**Dayenu!**

Rachel Abdoler
Inaugural Barbara and Clark Williamson Scholar

A PhD student in the History of Christianity, she studies Christian theological texts written in Arabic against a backdrop of Christian and Islamic polemical writing, and, particularly, the hermeneutical strategy of Butrus al-Sadamantī, an Arabophone Christian who wrote in a 13th-century Copto-Islamic milieu.

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**Day-dayenu!**

An ebullient melody and clapping broke out around the table at the Passover Seder. *Dayenu* roughly translates from Hebrew as “that alone would have been enough” or “that alone would have sufficed us.”

I joined along singing the thousand-year-old song which joyfully recounts all the blessing and miracles that God had visited on God’s people, beginning with the Exodus from Egypt: If God had brought us out of Egypt, but not split the sea, *Dayenu*! If God had split the sea, but not fed us manna, *Dayenu*!

This was one of the many, many intimate moments of communal life I got to join during my year interning at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis, made possible through DDH and, particularly, by Clark Williamson. Clark’s warm spirit and serious commitment to addressing anti-Judaism in Christian theology enabled his formation of deep relationships with several Jewish religious leaders in Indianapolis. So trusted and profound were these relationships that when I, then a soon-to-be third-year MDiv student, indicated my interest in interning with a non-Christian congregation, Clark was able to arrange for me to spend the 2014–15 academic year with Rabbis Dennis and Sandy Sasso at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck.

Previous attempts to arrange field work at non-Christian congregations in Chicago had come to no avail, the religious leaders and their communities being somewhat (and understandably so) suspicious when contacted about having a Christian MDiv student work with them. But Clark’s trust and friendship with the Indianapolis Jewish population provided me the opportunity to join Congregation Beth-El Zedeck as an intern invited into every facet of community life.

When I reflect on Clark as a person and a scholar, *Dayenu* comes to mind. He is the one who enabled my presence at that Passover Seder where I first learned and sang this song, and more. When I think of all that Clark has given and taught me and others, the sentiment of *Dayenu* is most apt. Had Clark simply arranged the internship for me—an internship that is one of the most formative experiences of my personal and academic life—*Dayenu*! But I did not just get the experience of the...
Letter from the dean

Amidst a challenging year, students have nevertheless invested heart, mind, and soul in their vocations. Your interest and support have made a difference for them.

Andrew Packman, a summer 2021 PhD graduate, will become a Louisville Postdoctoral Fellow at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. He reflects on pursuing a vocation of theological teaching during the past months:

...There is the usual nervous energy of presenting oneself and one’s work to others. But there is a deeper vein of intensity rippling through a nation that has witnessed the loss of over 600,000 souls in the past year. Along with this horrifying loss of life, the social and institutional tumult already well underway before the pandemic has grown in its wake. The need for the kind of intelligent, imaginative, experimental ministry and theological education that DDH has prepared me to do could not be greater. And whatever the setting of my future vocational life, I am equally certain that the intellectual, moral, and spiritual formation of these years will, along with the relationships I have formed through this handsome House on 57th Street, repeatedly buoy me and guide my steps.

I’m grateful for what this remarkable institution has given me, and commit myself to ensuring that it and other institutions like it persist long into our future.

In September, the 2020 and 2021 graduates will gather for an in-person Convocation, which will also mark the conclusion of the 125th and 126th academic years of the Disciples Divinity House.

The 2021 graduates—five Disciples and two ecumenical students—were awarded three MDiv, two MA, and two PhD degrees. They will go to chaplaincy, arts ministry, anti-racism work, and doctoral programs; they will teach at this university and in a seminary. The four 2020 graduates, both Disciples and ecumenical students, received MDiv degrees and serve in congregations.

We give thanks for a legacy of learning and leadership, service in the present, and vision for the future. That legacy, service, and vision were exemplified by Clark M. Williamson and Eddie Evans Griffin. This Bulletin remembers their remarkable lives and celebrates the Barbara and Clark Williamson Scholarship that bears promise into the future.

With gratitude, Kristine A. Culp, Dean

Loving questions: Remembering Clark M. Williamson

Love of questions brought Clark Williamson to DDH as a student and to his pathbreaking work as a Christian theologian.

