A CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION

[Pages 8-12]
Meet Luis R. Rivera, Garrett-Evangelical’s new academic dean, who was installed on April 9, 2014.

From Chicago to Rome and across the world, Garrett-Evangelical is committed to a cross-cultural education.

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Aware is published quarterly by the development office for alums and friends of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, a graduate school of theology related to The United Methodist Church.

Founded in 1853, the seminary serves more than 500 students from many denominations and various cultural backgrounds, fostering an atmosphere of ecumenical interaction. Garrett-Evangelical creates bold leaders through master of divinity, master of arts, master of theological studies, doctor of philosophy, and doctor of ministry degrees. Its 4,500 living alumni serve church and society around the world.

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We are living in a time when increasing awareness of the global nature of the world is challenging North American theological seminaries and schools to better equip graduates for serving multicultural ministry contexts. We consistently hear from religious leaders across denominations and various faith commitments that these skills are critically important and undergird the effectiveness of the bold, spiritual leaders we seek to prepare. The Garrett-Evangelical faculty has been at work on this for a number of years, and as we begin a new curriculum revision process, we realize this dimension of our programs has become even more crucial.

At a recent Faculty Forum, Dr. Hendrik Pieterse invited the faculty to enter into a time of wilderness in which we decenter from our predominantly white privileged perspectives and vantage points in order to consider an even more radical revision of the curriculum. The discussion was lively and inspiring as we began to dream of new ways to organize our degree programs, new ways of teaching, and different ways of engaging our students. These considerations necessarily involve us more deeply in the matters of inter-faith education and partnerships, in broader knowledge about global Christianity across the faculty, and in new consideration of the place of missiology within our curriculum. The conversations will continue in the months ahead, and I am hopeful about these exciting possibilities. I believe this opportunity is nothing less than a kairotic moment for the future of the seminary.

You will see that this issue of Aware highlights the various experiences our students are currently undertaking to fulfill the cross-cultural requirement of the master of divinity and master of arts degrees. The purpose of this requirement has been to assist students in developing awareness and more profound understandings of cultural diversity, i.e., developing a kind of “cultural competency.” Essentially, students must experience an in-depth immersion in another culture in the city of Chicago, in other national locations, or in international places. The requirement can be fulfilled as an independent study with a faculty member or by participating in an approved course, many of which include travel. These experiences are often life changing and sometimes precipitate an “epistemological rupture”—that is, a significant experience of disruption in the way that students have previously come to know what they think they know. The rupture provides an opportunity to expand the horizons for comprehending various contexts of ministry and for seeing the world in a new way. You will enjoy reading about these experiences, but also know that we realize we must move beyond one requirement to a whole new approach that integrates consideration of cultural dimensions across the whole curriculum - a global theological education for a global world.

We have more work to do as we continue to live into being a servant seminary for the twenty-first century church. I can assure you we are committed to this. God is, indeed, doing a new thing among us. Stay tuned!
On Saturday, March 1, 2014, Lallene J. Rector was inaugurated as president in a ceremony at First United Methodist Church in Evanston, Illinois. She is the first woman and first layperson to be appointed president of Garrett-Evangelical.

The two-day inaugural event started on Friday, February 28. Scholars and activists, Matthew Sleet, Timothy Eberhart, Loyce E. Spells II, Angela Cowser, Andrew Sund, and Luis R. Rivera, participated in a lively and thought-provoking panel discussion, Establishing Justice at the City Gate: A Public Theology Conversation. The panelists tackled three key public issues: violence, the environment, and immigration. Later that evening, the Inaugural Concert of Celebration featured Barry Wenger, organist at First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple; Rev. Cynthia A. Wilson, dean of students at Garrett-Evangelical; and the Second Baptist Church of Evanston Choir.

Inauguration day began with a Service of Blessing in honor of President Rector in the morning. Molly T. Marshall, president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, delivered the sermon, titled “Stewards of the Mysteries.” Bishop Sally Dyck of the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church, along with four other United Methodist bishops, offered the blessing upon Rector as she began her presidency.

