen the soil of our hearts"—Amy's words—and open us up to God and to one another. That being anchored in the gospel means that there is no longer any "us" or "them." That scripture doesn't answer all our questions but instead illuminates the unknowable more at the heart of our existence.

I want to follow Amy's lead and offer a commentary on a vision of the church. Not Mr. Ames's vision, although I love that passage. We are celebrating Amy's commitment to the raising up of women's voices—in the church, in the academy, in public life—and Amy's family's continued faithfulness to that commitment. I'd like to base my remarks on a brief passage from the fourteenth-century theologian, Catherine of Siena—like Mr. Ames, and like Amy Northcutt, a profound thinker who brought theology to life in community.

Catherine of Siena is one of only four women who have been named as "Doctors of the Church," a designation recognizing those who have had genuinely new insight into the Christian faith and who impart that new knowledge through their teaching.

Catherine was named a doctor of the church in 1970 by Pope Paul VI along with the Spanish theologian Teresa of Avila. They were joined in 1997 by Therese of Lisieux and in 2012 by Hildegard of Bingen. Doctors all, these women are teachers from



Stephanie Paulsell

First Annual  
**Amy A. Northcutt**  
**Lecture and Celebration**  
 May 5, 2018 - Washington, D.C.

**Stephanie Paulsell**  
 Susan Shallcross Swartz Professor,  
 Harvard Divinity School, speaking



whom we are still learning.

Catherine of Siena was born in 1347, the twenty-fourth child of a local wool-dyer and his wife. She grew up down the hill from the church of San Domenico, a center of learning and worship for the Dominicans, the order of preachers, including a group of Dominican women whose ministry was caring for the poor and the sick in their city. Catherine's family was not pleased when she began expressing interest in joining this group.

When Catherine was fifteen years old, her family tried to get her to marry. She cut off all her hair and refused. Emma Gonzalez, the young Parkland High School activist who spoke to the nation at the March for our Lives here in Washington a few weeks ago, and who led us in several very full minutes of silence, reminds me of Catherine, with her shorn hair and her clarity. Leaders continue to rise up, thank God, generation after generation.

When Catherine turned eighteen, she began living in silence in her room, coming out only to go to Mass at San Domenico. She stayed in her room for three years—which is the length of time it takes to earn a Master of Divinity degree at the University of Chicago. During those years, she learned to read, she studied and prayed, and had experiences of God's presence that left their mark on the shape of her life. After three years, she emerged, ready to work. And with her sister Dominicans, she began devoting

herself to the daily care of the needy in her city, tending to the dying when the plague broke out in Siena in 1374, caring for people in the hospitals and in the streets.

Catherine was the kind of person whose brilliance and energy and fresh view of the possibilities of our shared humanity drew others to her. A group of friends began to take shape around her. She called them *la bella brigata*, her beautiful gang. They crowded into her room for hours each day, talking and talking—about scripture, about theology, about politics, about the movement of God in their lives and in the world. Catherine's theological education happened in these kinds of engagements — conversation, prayer, reading and debate — the same kinds of engagements that light up Disciples Divinity House every day.

As she became better known, Catherine began to travel, addressing political and religious disputes. She interceded with violent English mercenaries who were rampaging around the countryside and demanding bribes from the cities. She ministered to a political prisoner in Siena. She helped to end the Great Schism by convincing Pope Gregory XI to bring the papacy back to Rome.

But she wasn't perfect. She preached a crusade that sent armed men marching to Jerusalem. And she was vulnerable to having her power co-opted in the struggles between the papacy and the Italian city-states. Trying to negotiate between Rome and

Florence, she came very close to being assassinated, an experience that shook her to the ground. She eventually moved to Rome, living in community with women and men, meeting and advising popes and cardinals, counseling her followers, continuing the conversation that had begun in the room she had grown up in. She hoped to establish a council of holy people who would cut through the political machinations of Rome and keep the church focused on prayer, and justice, and the care of others. But she died before she could accomplish that, in 1380, at the age of 33.