Clark Murray Williamson was born November 3, 1935, in Memphis, Tennessee. He grew up in the Taylor Memorial Christian Church in Memphis, where his grandfather, J. Murray Taylor, was minister. His grandfather viewed the principal calling of the minister to be that of teacher of the Christian faith, a perspective that animated Clark’s own approach to theology, church, and ministry.

A pioneer in post-Holocaust theology, important voice in Process Theology, and leading Disciples theologian, he was the author of seventeen books, including his systematic theology, Way of Blessing, Way of Life: A Christian Theology (1999), which has just been published in Korean translation, and A Guest in the House of Israel: Post-Holocaust Church Theology (1989). He was the Indiana Professor of Christian Thought Emeritus at Christian Theological Seminary and its former Vice President and Dean. An ordained Disciples minister, he was an elder, volunteer, and teacher at Central Christian Church in Indianapolis. He was a valued colleague, mentor, friend, and, for many, a teacher without parallel.

After earning a BA in religion and philosophy at Transylvania College in 1957, Clark entered the Divinity School as a Disciples Divinity House Scholar. He earned BD (1961), AM (1963), and PhD (1969) degrees from the University of Chicago. He served as an assistant dean of the Disciples Divinity House and an interim minister of University Church. He was Paul Tillich’s assistant for Volume III of Tillich’s Systematic Theology. Tillich referred to Williamson as “my Englisher.” For his part, Clark had a raft of stories to share about “Paulus.”

Clark met Barbara Unger when she was a student working in the office of the dean of the Divinity School. She earned AB (French) and AM (Linguistics) degrees from the University. They married and raised a son, Scott. She taught high school French before serving as Executive Director of the ACLU in Indiana, in the US Attorney’s Office, and in the Federal Court House in Indianapolis.

From 1966 until his retirement in 2002, Clark Williamson was a member of the faculty at Christian Theological Seminary (CTS), and became the first occupant of the Indiana Chair of Christian Thought. He developed an interpretation of God and the world through the lens of neo-process thought. “His writings are marked by epitome...
A blessing for Rachel Abdoler as the first Williamson Scholar

Throughout her internship at Beth-El Zedeck, Sandy and I were jealous that Rachel was not a rabbinical student whom we could snatch for the synagogue. Some years after, I invited Rachel to return to preach. She delivered one of the most erudite and beautiful homilies I have heard, titled, “Singing Another’s Song.”

Rachel, may your voice always sing the song within you, and may you lend your voice, your heart, your mind to amplify, to deepen, and to sweeten the songs of others. For you are not just a voice, you are a chorus. We pray that you will sing with conviction, of joy, of hope, of peace.

Dayenu! CONTINUED FROM COVER

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Dayenu! CONTINUED FROM COVER

Barbara and Clark Williamson Scholarship

Now fully endowed at $250,000, the scholarship will recognize “excellence in theological thinking that furthers understanding and accountability between traditions.”

The scholarship expresses the conviction that thinking critically about faith and about the accountability of Christianity to other faiths is essential for spiritual life and leadership. On occasion, it can be awarded to students in the Divinity School from other faith traditions to make possible their residence and participation in shared life at DDH.

Barbara and Clark Williamson began to build the fund in gratitude for excellence in theological education and scholarship. The endowment was built through their commitment for more than twenty years, with a little help from some friends, and completed through Mr. Williamson’s stunning commitment to the 125th Anniversary Campaign. Their determination was further catalyzed when then-MDiv student Rachel Abdoler completed an internship at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis that Clark was instrumental in helping to arrange. He saw the quality of leadership and thought that was possible in a DDH student.

On April 24, friends and family surprised Clark by joining the Board of Trustees for the formal action to establish the scholarship. The surprise continued with the announcement of the inaugural 2021–22 recipient of the scholarship: Rachel Abdoler, now a fourth-year PhD student in the History of Christianity. She spoke movingly, recounting Clark’s formative mentorship and dinners shared with Barbara and Clark. In those ways and more, she explained, she felt as though she had already been a recipient of the scholarship. Her comments were followed by remarks from Rabbi Dennis Sasso, who blessed his dear friend Clark, the memory of Barbara, the scholarship, and Rachel, its first recipient.

Tish Duncan (1999; trustee) has received tenure and been promoted to Associate Professor of Religion at Texas Christian University.

June MDiv graduate Aneesah Ettress co-led “Attention and Testimony in Works by Lorna Simpson” at the Smart Museum and the Art Institute of Chicago on January 6 and 8.