The inauguration ceremony took place Saturday afternoon and featured a number of special guests. Past presidents of Garrett-Evangelical, including K. James Stein, president of Evangelical Theological Seminary (1972-1974); President Emeritus Neal Fisher, who served as president from 1980-2001; and President Emeritus Philip A. Amerson, president from 2006-2013, offered words of congratulations and blessings to President Rector during the Transfer of the Emblem. Morton O. Schapiro, president of Northwestern University, during his words of greeting said, “Garrett-Evangelical remains a beacon in the campus of Northwestern University.” At the end of the ceremony, Schapiro offered a Hebrew blessing.

The inaugural ceremony featured the Korean Student Choir at Garrett-Evangelical, who performed “Eoyadiya, Be Thankful” and the Celebration Choir, representing the combined talents of singers from Garrett-Evangelical, local churches, and the community at large, who sang “Order My Steps.” Both groups received rousing standing ovations for their spectacular performances.

In her inaugural address, titled, “A Place in God’s Purpose,” President Rector acknowledged the many upon whose shoulders she stands. She challenged the seminary to be a servant seminary to the church and world and to continue to strengthen its connection with Northwestern University, the Evanston and Chicago areas, and the wider church community. Recognizing the complexities of theological education in the twenty-first century and the need for the seminary to practice radical hospitality, President Rector also highlighted issues of justice and inclusion. “Let’s get ourselves out of this lukewarm place of a legal, minimalist, non-discriminating stance. We can do so much better than that.” President Rector concluded her address saying, “There is nothing else at this time to which I would rather give my life energy. We will do what we need to do along the way to protect the future. We will do it with God’s help and wisdom and with a spirit of servanthood for the 160-year-old school we love, the school we are privileged to serve. May God guide and bless our efforts and may Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary continue to flourish.”

To watch the inauguration video or to view the photo album, go to www.garrett.edu/inauguration.
A Faithful Friend for 28 Years

What inspires a layman in Iowa to support a seminary in Illinois for 28 years? According to Joe Trecek, perhaps it was God speaking to him through a couple of individuals.

Joe, now 81 years old, still remembers the day in November 1986 when he got a phone call from his friend, Bob Yaw, inviting him to a 7:30 a.m. breakfast to meet a young man from Garrett-Evangelical. “I can’t,” Joe replied. “I’m at work then.” “Call them and tell them you will be late!” was Bob’s response. So that is what Joe did—and the rest, as they say, is history!

Bob and Joe were both active members of St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and both shared a deep appreciation for their pastor, Eugene Hancock, a 1951 Garrett graduate. Bob had been introduced to the seminary a couple of years earlier and was working with David Heetland at Garrett-Evangelical to create an endowed scholarship in Dr. Hancock’s name. Bob thought Joe would be interested in learning more about the seminary and plans to honor Dr. Hancock. Hence, the breakfast meeting.

At the breakfast, Joe shared with Bob and David his story of growing up on a farm near Boscobel, Wisconsin, majoring in business administration at the University of Wisconsin, spending two years in the army, and then moving to Cedar Rapids to begin work at Collins Radio (today known as Rockwell Collins). He listened with interest as David told him about Garrett-Evangelical and how it had been preparing Christian leaders like Dr. Hancock since its founding in 1853.

Joe commented that he recognized the importance of higher education. Since he was a bachelor and had never sent anyone to college, he was thinking that perhaps he should help someone through school. Upon learning about the financial challenges seminarians face in funding three years of graduate theological education, he became convinced this was where he could make an important difference. At the conclusion of the visit, Joe remarked that perhaps God was speaking to him through Bob and David.

Shortly thereafter, Joe made a leadership gift to the Eugene Hancock Scholarship at Garrett-Evangelical—and he has continued his leadership support to the seminary every year since. In addition, Joe has made a significant planned gift commitment to the seminary through his will. “My hope is that these gifts will help make it possible for young people to pursue their call to ministry,” Joe says. “The church desperately needs strong preachers and strong leaders—and I want to help prepare quality leaders like Dr. Hancock and other Garrett-Evangelical graduates I have known.”

In addition to his own gifts, Joe has hosted several Small Informational Gatherings over the years to introduce others to the seminary. He has also served on the seminary’s Council of Laity.

Joe worked his way up in management at Collins to the position of Manager of Credit and Financial Operations. After 32 years with the company, he took early retirement at age 57 so that he could pursue other interests, including volunteering on numerous church committees, working with delinquent boys, and playing the clarinet with the Collins band and the Shriners Band—something he still enjoys doing.