One of her lasting achievements is a book called *The Dialogue* in which Catherine tried to capture her lifelong conversation with God. It begins with one of my favorite sentences in all of literature: *A soul rises up, restless with tremendous desire for God's honor and the salvation of souls.* I love thinking of that young woman struggling against the demands of her culture, restless with the desire for God, and eager to be of use rising up from her ordinary life to the extraordinary ministry to which she was called.

In the dialogue with God that Catherine recounts in her book, the two of them commiserate quite a bit on all the ways the church disappoints. When the poor are shunned, when the educated hold themselves above everyone else, when the ministers charged with caring for God's people betray that trust, God told Catherine, they make my house "a robbers' den."

But Catherine and God talked together even more about what the church could be. I'd like to comment on one of these passages today, as Amy did on the words of E. S. Ames. God says to Catherine:

*My house ought to be a house of prayer. There the pearl of justice ought to shine, and the light of learning joined with holy and honorable living. There one should find the fragrance of truth.*

Three sentences written by a woman



who lived a long time before Amy Northcutt, but who is linked to her through a fierce and critical love of the church, a vision of what the church could be, and a commitment to the leadership of women.

Catherine died 628 years ago last Sunday, and yet her words continue to awaken both thought and love. We lost Amy a year ago tomorrow, but she still has the power to gather and inspire us. Together, in the cloud of witnesses that surrounds us, these women draw us beyond things as they are toward things as they might be.

### *I. My house ought to be a house of prayer.*

Amy finished her degree at the University of Chicago Divinity School, as a scholar of the Disciples Divinity House, in 1983. I moved into the House two years later, where I lived next door to Kay Northcutt, Amy's sister. All of us entered DDH in the first decade after women were admitted as residential House scholars. We were close enough to that watershed moment in the House's history to feel ourselves part of a vanguard of women making space for the women who would come after us. This scholarship, in Amy's name, continues that work.

For me, the House was a place of intense study, intense conversation, and the occasional intense blowing off of steam. The Divinity Student Association's annual Halloween party was held in the Disciples House common room, and it was always wild. Our arguments in class sometimes spilled out onto the dance floor. I remember a bunch of us from Anne Carr's feminist theology class arguing about whether it was ok to dance to the Rolling Stones' song, "Under My Thumb," shouting at one another over the music.

Disciples House was also a house of prayer. In our little gothic jewel box of a chapel, we gathered for prayer at 5:30 on Monday afternoons before

sharing dinner together. We sat facing each other in the monastic choir stalls and traded the words of psalms and hymns and prayers back and forth.

On Thursday nights at 10:00 pm, another group gathered in chapel—a group of women Divinity School students. We did not sit in the choir but rather in a circle on the floor. We sat in the dark, and lit candles. And we took turns bringing to each other, each week, some sort of liturgy that we ourselves had written.

I found a few of these liturgies yellowing in a file a few weeks ago. They lift up and honor women's history, women's friendships, and the theological questions about creation and redemption, oppression and liberation that arise out of women's experience. They call upon God as mother, as fullness, as light. It took my breath away to read them, to remember how I had felt the world opening up all around me as we sat together on the floor of the chapel, praying each other's prayers.

To borrow a phrase from the novelist Virginia Woolf, those prayers

were "matches struck unexpectedly in the dark." They helped us feel our way along the edges of the education we were pursuing in the classrooms of the Divinity School—helped us contextualize it, and critique it, and be transformed by it. In prayer, we activated our education.

These days, prayer suffers from a bad reputation. The phrase "thoughts and prayers" even has its own Wikipedia entry that explains that "thoughts and prayers" are frequently offered after mass shootings and other disasters in lieu of taking meaningful action. Politicians, as I don't have to tell those of you who live in Washington, DC, are well known for offering prayers instead of passing laws to meet the crises of our time. As we saw when the chaplain of the House of Representatives was asked to step down (a decision since reversed), power prefers that prayer remain a mere decoration for our sorrows, a shorthand for the maintenance of the status quo. "Stay away from politics, padre," the Speaker of the House reportedly said after the chaplain prayed for those who live

An alumna of the Disciples Divinity House and former president of its Board of Trustees, Amy Northcutt was a person of deep faith who believed in the power of theological education for women especially.