Joel Brown has been awarded a 2021–22 Divinity School Dissertation Completion Fellowship for Preparing the Way: African American Women and Social Christianity in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago. In February, he spoke on the “Spiritual Bondage of Whiteness” and moderated a panel for Ministers’ Week at Brite Divinity School.

Michael Kinnamon (1999) has published his debut novel, Summer of Love and Evil. It’s 1967 in rural Iowa...
“She took life on.”
An appreciation of Eddie Evans Griffin

At DDH we esteemed Eddie Evans Griffin, an officer of the Board of Trustees and mentor to students. She was a pioneer in several realms. After receiving her bachelor's degree from what is now Clark Atlanta University, she became the first Black student to enter and to graduate from the Master of Social Work program at the University of Illinois.

Why I do what I do

For a DDH Board retreat in 2007, Eddie Evans Griffin recalled how she had come to her own profession, vocation, and sense of the calling—and the divergences and convergences among them.

The fact that I was born Black and female and came of age in the late 30s and early 40s somewhat predetermined my professional choices. Both my parents were college educated and had entered fields that were open to Blacks in the late 30s and early 40s. My father was a seminary-trained Disciples minister and worked with the Black churches in Georgia. He also worked as a department head at the Butler Street YMCA in Atlanta, but acted on his values when he left this secure higher paying job to move his family to Indianapolis to work for the church for less money. My mother taught school. I knew that I was expected to go to college and get a respectable job. I learned early that Black female college graduates could be assured of a good job if they entered one of three professions: teaching, nursing, or social work.

The words profession, vocation, and calling are different though very much related entities. Profession indicates an acquired body of specific knowledge that is used to provide a service. A vocation is how one identifies one's self, and a calling is something that one must do. The three can and do merge to become one and the same but not necessarily at the same time. Graduating from college at age twenty, I chose social work not for altruistic reasons but because I knew too many teachers and nurses. Pitiful confession but true! It was when I was in graduate school and found that I was the first and only Black student in the school of social work that I began to realize that I had entered more than a profession. I had this need to change things and make it better for my clients. As a young person, I was told that as I achieved, I had a responsibility to reach back and help others; anger and proportion of blame gets you nowhere. As I began to grow as a professional and through therapy, to understand my needs and how they conflicted with what I had been taught that I should be about that I began to think in terms of a calling. Therefore, I am a life member of the NAACP. I am an active alumnus financial supporter of HBCUs because they offer support and nurturing to many students who would not survive in a large predominantly white university.

I sit on this board because I want to see the church survive and to do so it needs bright, dynamic young people who are knowledgeable and bring a breath of fresh air to the church and to the academic world. This is my calling. This is the story of my journey and this is the journey that many students are beginning. It is a process and as a board we support this in different ways, financially, emotional support to student and staff, practical support by helping to provide a decent place to live. We help to provide the bridge from the now into the future as we prepare others to take our place. Hopefully, we help guide them through their journey as they arrive at their destination, whether it is a profession, vocation, calling, or all three.
The University of Chicago's 534th Convocation was held virtually on June 9. The Divinity School's Diploma and Hooding Ceremony was held the following day. On September 17–18, DDH will celebrate its 2020 and 2021 graduates with an in-person Convocation.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO DDH'S 2021 PHD, MDIV, AND MA GRADUATES**

Mark Lambert, DDH Scholar and MA alumnus, will receive a PhD from the University this summer. The recipient of the Divinity School's Alma Wilson Teaching Fellowship and of a Louisiville Institute Dissertation Fellowship, his work draws upon historical theology, medical ethics, and medical history in an effort to understand and approach stigmatic illness, including in the present day. His dissertation is titled, The Sacramental Sickness: The Symptomatobic Correlation of Leptospirosis and the Sacraments in Historical Theology.

Andrew Packman, DDH Scholar and MDiv alumnus, will also receive the PhD this summer. His dissertation, Theology and the Atmospheres of Race: Schleiermacher, Affecivity, and the Tenacity of Racism, marshals theological, theoretical, and phenomenological resources to address anti-Black racism's recalcitrance in American life. A co-founder of Root and Branch Church and of the Constructive Theologies Project, he has been awarded the Louisville Institute's Postdoctoral Fellowship. He will teach at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.