Garrett-Evangelical is incredibly grateful to Joe Trecek for his 28 years of faithful support and friendship. If you share Joe’s commitment to preparing strong Christian leaders, we invite your participation in the seminary’s Forging Our Future campaign. Outright gifts, pledges, and planned gift commitments are all welcome. For more information, contact David Heetland, vice president for development, at david.heetland@garrett.edu or 847.866.3970.
After nearly twenty years on faculty at McCormick Theological Seminary, what attracted you to Garrett-Evangelical?

I had no intention of leaving McCormick last year. In May 2013, I had been re-elected by the faculty and approved by the board of trustees to a second five-year term as dean of faculty and vice president for academic affairs. Then, during the summer, president-elect Rector surprised me by inviting me to consider the possibility of serving at Garrett-Evangelical in a similar position.

A recent experience inspired me to explore this unexpected opportunity. In March 2013, in an interview with the District Committee on Ministry for the deacon candidacy process, I said, “For the past two years other Methodist deans have been asking me when I am planning to serve a Methodist school. Maybe the Spirit is whispering a ‘home coming’ call. I am open to this possibility.” Little did I know that a few months later President Rector would extend this invitation.

Several factors played a part in my discernment process. First, it was a chance to serve my denomination in the ministry of theological education, in which I have been active for 27 years. Second, years of teaching in the Course of Study and engaging in professional collaborations with faculty members solidified my appreciation of Garrett-Evangelical’s faculty and programs. Third, I realized that my professional experience as a faculty member and educational administrator could serve the school’s mission and strategic goals, and I could be part of an excellent leadership team led by an esteemed and respected colleague of mine, Lallene Rector. Fourth, I received very good recommendations for Garrett-Evangelical by some of my trusted friends and mentors in the academy and church. This information helped me imagine that this could be an appropriate place for me to culminate my term of service in the ministry of theological education.

You recently decided to seek ordination as a deacon in The United Methodist Church. What caused you to start such a process?

Deacons in The United Methodist Church are clergy who are focused on the ministry of service, word, compassion, and justice beyond the congregation, connecting and equipping the church for ministry in the world, and collaborating with elders in the task of making disciples active in mission for/in the world through teaching, proclamation, worship, and sacraments. My process of becoming a deacon was inspired by two factors: first, the ministries of compassion and justice done in my local church, Broadway United Methodist Church, and, second, a renewed desire to be of greater service to The United Methodist Church now and after my retirement.

My call as a deacon is to remain active in the ministry of theological education but to do it with a deacon’s heart and mind. I see myself engaged in the tasks of teaching, scholarship, governance, and service to the church, community, and academy. As a theological educator and administrator in a seminary setting, I live out the deacon’s call by contributing to the fostering of theological education that prepares people for ministries of compassion and justice in the world, and by engaging in scholarship and leadership practices oriented to these two core values.
You have been instrumental in fostering opportunities in theological education for Hispanic/Latino/a persons. How can Garrett-Evangelical best provide theological education for the religious leaders among the burgeoning Hispanic/Latino/a communities in Chicago?

I am excited and hopeful about what Garrett-Evangelical is already doing, and plans to do, to increase educational services preparing religious leaders for Hispanic/Latino/a churches and ministries in The United Methodist Church and beyond. The seminary is already part of important local and national initiatives in Hispanic theological education. We are partners with the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) and their Advanced Latino/a Theological Education Program, the Hispanic Summer Program, and the Hispanic Theological Initiative Consortium. We also have our own Course of Study Program in Spanish, and our students can cross-register for courses on Hispanic theology and ministry at member schools of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS).

We are partners in a new and important project with SCUPE, St. Augustine College, and the Chicago Northwestern District of the Northern Illinois Conference. This program will expand opportunities for Latino/a religious leaders to obtain college education at the baccalaureate level, which will eventually allow them access to graduate theological school. We continue to be attentive, creative, and intentional in providing resources and programs for Hispanic leaders of the church.

What are your goals in your leadership role for the rest of 2014 and in the coming 2014-2015 academic year?