The Amy A. Northcutt Scholarship and annual lecture are envisioned as ways to honor and sustain Amy's love of people and ideas, her relish in thinking creatively and critically to solve problems and build connections, and her sense of God's grace in the world and our responsibility for each other.

The scholarship fund reached \$76,000 in June 2018. When fully funded at \$250,000, it will benefit promising women leaders who are pursuing theological studies at the University of Chicago. See more at [ddh.uchicago.edu/giving/amy-a.-northcutt-scholarship/](http://ddh.uchicago.edu/giving/amy-a.-northcutt-scholarship/)

The Second Annual Amy A. Northcutt Lecture and Celebration will be held **May 26, 2019**, at the Disciples Divinity House, in conjunction with DDH's 125th anniversary celebration.

in poverty in our country the day the House voted on the tax bill.

The debate over what prayer is for goes way back. In the third century, the theologian Origen of Alexandria wrote that many people in his time and place believed prayer to be worthless. Why pray, many of his contemporaries asked, if God already knows everything, including what we need and what will happen in the future? Why pray if prayer is not going to change anything?

Origen's answer was that prayer is not useless but rather a mark of our freedom as rational beings alive in the world. Prayer does not immobilize us; it activates us. God uses our freedom, Origen insists, for the benefit of others. When we pray, we participate in God's work.

Catherine of Siena would agree. Catherine is sometimes called a "social mystic" or a "mystic activist" because of the organic way she integrated her energetic political and social work with her profound spirituality. But what she really was, was a person who prayed, and whose prayer shaped all the ways she moved her body through the world. Catherine practiced what she described as "continual humble prayer, grounded in the knowledge of herself and of God," believing that if she wanted to understand herself, she would have to know the God who created her. And if she wanted to know God, she would have to face herself, honestly.

Catherine felt herself being constantly remade in prayer, learning to see as God sees, learning to love as God loves. *Open your mind's eye and look within me, God said to her, and you will see the dignity and beauty of my reasoning creature.* Now there is a glimpse of religion "as intelligent as science" that so captured Amy Northcutt as she grew. Catherine believed that God cherishes our ability to think, to imagine, to create. It is a sign of our creation in God's image, a response to the unpredictable, creative possibility God has set loose in the world.

**My house ought to be a house of prayer.  
There the pearl of justice ought to shine,  
and the light of learning joined with holy  
and honorable living. There one should find  
the fragrance of truth.**

**- Catherine of Siena**

The theologian and philosopher of the Civil Rights movement, Howard Thurman, understood prayer as the hunger of God within us calling to the God who created us. Prayer is what we were made for, Thurman says, and if we seek God in prayer, we won't be able to stop ourselves from praying for others. The question of whether it does any good or not is almost beside the point. We pray for others because it is "the most natural thing in the world," not because we know what the outcome will be.

Thurman, like Origen and Catherine, believed that prayer did have effects in the world. Prayer opens our life to another's need and helps us see what that need has to do with us. More mysteriously, our prayer for another might quicken the spirit of the person for whom we pray, awaken their own hunger, and so put them in the path of what Thurman called "the vast creative energies of God." These two effects of prayer are two dimensions of the same experience, with God's vast creative energies winding through the lives of the one who prays and the one who is prayed for, filling the space between us with a growing understanding of what we owe one another and a growing desire to be of use to one another.

Catherine of Siena's theological education emerged from her prayer. But she did not understand prayer as something separate from everything else she did, from teaching, learning, healing, caring, struggling, loving. Prayer was a practice of radical pres-

ence to God, to herself, and to the world around her.

Recently I heard the writer and climate change activist, Terry Tempest Williams, speak about the relationship between contemplative prayer and public vocation. She spoke about trying to stay turned toward the realities of climate change without becoming numb: "I choose not to look away. For me, that is contemplative prayer. It is praying without ceasing." In her own prayer, Catherine refused to turn away from her call to ministry and leadership, from the suffering of others, or from the political crises of her day.