DDH Scholar Aneesah Ettriss developed a method of engaging art towards personal and social transformation with a pneumatology for social transformation with a pneumatology for the MA degree. With gifts in languages and a passion for learning about gender in early Christianity, she has been admitted to the University of Chicago in Illinois and Wisconsin.

Yinxuan Erin He, an international student, has been a DDH resident throughout her MDiv career. She spoke at the final DDH chapel service of the year. Her MDiv thesis explored a Buddhist approach to hospital chaplains. She will do a year-long CPE residency at Rush Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Save the dates September 17–18

On Saturday morning, September 18, the 2021 graduates will be joined by 2020 graduates (Kate Gerike, Kevin Gregory, Savannah Gross, and Victoria Wick) plus families, friends, and colleagues for an in-person Convocation marking the end of DDH's 125th and 126th academic years.

To kick off Convocation weekend, Friday evening will feature a night of storytelling with a picnic in the backyard and, of course, a firepit around which to tell the stories.

**WEEKEND EVENTS**

Friday Evening, September 17

**DDH StoryHour, campfire edition**

Alumnae Rebecca Anderson and Yvonne Gilmore will again join forces to host this event. Weather and construction permitting, it will be held in the renovated backyard. We’ll hear and tell stories about fast friendships, making sparks fly, and finding home away from home.

Saturday Evening, September 18

**Convocation celebrating the 2020 and 2021 graduates**

We’ll celebrate the graduates and welcome entering students for the new academic year with a service in the Chapel of the Holy Grail. It will be followed by brunch outside and toasts to the graduates.

Marshall Dunn, trustee and alumnus, will speak. He is the minister emeritus of University Christian Church, a multi-ethnic, multi-racial congregation near the University of Maryland that has been a model of community engagement for decades. He has served as an interim Associate General Minister and President—and as a beloved camp counselor in the Capital Area Region.

On Monday, April 19, Rebecca Anderson (2007), founding co-pastor of Gilead Church Chicago, and Katie Hays from Galileo Church in Fort Worth, shared “pan-demic lessons” for local communities of faith. Among them: rethinking approaches to accessibility and community formation in the age of virtual church.

**Hannah Flitch (2015) was ordained to the ministry on August 1 at First Christian Church, Peoria, Illinois, where her mother, Karen Memick, is the senior minister. Yvonne Gilmore (2001) preached; Regional Minister and DDH trustee, Teresa Dulin-Parker, presided. In honor of Hannah's scholarly devotion to Hildegard of Bingen, a medieval abbess, theologian, composer and polymath, the chancel was transformed into a "Hildegard/en."**

Judith Guy (2013), Colton Lott (2015), and Danielle Cox (2012), pictured below, participated in her ordination service.

**Cynthia Lindner (1978), trustee, asks, “Will There Be Life on Earth?” in her April 21 column for The Martyr Center's Sightings. She reflected on the pre-curious beauty of our home planet, and the need to see clearly the threats we pose to it. She is a regular Sightings columnist.**

**Bonnie Osei-Frimpong (2005), the former director of the NBA XPLORE program, preached on “The Love to All Conspirers,” for the DDH chapel service during Holy Week.**

**Mark Toulouse (1977) is the general editor of the Journal of Discipleship, newly launched by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. It studies the thought and teaching of Christ.**
Can art museums function as sacred space for spiritual development that can transform and renew community?

“In understanding the relationship between viewer and artwork and taking the distinct claims of contemporary Black art seriously, we can more readily develop anti-racist museums and communities,” Aneesah Ettress argues in her MDiv thesis. Her exploration leads to a nascent “pneumatology of contemporary Black art.” She discusses Black artists as “prophets—as those who are engaged in the ‘reshaping of nothingness’ (Theaster Gates)—” and, more generally, as “mediators” whose artwork may involve “embedded truth claims.” According to Ettress, “Art engagement is the primary way through which the museum space becomes transformational.” She develops a seven-step method of “art attestation” for engaging works of art in conversation with secular modes of close looking and religious practices of lectio divina and the veneration of icons, and Michael Fishbane’s work, Sacred Attunement. She finds instructive parallels between an activated engagement through Amy Seraldi’s confrontational portrait strategies and the practice of venerating icons. The museum space and the role of museum education and art interpretation are crucial for ethical and spiritual formation and for the Spirit’s circulation in imagination, hope, beauty, truth, and love.