I have two sets of goals for the rest of this and next academic year. The first set of goals relates to what I need to do to become an effective new leader in the community. As a new colleague and leader at Garrett-Evangelical, I am trying to accomplish the following goals in my daily work: a) establish personal and professional relationships with members of the faculty, administration, staff, board of trustees, and the student body; b) quickly learn the policies, systems, and practices that govern all aspects of academic affairs; c) support, collaborate, and inspire colleagues and leaders I work directly with and/or supervise; d) develop a more precise understanding of the prevailing institutional and academic cultures in the school; e) support, coordinate, and contribute selectively to the core activities and services provided in academic affairs; f) assess and improve areas that lack clarity, focus, or generate conflict; and g) identify visions, areas, and leaders that generate enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to our work.

The other set of goals has to do with conceiving and advancing a strategic plan for academic affairs during the years ahead. This plan includes: a) the assessment and strengthening of the Final Integrative Project (FIP) for master of divinity students; b) the assessment and enhancement of the cross-cultural requirement; c) preparation and organization to conduct a curriculum revision; d) enhancement of the faculty’s capacity to deliver learning through online and hybrid courses; e) the recruitment and integration of new faculty members; f) an integrated plan to deliver theological education to Hispanic and other ethnic-racial publics; g) continued faculty development to enhance theoretical and practical capacity to teach a curriculum with emphases on public theology; spiritual and moral formation; and intercultural, interracial, ecumenical, and interfaith commitments; h) the possibility of creating a few new master’s degrees in collaboration with other institutions; and i) preparation for the Association of Theological Schools accrediting visit in the fall of 2018-19.

What do you like to do in your free time, when you are not on campus?

I live a simple life. Some of the things I enjoy doing with my wife are watching movies and going out to dinner, gathering with family members, doing some babysitting for our granddaughters, and traveling to visit family and friends in Puerto Rico and Florida.

To learn more about our new academic dean, Luis R. Rivera, visit his faculty page at www.garrett.edu.
Chicago, Illinois

Michael Jarboe, master of divinity student, visited the Monastery of the Holy Cross and learned a lesson about communication from monks who have taken a vow of silence (Page 12).

Tonjibe, Costa Rica

Tiggs Washington, master of divinity student, traveled to Costa Rica in January 2014 with a Volunteer in Mission team. This trip was made possible by the Robert and Joan Suda Volunteer in Mission Scholarship (Page 10).

Rome, Italy

James Papandrea, associate professor of church history, leads students and others on a trip to Rome each year. Papandrea has also written a travel guide for Rome titled, *Rome: A Pilgrim’s Guide to the Eternal City*.

Liberia

Elizabeth Pierre, doctor of philosophy student, traveled to Liberia. In relation to her research on sexual violence in post-conflict countries and the role of forgiveness and reconciliation, she worked with non-profit organization, ReBuild Africa. She spoke to a group of pastors, themselves traumatized by years of violence, yet called to bring hope and healing to their congregations.
Real-world encounters with people of different backgrounds across the world help to shape the narrative of the Gospel for our students. As we continue to prepare bold, spiritual leaders for a world in the midst of globalization, Garrett-Evangelical is more dedicated than ever to provide a cross-cultural education here and abroad for our students.  

**Israel and Palestine**

Rotating every other year, K.K. Yeo, Harry R. Kendall professor of New Testament, leads a trip to the Holy Land (featured in photo) and Barry Bryant, associate professor of United Methodist and Wesleyan studies, leads a peace and justice immersion trip to Israel and Palestine.

Steve Braudt, master of divinity student, recently spent two months in Palestine studying and creating art. Inspired by a lecture given by Sami Awad, founder of Holy Land Trust, Braudt painted a mural on the wall that separates Israel and Palestine.

**Cape Town, South Africa**

Emily Lutz (G-ETS 2013), current master of arts in pastoral care and counseling student, traveled to Cape Town, South Africa in the summer of 2013.

**Seoul, South Korea**

In the fall of 2013, Lallene Rector, president, visited Yonsei University and Manna Church in Seoul, South Korea. While there, an organization for alumni/ae of Garrett-Evangelical in South Korea was officially formed.