## ***II. There the pearl of justice ought to shine, and the light of learning joined with holy and honorable living.***

Catherine's relationship with God was forged at the intersection of love and knowledge, living and learning. Loving God led her to want to know God. And knowing God led her, as she put it, *to pursue truth and clothe herself in it.* The movement between love and knowledge, living and learning, was the dynamic that gave shape to her life and the motion that polished the pearl of justice that God told her should be shining from the very heart of the church.

One of the best things I've read recently about moving between learning and living is the historian Timothy Snyder's little book, *On Tyranny*. Snyder is a scholar of authoritarian regimes, and his scholarship is marked

by his desire to learn something about how to live from the history he studies. He answers the question, “What can we do to resist tyranny in our own place and time?,” with a list of twenty practices. They include things like: establish a private life; read books; take responsibility for the face of the world by taking down symbols of hate when they appear; put your body in unfamiliar places and make new friends; be as courageous as you can.

One of the practices Snyder commends is striking in its simplicity: make eye contact, he says, and small talk. In all the places where tyranny has emerged, what the people who survive it remember years later is how their neighbors treated them. Small gestures like stopping to comment on the weather or offering a handshake came to mean a very great deal to people living under threat in Nazi Germany or during the purges in eastern Europe. When vulnerable people saw their neighbors averting their eyes from them, or crossing the street to avoid meeting them, they felt more afraid. And with good reason—someone who is isolated in society is easier for an authoritarian regime to harm than someone who is known, and seen, and held in community.

“You might not be sure, today or tomorrow, who feels threatened in the United States,” Snyder writes. So he recommends making eye contact with everyone: smile, offer a handshake, stop and chat for a moment when you can. If you make eye contact with everyone, he says, then you will, for sure, make some people feel better. And you will combat the isolation that increases their vulnerability.

Snyder’s practices strike me as spiritual practices, ones that have the potential to make us more present to each other and more present in our lives. Without practices that gather up the scattered parts of ourselves from time to time, practices that bring our inner lives and our outer lives into alignment for a moment, we can go through life slightly dissociated

from everything going on around us. We call it multi-tasking, and we brag about it. But we’re not fully present. And, as Timothy Snyder suggests, distracted people who are not fully present in the world around them are easier to manipulate into compliance.

The practice of making eye contact and small talk pulls us toward being more fully present: it slows us down, it requires us to care as much about connecting with the person in front of us as we do about getting to the next place we’re going. It’s a simple gesture that allows us to practice something complex, that is, being present in the world. It is also part of a larger practice: the practice of hospitality, a practice with a long history in many religious traditions.

If you’ve ever seen the film, *Weapons of the Spirit*, you’ve seen one example of this in Le Chambon, France—a community that sheltered 3,500 Jews and 1,500 others persecuted under the Vichy regime and helped many get over the border to safety in Switzerland. The Protestant (Huguenot) community had, a few centuries earlier, lived through its own persecution. Indeed, the path they walked with those they helped get from their village to the Swiss border in the twentieth century had been walked by their ancestors for very similar reasons. This community kept those paths clear through their well-honed practices of hospitality, even during the years when they didn’t need them so urgently.

When refugees began knocking on their doors in the early 1940s, the community didn’t have to waste time wondering what to do or how to do it. They simply did what they had practiced doing in their everyday lives: they offered hospitality to those who needed it. They opened their doors and their kitchens, they provided false documents and ration cards, they made up beds in their churches and their schools, and they accompanied people on the perilous journey to the border. As Elisabeth Koenig-



House Scholar Victoria Wick led the benediction at the lecture.

Kaufman, a former child refugee in Le Chambon, put it, “Nobody asked who was Jewish and who was not. Nobody asked where you were from. Nobody asked who your father was or if you could pay.” They just took us in.