What do theological symbols “explain” vis-à-vis the experience of illness, and how does the experience of illness present ethical demands to theology?

In his PhD dissertation, Mark Lambert appraises the relationship between stigmatic illness and historical sacramental theology, especially the medieval Franciscan interpretation of leprosy alongside the sacrament of the Eucharist. He elaborates, “Eucharistic piety and leprosy are provocatively coupled in the historical theologizing of leprosy.” The early Franciscan theologies are notable for their aesthetic insistence upon the revelation of leprosy alongside the sacrament of the Eucharist. He elaborates, “Eucharistic piety and leprosy are provocatively coupled in the historical theologizing of leprosy.” Lambert argues that this historical theologizing of leprosy has ramifications for contemporary approaches to stigmatic illness, such as HIV/AIDS, mental illness, and COVID-19. “These theologians offer productive models for imaginatively and sensitively rethinking theological symbols in order to address the ostracization of stigmatic illness. There are potent ramifications for contemporary medical ethics and church communities.”

Graduates are asking

In their research projects and PhD dissertations, graduates have pursued questions in ministry, theology, and shared life. Here’s a sampler from MDiv graduate Aneesah Ettress and PhD graduate Mark Lambert.

Welcome Justin, Marissa, and Charlie

They enter the MDiv program this fall as Disciples Divinity House Scholars. They will be joined by new ecumenical and interfaith residents.

Justin Carlson seeks to infuse congregations with a deepened understanding of how ideas and practices of embodiment manifest in different traditions. “As a Disciple, I had been brought up constantly hearing the refrain that all are welcome at the table. Physically excluding people from the church during times when they need community support is the most severe and compulsory to what I understand to be the core of Christianity: building a community where all can share their gifts.” His interests are informed by attention to physical disability, music and movement, and rituals including Catholic fiestas and the art of drag. He grew up in First Christian Church in Minneapolis, where he remains very active. In the Upper Midwest Region, he has served in the camp program and on the search committee for the regional minister. He is a 2012 magna cum laude graduate of Carleton College (Mussi). He is presently a legal editor for the State of Minnesota’s Office of the Revisor of Statutes. He is the Oreon E. Scott Entering Scholar.

Marissa Ilnitzki is the second-ever recipient of the Martin Family Scholarship, which recognizes promise for leadership. She is a 2017 graduate of Georgetown University where she majored in sociology and minored in environmental studies. After graduation she gained experiences in community leadership, wilderness education, and social services in Washington State with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps at the Pascal Sherman Indian School, on the staff of the Lutheran retreat center Holden Village, and as a family support specialist in Seattle. Raised Roman Catholic, her journey to ministry has been nourished by women leaders in United Methodist, ELCA, and UCC churches. She reflects, “The table of communion has been extended to me throughout my life. The ability to be a Disciples Divinity House Scholar would give me the connections to create my own table of welcome within the home of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).”

Charlie Platt is the William N. Weaver Entering Scholar. He earned a MSW from the University of Minnesota (2020) and is a 2016 cum laude graduate of St. Olaf College in Social Work and Religion. Currently a therapist at the Bayview Mental Health Clinic at the University of Minnesota, he brings social work experience in church, educational, and community settings. He served at Holden Village (with Marissa) and is a member of Macalester Plymouth UCC in St. Paul. “My experiences have shown me how participating in community and spiritual experiences have an essential place in the flourishing of all human lives. Being a leader in shaping these experiences is a core part of my vocation.” During his year as a case manager at the Lincoln Park Community Shelter in Chicago, he participated in Root and Branch Church, which provided a model and mentors for Disciples ministry.
**Nirenberg named Divinity Dean**

Effective July 1, David Nirenberg has been appointed Dean of the Divinity School, continuing the leadership he has given since 2018 as the interim dean.

David Nirenberg, the Deborah R. and Edgar D. Jannotta Distinguished Service Professor of Medieval History and Social Thought at the University of Chicago, is a leading scholar of the ways in which Jewish, Christian, and Islamic societies have interacted with and thought about each other.

Prior to leading the Divinity School, Mr. Nirenberg served as Executive Vice Provost, which included a focus on the current state of graduate education at the University. He previously served as Dean of the Division of the Social Sciences from 2014 to 2018 and was the founding Roman Family Director of the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society, and a tenured position as Associate Professor of the Practice of Social Sciences from 2014 to 2018 and was the founding Roman Family Director of the Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society.