**Thailand**

Kathleen McMurray, master of divinity student, spent eight months in Thailand interning with a non-profit organization called Borderless Friendship Foundation (Page 11).
Garrett-Evangelical has long held a deep commitment to diversity and the global church within the classroom, but in 2002-03, the seminary asserted a stronger stance by making cross-culture experiences mandatory for master of divinity and master of arts degree students. “Cultivating the virtues and skills needed for intercultural engagement cannot be an optional extra, but must be a fundamental dimension of faithful participation in Christ’s church, not just in the United States but within the body of Christ around the world,” said Hendrik Pieterse, associate professor of global Christianity and world religions. “Garrett-Evangelical’s cross-cultural program is one aspect of our aim in training leaders fired by a global Christian imagination who are able to lead their congregations into embracing the diverse body the Spirit is seeking to ‘realize’ in their midst.”

A multitude of opportunities are open to students to expose them to the rich diversity in this country and internationally. Located in the midst of one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the world, Garrett-Evangelical students have countless, rich cross-cultural experiences available at their fingertips.

Garrett-Evangelical is also blessed with donors who value the cross-cultural exposure and the life-altering experience it offers to our students. Some of the scholarships available are: the Emmy Lou John Scholarship, which supports United Methodist Volunteer in Mission trips; the Robert and Joan Suda Volunteer in Mission Scholarship, which supports an annual trip to Costa Rica; and the James E. Ridgway Scholarship, which provides a number of scholarships each year for students to travel to the Holy Land.

Volunteer in Mission to Tonjibe, Costa Rica

**Tiggs Washington, Master of Divinity Student**

I had never heard of Tonjibe, Costa Rica, much less imagined that I would be there as a Volunteer in Mission (VIM) Scholarship recipient last January. During a short, rocky bus ride into the village with my VIM group, I noticed makeshift homes, a soccer field, many animals, a school, and what would be our home for two weeks, the Tonjibe Methodist Church.

Upon our arrival, the whole town came to greet us and showered us with love as if we were old friends who had returned home from a long journey. I was completely overwhelmed with the reception.

We began our week with a Vacation Bible School (VBS) for the children in the community. We danced, sang, played, made crafts, and learned about Jesus. I taught the young boys a special handshake, which we named “El Rey” (“The King” in Spanish). Every time I saw one of the boys, he wanted to do the special handshake.

We also repaired the ceiling of the fellowship hall for the Tonjibe Methodist Church. This was incredibly difficult but very rewarding. When some women stopped by as we were working and saw the work we had done, they were very grateful. Their warm expressions of thanks made all of our efforts seem worthwhile.

We also had a lot of fun participating in the life of the village. I was invited to play soccer with the kids and quickly discovered how skilled they were. It was an amazing experience to spend time with the kids, playing soccer, watching movies in Spanish, and most important, growing in our faith during VBS.

The most valuable lesson I learned from the people in Tonjibe is the valuing of community. In that small village, they have a strong sense of community and a bond like none that I have ever seen. When we went to a funeral in Tonjibe, the whole community was there to show love and pay their respects to the family. It was incredible. They really show genuine support and love for one another.

I am truly grateful for this experience and for the Robert and Joan Suda VIM Scholarship that made it possible for me to participate in this mission trip. Though I was in Costa Rica for only two weeks, Tonjibe and its people will be with me for my lifetime.
I have always been passionate about the church working outside our own walls, crossing barriers, and sharing the love of Christ through acts of compassion and justice in our local and global communities. Part of my attraction to Garrett-Evangelical was its emphasis on being bold leaders for the Church and the world. I appreciated the emphasis on learning cross-culturally and the challenge—in the classroom and in the field—to think outside of our contexts. In my studies I felt a call to fulfill one of my field education requirements outside of the United States. With the help and support of Garrett-Evangelical professors, I was blessed with the opportunity to have the cross-cultural learning experience of a lifetime.

I spent from September 2012 to April 2013 in the northern region of Thailand, interning with a non-profit organization called Borderless Friendship Foundation (BFF). BFF was formed by nine community-based organizations working with nine ethnic groups (Hill Tribes) in remote areas of northern Thailand. The organization is working with 350 to 400 communities of Lahu, Hmong, Akha, Karen, and Lisu tribes, and it is run entirely by volunteers in these communities. BFF strives to make education possible for children, keep children safe from human and drug trafficking, bring sanitation and safe drinking water to villages, educate farmers on spending and safe practices, begin Hill Tribe cooperatives and microcredit, and many other community development enterprises.