The community of Le Chambon had been practicing hospitality for a long time. They were formed by its small gestures—opening the door when the knock came rather than sitting still and silent until whoever was knocking moved on, keeping extra pillows and blankets and food on hand. And, I expect, making eye contact and small talk with people they encountered. They had practiced being open and welcoming for generations. And so when it was a matter of life or death, they could open their doors without hesitation. Sometimes these kinds of heroic acts are like miracles, coming out of nowhere. But most of the time, they’re prepared for, in community, through practice.

These kinds of formative practices have a long history in communities of learning and communities of faith, histories we need to be studying and learning from. Ancient philosophical communities—Stoics, Epicureans, Platonists—all developed practices intended to sharpen their attention to the present moment, to help them learn to live “freely and consciously,” and make them available to be transformed. These practices included meditation, the study of the natural world, the cultivation of friendship,

the remembrance of things worth remembering. Amy included in her sermon for Western Oaks a specific, local version of those same practices: “shared meals, summer camps and retreats, chancel drama, singing and dancing, crazy pranks, [and] Bible studies.”

The Platonists cultivated a communal spiritual exercise whose title Catherine of Siena borrowed for her book, the dialogue. If you’ve ever read a Platonic dialogue, you’ve seen the practice in action. Socrates draws someone into conversation about some significant question or other: What is truth? What is justice? What is the good?

But the dialogue is not primarily about getting to the answer. It’s about the practice itself, a dialectic practice that requires the consent of its participants in every moment. The point is not to articulate a doctrine, but to shape a mental attitude, an orientation toward life that opens one to conversion, to change.

That’s why you can’t just skip to the end of a dialogue to find the answer any more than you can summarize a poem. The answer’s not at the end; it’s not reducible to a definition. The answer’s in the practice of dialogue itself, a practice of moving together toward truth, toward justice, toward the Good.

For the Stoics, attention was the foundation of every spiritual exercise, the philosophical practice par excellence. What they meant by attention was both attention to the present moment and attention to the things one wants to remember. Pierre Hadot

says that the practice of attention “allows us to respond immediately to events, as if they were questions asked of us all of a sudden,” a description that reminds me of the story of Le Chambon. That community was suddenly asked: Can you take me in? Can you help me? Will you risk your life to save mine?

In the history of authoritarian regimes, Timothy Snyder writes, there comes a time when police officers and soldiers are asked to do irregular things. Another of the practices he commends is, “if you must bear arms, be reflective.” Snyder urges soldiers and police officers to “be ready to say no.” To practice finding the words, to remember the bedrock convictions that will help you answer the question in a moment.

Cultivating attention is also a core religious practice. The philosopher Simone Weil argued that “prayer consists of attention.” For Weil, our education—theological or otherwise—is an opportunity to cultivate that attention. Because studying something outside ourselves requires us to make ourselves present to something that is not ourselves, without domesticating it or turning it into something like us. If we’re studying Arabic or Italian or Sanskrit, the language is not going to change to accommodate us. The grammar, syntax, and vocabulary have to be learned as they are. When we do that, Weil says, when we really make ourselves available to what we study, we increase our capacity to be present to God in prayer, and to our suffering neighbor.

If we spend our years in school

without trying to cultivate this kind of attention, she says, we miss an opportunity to be transformed. Weil calls this an “experimental certainty.” There are some

things we can’t know are true until we live as if they are. Theological education should be full of experimental certainties.

It is important to study practices and cultivate them in school and in community because we can’t just think our way to the people we hope to become. Amy would want to remind us, I know, that thinking is important. It is itself a practice that we all need to cultivate in these days. But on its own, it’s not enough. We’ve been having a national seminar on this topic for last several months, as a light had been shined on men who have thought their way to politics that are progressive, that are feminist, that are even intersectional. But their progressive politics have made them no less dangerous to women.

Thinking is not enough. Believing is not enough. If we haven’t practiced respecting the boundaries of other people’s bodies, if we haven’t practiced recognizing our power and our privilege, if we haven’t practiced listening to voices that are not our own, if we haven’t practiced gestures of welcome and compassion, then professing our convictions will not be enough. And we won’t be ready, as individuals or as communities, when something difficult is asked of us.

