



“The gifts that He gave were that some would be pastors and teachers . . . to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.” - Ephesians 4:11-12

Bethany Theological Seminary's 103rd academic year was one of extraordinary change and demands created by faculty searches, the transition in presidential leadership, heightened discussions about institutional identity and mission adequate for the 21st century, and an Inaugural Forum that successfully opened the Seminary's witness to the wider church.

Personnel

We express deep appreciation for the service of Delora Roop, Jonathan Shively and Stephen Breck Reid. Delora will retire this summer after 23 years of service in the Institutional Advancement Office. Jonathan, Director of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, has accepted the position of Executive Director of Congregational Ministries for the Church of the Brethren General Board. Steve, Academic Dean, has accepted the position of Professor of Hebrew Bible at George Truett Seminary.

We are pleased that our educational program is fully staffed for the upcoming academic year. In 2008/2009, Scott Holland, Associate Professor of Theology and Culture and Director of Peace Studies and Cross-Cultural Studies, will serve as Interim Director of the Master of Arts program. Richard B. Gardner, Emeritus Professor of New Testament Studies and former Academic Dean, will serve as interim Academic Dean. Joshua Brockway has been appointed to a one-year, half-time position in Brethren Studies. H. Kendall Rogers will join the faculty as Professor of Historical Studies. Thomas N. Finger will serve as Scholar-in-Residence in 2008/2009, teaching four courses in Theological Studies. And in 2009/2010, Malinda Berry will join us as an instructor in Theological Studies and Director of the M.A. program.

Core Testimonies

Bethany's faculty and Board of Trustees are continuing discussion about the Seminary's mission and program, and how it can be refocused around Church of the Brethren core testimonies in order to meet the needs of the denomination, the wider church, and the world in the 21st century.

The Mission Continues

Even as Bethany leadership addresses the task of reviewing, renewing, and re-visioning, the Seminary's mission of educating those called to leadership and ministry continues. Seven persons received academy-level ministry training certificates at the end of 2007, and 16 persons received graduate-level degrees and certificates in May 2008. One Master of Divinity graduate said this about his Bethany education: "Bethany has provided me with the skills that are necessary in ministry: theological reflection, exegesis for Bible study, and models for preaching, pastoral care and counseling. Bethany has helped me grow a pastoral heart to care more deeply for people, and allowed me to rework my leadership model to include ministry."

Our Partnership With The Church

In March, the Seminary opened its witness to the wider church and world by hosting an Inaugural Forum on "Hearing Scriptures of Peace," when plenary speakers from the three Abrahamic faith traditions shared deep insights and meaningful stories. The 150 persons in attendance from our denomination and beyond have asked for similar forums in the near future.

Our relationships with Church of the Brethren members and congregations remain vitally important. A new initiative—the Bethany Ambassador program—names individuals in congregations as ongoing Seminary representatives. Congregations partner with Bethany by calling persons to ministry and supporting them in their educational endeavors, including Bethany in their congregational outreach budgets and church prayer lists, and remaining informed about the Seminary's work through involvement in activities such as naming a Bethany Ambassador, observing Bethany Sunday, and regularly visiting our website.

As we seek to embody a broadened and deepened vision of theological education, we affirm our Church of the Brethren beliefs and practices as especially relevant today. The Church of the Brethren's witness for peacemaking and reconciliation, service, care for creation, and holistic mission stem from ongoing efforts to discern the mind of Christ. Our Christ-centered denominational heritage is a light that we are committed to let shine.

Ruthann Knechel Johansen, President; Ted Flory, Board Chair

Bethany and the Missouri/Arkansas District: Partners in educating ministry leadership: 2007 Statistics

Students in graduate programs: Karen Roberts

Students in Academy programs: Marie Froman, Carolyn Schrock

Financial support: \$2,577 from your district and congregations

***Thank you so very much for your prayers and continuing support of Bethany Theological Seminary
To learn more about Bethany, visit our website at www.bethanyseminary.edu***