**Middle Testament**

The Flying Chalices are Ross Allen and Emily King. Their recordings grazed chapels services this year.

In May, *The Flying Chalices* released a playlist of their “greatest hits,” complete with album cover. In folk songs and hymns such as *Loving on the Everlasting Arms*, *Dove that Will Not Let Me Go*, and *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, their voices match in harmony and soar in choruses. There’s a contagious joy and a lot of fun in their musical collaboration.

Their name comes from the winged chalices that fly across the patterned ceiling of the Chapel of the Holy Grail. Even with chapel services being held by remote virtual connection, their recorded songs lifted the tone.

Late in the afternoon, Ross Allen, a third-year MDiv and Disciples Scholar who aspires to doctoral work in theology, can often be found at the piano in the Common Room. Emily King, now a second-year MDiv and ecumenical resident with a special interest in Simone Weil, plays the guitar for their arrangements. ✤

**You can find the playlist at**

www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8-gOZC31dpwBFyVq49Y9MrKx9B8K

**Tranformative leadership**

Sandhya Jha, author of four books and founder of the Oakland Peace Center, has been elected to the Board of Trustees.

An alumna and 2006 graduate of the University of Chicago’s joint MDiv and Public Policy program, Sandhya R. Jha is a consultant, community organizer, and serves with the Emerging Leaders Program at the Leadership Institute at Allen Temple.

In addition to founding the Oakland Peace Center, she is its former executive director and current Connections Consultant for OCR—a collective of forty organizations working to create equity, access, and dignity as the means of creating peace in Oakland and the Bay Area.

She serves as an anti-racism/anti-oppression trainer with Reconciliation Ministries for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and, with Yvonne Gilmore, co-directs DDH’s “Living Justice Project: An Anti-Racist Practicum.” Her first book, *Room at the Table* (2009), a history of people of color in the Disciples of Christ, was followed by Pre-Pastoral America: Spiritual Stories from the Front Lines (2014).

**Scott grant extends “Living Justice”**

An anti-racism project directed by Sandhya Jha and Yvonne Gilmore will continue to develop pedagogies and curricula.

Living Justice: An Anti-Racist Practicum invites conversation, exploration, and inquiry to support individual and collective anti-racism work and to develop pedagogies and curricula. The project also expresses DDH’s commitment to innovative ministry and to thinking critically and constructively.

Which models of teaching and learning can better engender thinking about and practicing justice? How can we deepen conversations? What does solidarity mean theologically, and how do Disciples from diverse communities practice it with integrity?

A second grant of $15,000 from the Oreon E. Scott Foundation, together with continuing leadership from Yvonne Gilmore and Sandhya Jha, will allow DDH to offer a second cycle of three interrelated five-week sessions during the 2021–22 academic year. The second year will enable the practicum to consolidate learning, adjust aspects of the emerging pedagogical structure and model, engage a second group of core leaders, and reach out to new participants.

The initiative seeks to enable individuals with expertise in the Disciples anti-racist/pro-reconciling training to join with other Disciples practitioner-scholar-activists to develop a next generation of pedagogical approaches and resources. It returns us to a seismic shift in attention to policing and race as well as to the ongoing commitment of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to build an anti-racist, anti-oppression church. ✤

**Transforming Communities: How People Like You Are Healing Their Neighborhoods**

Claudia Highbaugh and David Vargas, two members of the Nominating Committee, stressed the importance of the “grass roots” perspective that Sandhya Jha brings to the Board’s work of planning for and imagining the future of theological education at the Disciples Divinity House. Her three-year term on the twenty-one member board begins immediately. ✤

**MORE NEWS**

**BRIEF IN NEWS**

**Stephanie Paulsell** (1985) has concluded a two-year appointment as Interim Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church at Harvard University. She continues as the Susan Shalcross Swartz Professor of the Practice of Christian Studies at Harvard Divinity School.

Last year, she and Kevin Madigan became faculty deans of Elot House.

**Former resident Braxton Shelley**, path-breaking theorist of African American sacred music and author of *Healing for the Soul: Richard Smallwood, the Vamp, and the Gospel Imagination* (Oxford, 2021), has been appointed to a tenured position as associate professor at Yale University in the Institute of Sacred Music, Divinity School, and Department of Music. He will be the faculty director of the new Program in Music and the Black Church.