### *III. There one should find the fragrance of truth.*

*The fragrance of truth.* This one’s a bit harder to get hold of than prayer or justice or the intersection of learning and living. God does not say to Catherine, in my house one should find truth, and here it is, laid out clearly for all to see and understand. God says, in my house, one should smell truth’s fragrance.

The sense of smell isn’t called upon nearly enough in theological education. But when I think of the fragrances of Disciples Divinity House, they seem to me to have everything to do with my formation as a scholar and a minister: the smell of old books in the library, the smell of people living



together in close quarters, the smell of the yogurt one of us offered as an communion element on one of our Thursday nights, the smell of cooking coming from the kitchen, the smell of the sherry we used to sip out of tiny glasses in between chapel and Monday night dinner—too tiny, we used to complain. Is this the fragrance of truth? Certainly it's the fragrance of life.

The thing about a fragrance is that it can't be stopped from going where it will. It will slip under doors and seep through walls. It will work its way into our hair and our clothes and our skin. I learned a lot of things that way in my theological education—there were many ideas that I never heard a single lecture on or read a single book about, but that seeped into me and shaped me every bit as much as the things I did study.

To get at what Catherine of Siena might mean by the fragrance of truth, I need to turn to one of my favorite theologians, the novelist Virginia Woolf, for whom the unknowable *more* about ourselves, about each other, about the world was the great subject of her art. Woolf sought new literary forms that were capable of communicating the invisible presences by which our lives are shaped, the mysteries that we are to each other, the moments of being in which the really real suddenly makes itself felt in the ordinary stuff of our days.

In Woolf's novel, *To the Lighthouse*, the painter Lily Briscoe despairs of capturing Mrs. Ramsay, a woman she had known and loved, in a painting: "One wanted fifty pairs of eyes to see with,' she reflected. 'Fifty pairs of eyes were not enough to get round that one woman with.'"

Fifty pairs of eyes, and, even then, you would need some "secret sense, as fine as air" to allow you to slip through keyholes and into the secret places where you could discover Mrs. Ramsay's "thoughts, her imagination, her desires." "What did that hedge mean to her," Lily wonders, "what did

the garden mean to her, what did it mean to her when a wave broke?" Lily is reaching toward the unknowable more, the mystery of another person.

The mystery of others, for Catherine of Siena, is lost in the mystery of God. And if we are to know others as they truly are, or even know ourselves, that is where we will have to look. That mystery is also central to the vision of church that Amy celebrated in her sermon for Western Oaks. There are some things that Amy was certain about, truths that were the bedrock of her life: that we are all children of God; that there is no "us" and "them"; that the gospel is about love and care. That the faith to which she was called was *as intelligent as science; as appealing as art; as vital as the day's work; as intimate as the home; and as inspiring as love.*

But those certainties were held within a mystery—within, as Amy put it, a "love that cannot be explained." Although the Bible might be our guidebook, she said, the light that illuminates it, the light of the Holy Spirit, is itself unknowable, beyond our understanding. We are grateful for these mysteries, she said at the end of her sermon. They are rich and deep. They reach us not as doctrine but as fragrance, as a secret sense as fine as air that can slip through cracks and keyholes and into our very being.

We were so lucky to know Amy, to benefit from her kindness, her love,

her sheer know-how, her care. But like Lily Briscoe, we would need fifty pairs of eyes to see round that one woman with. And we would need all our senses, not just sight. To listen for her in the sound of Lei Lei's delicate touch on the piano, and the sound of Henry's skate cutting into the ice. To feel her in Craig's fierce love for his family. To catch her fragrance in her sisters and friends. To see her in her colleagues' commitment, renewed each day, to making scientific research an integral part of our democracy.

I could go on and on, trying to see all the way around that one woman, looking through fifty pairs of eyes and more. But I'd like to end by recognizing and honoring that part of Amy that is beyond all our reach: the unknowable more at the heart of life and death, the mysteries that we are to one another, the fragrance of truth that we can sense but never quite capture because it always spills over whatever boundaries we try to put around it.