While with BFF, I was able to be a part of many projects, including the installation of a solar-powered water filtration system in partnership with a California Rotary Club. I gave support to the newly formed Hill Tribe Women’s Council with their handicrafts and organization. I taught English at two schools and had a chance to work with Myanmar refugee Hill Tribe children at a border orphanage. I worked with 30 children from this Lahu Orphanage Center, teaching them music in English, Lahu, and Thai so that we could go to the big city of Chiang Mai and perform in the BFF fundraising concert. I assisted with BFF communications, putting together the annual newsletter, updating social media, and sending e-mails to English-speaking donors.

BFF is not a religious organization, but many of their volunteers in communities are Christian leaders. In addition to my work with BFF, I had the opportunity to participate in worship and activities of many Christian Hill Tribe churches. I preached in churches (with a translator), offered prayers at hospital beds and meal tables, provided music in worship, and spoke with pastors about theology.

These only skim the surface of the many experiences I had over eight months. I am forever changed by the places I went, the things I saw, and the people I met. I returned home encouraged by the power of people doing good. In the midst of poverty and violence, there are people striving tirelessly in love and service for a better world. God is at work through people every day and we are called to be a part of that work for the transformation of the world.
Learning to Communicate from a Benedictine Monk

Michael Jarboe, Master of Divinity Student

It was 5:50 a.m. when I started my drive from Evanston towards the Monastery of the Holy Cross on the south side of Chicago. I wanted to start on the right foot, so I clicked my car stereo off. I drove in complete silence. It's what a monk would do, right?

Weeks before, my academic adviser sat me down to discuss my cross-cultural options. He had a specific plan in mind for my experience. “Michael,” he said frankly, “you need some quiet in your life.” “Um, thanks?” I was not sure how to respond. “You thrive in a culture of chaos,” he continued to say. “Your ministry setting in the city has you always on the go.” He had a point. “I think for your cross-cultural requirement you need to experience a culture that revolves around silence and contemplation. You need to search within the depths of your soul and begin to become familiar with your inner divine. God’s Spirit is a mighty wind; you know that to be true, Michael, but She can also come as a still, soft voice.” Eventually, but reluctantly, I agreed to see his charge through.

Arriving at the Monastery of the Holy Cross and enduring the excruciating 40 minutes of silence, I knew I could accomplish anything. “Bring it on,” I whispered to myself as I climbed the steep stairs into the sanctuary. A loud clang from a sharp bell signaled the start of the monastic march as 12 hooded men chanted throughout their somber entrance. Ky-ri-e E-lei-son, Ky-ri-e E-lei-son. Over and over again, their words translated from Greek, “Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.” It was exactly the prayer I needed to hear. Lord, have mercy… that I can get through these next few painful days.

The first line from the Daily Office almost had me falling out of my pew. From Psalm 51, the monks chanted in unison: “O Lord, open my lips; and my mouth will proclaim your praise.” What? What did they just say? Why did I come all the way down here if the first thing we’re going to evoke God to do is to open up our traps? I can do that anywhere!

As the service ended, Brother Ezekiel, one of the 12 monks and my contact at the monastery, came over to greet me. At just above a whisper he directed me to the guest house where I would be sleeping. Following the grand tour, Brother Ezekiel asked if I had any questions about the guest house amenities.

“No, Brother, but I do have a question about Mass this morning. I’m… I’m just so confused about the reading of Psalm 51 at the beginning of the first service. How does a monk, who has taken a vow of silence, give praise to God with their mouth?”

He smiled briefly, and with a deep breath he responded: “Just because we as monks have taken a vow of silence, does not negate the fact we all have voices. The prayer asks God that if we are called forth to speak to some degree, that each sound uttered might be words that glorify God’s name.” With that he handed me the key, wished me Pax Christi (Christ’s peace), and walked out of the room leaving me standing in awe.

Over the next 72 hours I would spend much of my time silently pondering those two sentences Brother Ezekiel so graciously shared with me. I had come to the Monastery of the Holy Cross for a chance to purge the existence of sound, noise, and distraction from my cultural milieu, only to realize what I needed was a reconfiguration of how I use my voice. Maybe it is less about shutting up completely and more about being precise with words of encouragement in every opportunity we have to communicate.