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**Welcome to the world David Walker Bateman. Proud parents are Danielle Cox (2012) and Samuel Bateman. Walker arrived on May 28 at 5:28 am, weighing 8 lbs, 10 oz.**

**Brandon Cook** (2010) became a chaplain at Ascension St. Thomas Midtown Hospital in Nashville this spring.

**Garry Sparks** (2001) shared his research on Maya and Christian doctrines of divinity during a Monday forum on May 17. An associate professor at George Mason University, his research attends to the periods of first contact between Iberian mendicant missionaries and native Mesoamericans.
Kenneth Axel Floyd (1922) died on July 7 in Canton, Illinois. He was 64. After working for Mid-Century Telephone Co-op for nearly two decades, Kenny Floyd went back to school. He earned a BA from Eureka College in 1992 and the dual MDiv and MA in SSA from the University of Chicago. His career in ministry, chaplaincy, and social work was centered in his home town of Canton and the surrounding community, including at Sunnyland Christian Church, Cuba Christian Church, Graham Hospital, First Congregational UCC in Canton, Mason District Hospital, and, at the time of his death, Spoon River Correctional Center, where he was chaplain. He was preceded in death by his son Jeremy. He is survived by two sons, Nathan and Kyle (Alicia) Floyd, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, his mother, and his partner, Geneva Becker.

James M. Gustafson, University Professor of Theology at the Disciples Divinity House and the Committee on Social Thought from 1972–89, died on January 15. Born in 1925, he helped to define the field of theological ethics as a renowned scholar, author, and teacher. Mr. Gustafson taught at Yale University before coming to the University of Chicago, and before culminating forty-three years of teaching and research at Emory University. Among his classic works were Treasure in Eternity Vessels, Christ and the Moral Life, and his magnum opus, the two-volume Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective. His book, Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics, first took shape as the 1973 Hoover Lectures of the Disciples Divinity House. For a full obituary, please see divinity.uchicago.edu/news.

Lanny Wood, spouse of alumna and trustee Melinda Kneeman Wood (1997), died on June 13 of complications from a recent diagnosis of advanced stage lymphoma. He was 60. Born and raised in La Harpe, Illinois, he went on to earn a degree in architecture at the University of Illinois. Lanny and Lindy married in 1987. After several years as an architect, he dedicated his life to teaching middle school math. Through Project Lead The Way (PLTW), he served for ten years as Associate Dean and member of the faculty at Britte Divinity School. At DDH, he was Associate Dean during Don Browning’s deanship and was interim dean during the 1983–84 academic year. After earning a BA from Texas Christian University (1975) and a MDIV (1976) from Vanderbilt University, he entered the University of Chicago Divinity School as a Disciples Divinity House Scholar. He earned his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1987, and did postdoctoral studies at National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan (1994–95). Trained as a scholar of Chinese Buddhism, he also gained historical and global perspectives on theology and ministry.

Sherry Drennen Bouchard died on January 3 in Fort Worth, Texas. She was 90. She was the mother of Larry D. Bouchard (1974; partner, Geneva Becker. Sherry had young children for forty years. She was active in Disciples congregations, including Midway Hills in Dallas and University Christian in Fort Worth, and a good friend of the Disciples Divinity House. Born in Stoughton, Wisconsin, she was 85. He was predeceased by his spouse, Karen, and is survived by his son, José.

Ruben I. Cruz (1963) died on May 12 in Chicago. From 1964–2019, he was Pastor of the Hispanic Christian Church, the oldest Spanish-speaking Protestant congregation in Chicago, founded in 1960. He was a member of the DDH entering class of 1963. He was a well-known media figure as a television and radio host and newspaper columnist. He produced and hosted shows on WMAG-TV, WCIU-TV, and FOX Chicago. He received his first bilingual newspaper column in a major US newspaper, the Chicago Times. He received a local Emmy in 1972 for his coverage of the Hispanic community. He was an important community and civic leader, sometimes joining forces with his late sisters, Miriam and Rebecca Cruz. He was predeceased by his spouse, Karen, and is survived by his son, José.