I can't imagine a better way to honor the unknowable more at the heart of Amy's existence and ours than to open wider the doors and windows of theological education for a new generation of women who, like Catherine of Siena and Amy Ann Northcutt of Oklahoma City, know that things do not have to be as they are, and that we ourselves are more than we believe ourselves to be. ☪



MDiv graduates Virginia White and Colton Lott

## Mark Miller-McLemore retires as dean of (the other) DDH



Mark Miller-McLemore is retiring as Dean of the Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt Divinity School on June 30 after 23 years of leadership.

A DDH-Chicago alumnus, he earned his MA at the Divinity School and pursued further study with Langdon Gilkey. His 15-year pastorate at First Christian Church of Chicago Heights “reversed a decade of decline” and the congregation “became very engaged in ministry with its surrounding community,” Mr. Miller-McLemore explained. “So I brought with me to DDH-Vanderbilt a vision of the attention to theological depth plus a heritage of social justice at Vanderbilt, combined with a focus on doing transformative ministry in churches.”

He turned DDH-Vanderbilt’s financially precarious situation around, built up its board, refurbished the building, and raised needed funds. He revitalized house culture, starting monthly House Dinners, an annual retreat, and an end-of-year Graduation Celebration.

The musical event, “Talent 4 the House,” began with his help. It grew from a spaghetti dinner with a student talent show to a spectacular event that

raised over \$100,000 and featured Nashville musicians, Vince Gill, Amy Grant, Allison Krauss, Andrew Peterson, as well as Disciples musicians, students, church members, and, occasionally, the dean on banjo.

During his tenure, 103 graduates were ordained, and 14 have completed PhDs. \$1.5 million in grants were received, including from the Lilly Endowment for a Transition into Ministry initiative that placed graduates in two-year pastoral residencies. He instituted the “Wise Practice” series.

He commented, “I firmly believe in this residential model for educating excellent ministers, so I am pleased that Disciples House-Vanderbilt has thrived and been successful in its mission in spite of a very challenging time for church-related organizations.”

“I’m grateful for Mark Miller-McLemore’s invaluable leadership to DDH-Vanderbilt,” said Kris Culp. “He’s been my closest colleague in Disciples theological education. Both DDHs have been strengthened by the collaboration that Mark has made possible.”

Mr. Miller-McLemore will continue to teach at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Leadership and Ministry. He is married to fellow DDH-Chicago alumna, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Religion, Psychology, and Culture at Vanderbilt; they have three grown sons. He plans to give more attention to family, music, and writing projects, including a book, *Theopracticals*, now under contract with Rowman and Littlefield. ☞

## News

Find more news and more details at [ddh.uchicago.edu](http://ddh.uchicago.edu) and on Facebook

**Keri Anderson (2013)** is an outpatient therapist at The Carson Center, a community mental health agency, in Westfield, Massachusetts.

**Joel Brown (current scholar)** passed his doctoral examinations on May 11. He will serve as DDH’s acting administrator in July and August.

**Erica Brown (1996)** was installed as Senior Minister of Howland Christian Church in Warren, Ohio, on April 15.



Congratulations to **Danielle Cox (2012)** and Samuel Bateman who were married on May 26 in Houston, Texas. Teresa Hord Owens (1999), who was Danielle’s teaching pastor, presided.

**Kris Culp (1982; dean)** gave a lecture for a conference entitled, “Love and Vulnerability: In Memory of Pamela Sue Anderson,” at Mansfield College, Oxford University, March 16-18.



Congratulations to **Darryl (former resident)** and **Thandiwe Dale-Ferguson (2009)** on the birth of Cora Lois on November 17. Tod and **Ana Goble Dale (1975)** are proud grandparents. Cora and Thandiwe, the current Alumni/ae Council President, are pictured with **Larry Bouchard (1974; trustee)**.

**Spencer Dew's** (1998) book on three religious movements based in the thought of Noble Drew Ali is forthcoming from the University of Chicago Press. He is now teaching at Denison University.

William B. Eerdmans published *Sacred Signposts: Words, Water, and Other Acts of Resistance* by **Benjamin J. Dueholm** (former Monday night chef).