The final guideline of the Cross-Cultural requirement at our seminary asks that each proposed experience might “incorporate into ministry a broadened view of what it means to be human and Christian.” I learned a lot about what it means to be a human within the confined walls of the monastery, but I can’t help to imagine the possibilities as Christians we might have to embody Brother Ezekiel’s calm reminder to convey God’s love in every breathe we take. Although I may not have the radio in my car off every time, my view of what it means to be human and Christian certainly has been stretched through the God glorifying voices of these south side monks.
A little more than a year ago, my brother Dave lost a battle with brain cancer that he had been fighting for over seven years. A gifted hand surgeon, the tumor destroyed his medical career and precipitated an unplanned quest to find both the spiritual counsel and friendships that would sustain him along the way.

At one point on that journey I asked him if he was going to church.

“No,” he responded.

“Would you mind telling me why?” I asked.

“If the preacher is using stained-glass language that I can’t pin down and apply to my life, then he is blowing smoke, telling me the whole experience is a blessing in disguise.”

“It’s hard,” he went on to say, “when you’ve been told that you have a brain tumor to hear people tell you that ‘God has a plan,’ that ‘the best is yet to come,’ or that God is giving you ‘a blessing in disguise.’ When you say that to someone who has a tumor that claims the lives of all but three percent of those who have them within a year, the words are worse than useless.”

My brother’s language was pretty raw, but it is also fairly typical of people who find themselves at life’s ragged edges. In turn, those ragged places present some of the tougher and perennial challenges to Christian communities. Helping seminarians to nurture communities of faith that can walk with people in those places has long been a centerpiece of theological education, particularly in classes and internships devoted to the subject of pastoral care.

Effective care at life’s end and the little “m” mortalities that we experience along the way (including job loss, divorce, and illness) cannot be addressed through theory, training, and technique alone. Leaders and communities that can care for others also require deep spiritual formation and that, in turn, requires us to face our own mortality. Questions I ask my students are those I also ask the readers of the book that I wrote in the wake of my brother’s death, which—taken together—I call The Dave Test:

- Can I say “Life sucks?”
- Can I give up my broken gods?
- Can I avoid using stained-glass language?
- Can I admit that some things will never get better?
- Can I give up trading in magic and superstition?
- Can I stop blowing smoke?
- Can I say something that helps?
- Can I grieve with others?
- Can I walk wounded?
- Can I be a friend?

Each of the ten questions leads the reader into a process of self-examination, noting the places that we struggle in confronting our own losses and walking with those we love. Each chapter also offers what I hope will be a helpful way forward.

As we think together about these issues in the classroom, it becomes clear to the students that our churches are complicit in our culture’s denial of death. We do not preach enough on the subject because it is a “downer.” We fail to take advantage of the rich resources of the church to foster intergenerational conversations about death and loss that would enrich everyone who participates. When we do talk about such losses we often offer cold comfort that reinforces the isolation of those we attempt to help. Increasingly, we take refuge from the realities of death, preferring memorial services to funerals, and we do it all without embracing a robust theology of the resurrection. The net result is that the members of our community often navigate death and life’s difficult places with very few of the rich resources that our faith has cultivated over the millennia.

Together, we are rediscovering those resources. More to the point, we are also exploring what it means to be the kind of people who can walk with others. Passing The Dave Test is one step in that journey.

*The Dave Test* is published by Abingdon Press.
Donald Vroon (GTS 1966), has written a collection of essays titled, Classical Music in a Changing Culture. Published by Rowman and Littlefield, these essays focus on spirituality and music. The book will be available beginning July 1, 2014.

Adolf Hansen (GTS 1968), senior scholar and vice president emeritus at Garrett-Evangelical, is pleased to announce the publication of his new book, Three Simple Truths: Experiencing Them in Our Lives. He writes, “After reflecting on the theological journey I have taken throughout my life, I decided to identify the truths I have learned, choose those that I regard as most important, and express them in a manner that might enable readers to experience as well as understand them.”

Lallene Rector, Garrett-Evangelical’s president, says, “Three Simple Truths is an expression of profound Christian faith and a call to steadfastly trust our good God in all circumstances. This compelling book teaches us about the nature of God, encourages us to take action, and provides creative exercises designed to enhance individual and corporate spiritual growth. Adolf Hansen has engaged the depths of human life—its joys and its sorrows. His insight will be relevant for anyone seeking to deepen his or her relationship with God.”