Ann Wallace Horton Burns died on January 2 in Lexington, Kentucky. She had celebrated her 100th birthday in September 2020. She was the widow of Alumnus Benjamin F. Burns (1941). Although she knew she couldn’t attend in person, she sponsored the tea for the opening afternoon of DDH’s 125th celebration in May 2019. That was but one glimpse into her magnificent spirit. Born in Paris, Kentucky, she graduated from Transylvania College (now University) in 1942. She married fellow alumnus Bum Burns, who would return to Transylvania as Dean of Morrison Chapel. They enjoyed fifty-eight years of marriage. She had a career as a teacher. At age fifty, she received her Master’s degree from the University of Kentucky. She was a mainstay of Central Christian Church in Lexington and a national leader and speaker for the CWF. She is survived by extended family. A memorial service will be planned for later in 2021.

Lindsey married in 1987. After several years as an architect, he dedicated his life to teaching middle school math. Through Project Lead The Way (PLTW), he served for ten years as Associate Dean and member of the faculty at Britte Divinity School. At DDH, he was Associate Dean during Don Browning’s deanship and was interim dean during the 1983–84 academic year. After earning a BA from Texas Christian University (1975) and a MDIV (1976) from Vanderbilt University, he entered the University of Chicago Divinity School as a Disciples Divinity House Scholar. He earned his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1987, and did postdoctoral studies at National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan (1994–95). Trained as a scholar of Chinese Buddhism, he also gained historical and global perspectives on theology and ministry.

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Don A. Pittman, University Professor of Theology at the Disciples Divinity House and the Committee on Social Thought from 1972–89, died on January 15. Born in 1925, he helped to define the field of theological ethics as a renowned scholar, author, and teacher. Mr. Gustafson taught at Yale University before coming to the University of Chicago, and before culminating forty-three years of teaching and research at Emory University. Among his classic works were Treasure in Eternity Vessels, Christ and the Moral Life, and his magnum opus, the two-volume Ethics from a Theocentric Perspective. His book, Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics, first took shape as the 1973 Hoover Lectures of the Disciples Divinity House. For a full obituary, please see divinity.uchicago.edu/news.

The main task, which is transformation and healing. Several of his books are, in the best sense, manuals, practical guides. They provide a deeper appreciation of a Christianit y that is aware of its Judaic roots, while maintaining its historic and theological integrity. In significant ways, Clark was what Jewish tradition would call Hasid Umit Ha’olam, “a Righteous Gentle.” He was a loving critic and a faithful friend. His scholarship was vivid and vital. It drew on the past, but it remained relevant to the present and conscious about shaping the future. His call to the faith reminded us that the virus of prejudice and the plague of anti-Semitism are easily reactivated.

Clark prodded Jews and Christians to re-examine our sources and traditions, to ponder our mutual tasks, to consider our common agendas and our particular responsibilities, not by overlooking differences, but by respecting them; not by filling the gaps, but by bridging them. Clark believed that religion is urgent and relevant business. Churches and synagogues are not museums of dead ideas, but laboratories for testing and improving the human condition. He encouraged Christians to talk to Jews as Jews of flesh and blood; not theologized Jews, but living members of the community of Israel, historic and present. As a faithful Christian, Clark sought to teach Christians and Jews about Jesus, both the historical Jesus and the Jesus of faith, in ways that are historically accurate, intellectually con- stant, and spiritually compelling.

In 2007, Clark Williamson was the Honorary Co-chair of DDH’s 125th Anniversary Celebration in 2019. This April, the Barbara and Clark Williamson Scholarship became fully endowed due primarily to Barbara and Clark’s immense generosity over many years. (See related article on page 5.)

Clark M. Williamson died on June 26 in Indianapolis, after a short illness. He was 85. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Barbara. He is survived by his son Scott (Eva) and two grand- children, Joie and James. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 pm, September 25, at Central Christian Church in Indianapolis. –
BACKYARD RENOVATION UNDERWAY

New possibilities for student life and community are being created.

DDH’s backyard will be renewed as a place of gathering, relaxation, and respite.

Can you imagine sitting together outdoors for Monday dinners? A patio, grill, serving area, farm table, and strings of lights will make that and other student gatherings possible.

What about finding a quiet retreat to talk with a colleague or read a book? There will be hammocks, a swinging bench, picnic tables, and a fire pit lined with seating.

Bicyclists will be able to enter and exit from the alley and make use of new vertical bike racks. Raised beds for vegetables, herbs, and flowers will line the edges against a new cedar fence.

Ernest Wong of Site Design developed the plans in consultation with the trustees and a group of students. The work starts in August.