**Patricia Duncan** (1999) is the author of *Novel Hermeneutics in the Greek Pseudo-Clementine Romance* (Mohr Siebeck). She examines the fourth-century Christian novel, traditionally known as the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies, to offer a revised, esoteric vision of the origins of Christianity.

**Yvonne Gilmore** (2001; associate dean) was the Baccalaureate speaker at Eureka College on May 4. She also served as the keynote speaker for the Advance Ministries spring retreat of the Christian Church in Ohio, April 6-8, and the Indiana Youth Assembly on March 3.



MDiv graduate, Jonathan Cahill (2015), and Global Ministries partners making a multi-day journey down the Congo-Chambeshi River last summer. Mr. Cahill shared this photo during his senior ministry thesis presentation.

**Teresa Hord Owens** (1999), General Minister and President of the Christian Church (DOC), was awarded an honorary doctorate by Lynchburg College on May 11. She was the speaker for its Baccalaureate service.

**Tabitha Isner** (2005) won the Democratic primary for Alabama's 2nd Congressional District.

**Sandhya Jha** (2001) was featured in a Faith and Leadership article, "A Tiny Congregation with A Big Building is Resurrected as a Center for Peace."



**Alexis Kassim** (2009) was installed as Associate Pastor of Little River United Church of Christ in Annandale, Virginia, on June 3. **Yvonne Gilmore** (2001; Associate Dean) preached. **Allen Harris** (trustee), Regional Minister of the Christian Church Capital Area, participated in the service.

**Melinda Keenan Wood** (1997) was installed as Senior Minister of Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Durham, North Carolina, on March 18.

**Daette Lambert** (Administrator-elect) and **Mark Lambert** (current scholar), and older brothers, Hogan and Valen, welcomed Mary Mattie into the world on June 16.

**Rachel Leslie** (2011) will be ordained on August 5 at First Christian Church of Alexandria.

**Tim Lee** (1986) was featured in a Disciples News Service article, "Actions, Connections, Bear Good Fruit." Lee is the Second Vice Moderator of the General Assembly for the 2017-19 biennium.

**Bethany Watkins Lowery** (2006) and Joseph Zielinski are engaged to be married on December 1 in Indianapolis.

Congratulations to **Elsa Marty** (former resident) and Matt Veligdan, who married on May 12.

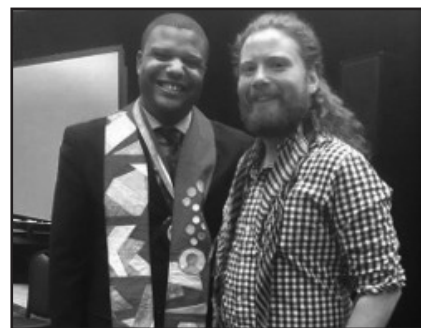
**Santiago Piñón** (1998) received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University.

**Braxton Shelley** (former resident) received the University of Chicago Division of the Humanities 2018 Dean's Distinguished Dissertation Award at the June Convocation.

**Garry Sparks's** (2001) article, "Maya Moral and Ritual Discourse: Dialogical Groundings for Consuetudinary Law," was published in the March 2018 issue of the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. George Mason University featured his research in its publication on May 30.

**Mark Toulouse** was honored as this year's Divinity School Alumnus of the Year on April 19. He gave the Dean's Craft of Teaching seminar and a lecture entitled "Religion and Public Life in Canada."

**Beau Underwood** (2006) spoke at his alma mater Eureka College for its Founder's Day Convocation on February 2.



**Jack Veatch** (current scholar) was selected as a sponsored attendee of the National Festival of Young Preachers 2018 by the Fund for Theological Education.

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*lectures* • *Sunday worship, Teresa Hord Owens* • *Second Annual*  
*Amy A. Northcutt Lecture* • *conversation* • *prayers in the Chapel of*  
*the Holy Grail* • *music* • *activities for the whole family* •  
*rooms at the Hyatt Place Chicago–South* •