Pamela J. Holliman (GTS 1973 and G-ETS 1975) was elected president of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC). She is the seventh graduate of Garrett-Evangelical’s doctoral program to be elected president since the founding of the AAPC in 1963. Holliman currently serves as associate professor of pastoral theology and pastoral psychotherapy at Garrett-Evangelical.

Terra Amundson (G-ETS 1998) has been appointed as district superintendent for the Southwest District of the Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Keith Augustus Burton (G-ETS 1989) has recently published a book, Laying Down the Law (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2013). It is the companion book for a soon to be circulated adult Bible study guide that has been translated into several languages and will be used by several million Seventh-Day Adventists across the globe.

Ryan Leif Hansen (G-ETS 2006 and 2012) has published his book, Silence and Praise: Rhetorical Cosmology and Political Theology in the Book of Revelation. This book was published by Fortress Press on May 1, 2014 as part of their emerging scholars series.

Michael McMenamy (G-ETS 2009) was elected the president of the Association of Lay Conference Directors of Lay Speaking Ministries. The purpose of the association, a non-profit organization, is to promote and support the Lay Servant Ministries Program of The United Methodist Church. Its mission is to equip the laity to fulfill their evangelistic, nurturing, and witnessing responsibilities that affirm the work of Jesus Christ.

Alum News

Nominations for the 2015 Distinguished Alum

Each year, two Garrett-Evangelical graduates are selected to receive Distinguished Alum Awards. One is given to a Garrett-Evangelical alum who graduated more than 25 years ago and a second award honors a Garrett-Evangelical alum who graduated 25 years ago or less. Nominees should embody the principles of Christian service in effective ministry and be graduates of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary or one of its parent bodies (Garrett, Evangelical, or Chicago Training School).

Nominations must be received by June 30, 2014. Awards will be presented at commencement of the following year. Persons previously nominated will be considered and will not require a second nomination to insure their consideration.

To download the distinguished alum nomination form, go to www.garrett.edu/alumnae. Or contact Betty Campbell, director of stewardship, at 847.866.3971 or Elizabeth.Campbell@garrett.edu.
In Memoriam

Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family and friends of the following alums who have died in Christ.

1940s

Lloyd A. Latta, GBI 1944, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, died on December 9, 2013.
Theresa Miller, GBI 1946, Fort Wayne, Indiana, died on January 31, 2014.
Eleanor Shelton Morrison, GBI 1942, East Lansing, Michigan, died on February 12, 2014.
Robert Ortmeyer, GBI 1944, Des Moines, Washington, died on December 11, 2013.
David C. White, GBI 1945, Nashville, Tennessee, died on April 1, 2014.
James Whitehurst, GBI 1949, Tampa, Florida, died on February 2, 2014.

1950s

Robert Wallace Brownlee, ETS 1950, Claremont, California, died on February 19, 2014.
Charles F. Cooley, GBI 1955, Cridersville, Ohio, died on March 21, 2014.

1960s

Fredric W. Lippert, GTS 1963, Land O Lakes, Wisconsin, died on December 6, 2013.
Amos Shimko, GTS 1962, Brodhead, Wisconsin, died on February 17, 2014.

1970s

Irvin H. Price, ETS 1972, Dallas, Texas, died on November 30, 2013.

1980s

Paul M. Shultz, G-ETS 1988, Iowa City, Iowa, died on January 9, 2014.

1990s

Anna Patricia Longabaugh, G-ETS 1999, Surprise, Arizona, died on December 27, 2013.
Bruce A. Williams, G-ETS 1997, Benton Harbor, Michigan, died on February 12, 2014.
Forging Our Future: The Final Lap

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has been at the forefront of Christian theological thought, evangelical outreach, and social action for more than 160 years. Still, our work is only beginning. In order to remain strong, and attract and educate the very best leaders for tomorrow’s church, your help is needed. We encourage you to consider a pacesetting gift as we enter the final stage of our $100 million campaign, *Forging Our Future, The Final Lap*.

To explore the number of ways you can support theological education at Garrett-Evangelical, go to:

www.Garrett.edu/ForgingOurFuture