

# VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

WINTER 2020



Convocation 2019

PAGE 20

# Table of Contents



On Thursday, September 26, 2019, the Rev. Joseph Thompson, Ph.D. '18 (center, surrounded by his chapel team) was ordained to the priesthood. As the Director of Multicultural Ministries, Dr. Thompson is leading the Seminary's reparations initiative.

## Features

### 11 Bill Roberts Retires

As our professor of church music retires, VTS remember his milestones in a musical life.

### 20 Convocation

The Rev. Willie Jennings, Ph.D., from Yale Divinity School was the keynote speaker at Convocation.

### 24 Reparations

Virginia Theological Seminary becomes the first institution of higher learning to announce reparations.

### 32 Bicentennial Hall

The past and future coincide with one of the Seminary's most historic buildings.

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PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER

The Rev. William B. Roberts, D.M.A., in the Immanuel Chapel music room before the November 15, 2019 concert to honor his impressive career.

11

## Departments

- 4 Dean's Message
- 6 Faculty News
- 17 On Holy Hill
- 18 Academic Affairs and Student Life
- 22 Scene at VTS
- 28 Center for Anglican Communion Studies
- 30 Lifelong Learning
- 35 Advancing VTS
- 40 Alumni News & Notes
- 42 In Memoriam
- 43 Board of Trustees

20

The Rev. Jeannie Lou Reid '99 and the Rev. Marcea Paul '18 reconnect during the 2019 Alumni Convocation.



PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER

### ON THE COVER

The procession enters Immanuel Chapel during Academic Convocation.

*Photo: Paul Evans '22*



VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



## PREPARING FOR A BICENTENNIAL

We are striving to tell the whole story about our past. Our reparations announcement created significant attention (and the article from *The New York Times* is reproduced in this issue, on page

25). Our story about our past must include a recognition of the deep sin of this institution's participation in evil societal structures. At the same time, our story about our past includes moments of remarkable grace, when this Episcopal seminary in Northern Virginia had an impact far beyond our size. Recently, I made a journey to Japan. I wanted to see and discover for myself the impact of Virginia Theological Seminary on the Anglican province of Japan.

My journey started in Kyoto. There I was sitting around the table with the Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Kochi, the Bishop of Kyoto; the Rev. John Kuroda Yutaka, the dean of Bishop Williams' Theological Seminary; the Rev. Akira Peter Iwaki, the retired professor from Bishop Williams' Theological Seminary; and and Gareth Jones, Ph.D., the principal of

Ming Hua Theological College from Hong Kong. It was Tuesday, October 22, 2019; I was at Bishop Williams' Theological Seminary.

The reason for the gathering was an alumnus. He graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1855 with a Master of Arts degree. The Seminary was a place where the mission field mattered. The words "Go ye into the all the world and preach the Gospel" were part of the DNA of the place, even if the chapel that would be adorned by those words was still to be built. This young man, Channing Moore Williams, from Richmond, VA, decided to make himself available for mission work.

The chosen destination was Shanghai, China, and he headed there in 1856. Williams had a gift for languages and learned how to say Morning Prayer in Mandarin relatively quickly. In 1859, Williams was sent to Japan. It was there he made a significant impact. Along with the founding of Trinity Divinity School (which eventually became the Central Theological College, Tokyo), he also founded a prestigious university in Toyko.



Dean Markham (first row; center) met with theologians and Church leaders in Kyoto, Japan

On October 25, 2019, I toured Rikkyo University. Rikkyo is a highly regarded, private University with over 20,000 students. It has been identified as a "Top Global University in Japan" and approximately 10% of the student body comes from overseas. Over the course of four or so hours, the Rev. Professor Dr. Renta Nishihara, the dean of the College of Arts, showed Dr. Jones and me the chapel, the library, and most interestingly, the museum.

It was in the museum that the story of our alumnus is told. It was all there. This son of a farmer from Richmond, VA, who studied at VTS made the long and treacherous journey to China and then on to Japan. There I looked at the will of Bishop Williams; the textbook he used at Virginia Seminary; and the description of the vision he had for education in Japan. Bishop Williams had created one of the first universities in Japan; as a result of his work over 20,000 students are being educated annually. The president of Rikkyo, Professor Yangchoon Kwak, noted that, as VTS celebrates 200 years in 2023, Rikkyo will celebrate 150 years in 2024. Two institutions, with significant anniversaries, making a difference sharing a connection through this remarkable bishop.

In 1866, Williams was consecrated as the Bishop of China and Japan. The results of his ministry are impressive. Along with the Theological College and Rikkyo University (originally called St. Paul's School), he founded another five educational institutions. He is also credited with a hospital, called St. Barnabas, and the construction of four churches. Towards the end of his life, he managed to unite the various Anglican missions to create the Nippon Sei Ko Kai – the united Anglican church in Japan. His imprint is everywhere.

On his gravestone in Richmond, we find the words added by some of his Japanese friends: "During his fifty years in Japan he taught Christ's ways and not his own." The work of formation of a human life is the Seminary's gift to the world. And in the case of Channing Moore Williams, the Seminary did that work well. We truly did give the world a remarkable gift.

Yours in Christ,



The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D.  
Dean and President



*Almighty and everlasting God,  
we thank you for your servant  
Channing Moore Williams, whom  
you called to preach the Gospel  
to the people of China and Japan.  
Raise up in this and every land  
evangelists and heralds of your  
kingdom, that your Church may  
proclaim the unsearchable riches  
of our Savior Jesus Christ; who  
lives and reigns with you and the  
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever  
and ever. Amen.*

(The collect for his commemoration  
day of December 2).



# Parish Ministry Roots

By *Christin Ditchfield Lazo, Communications Assistant*

Sometimes it seems the hallowed halls of higher education are far removed from the real world challenges most students will face: Will their on-campus studies be of any use to them out in the field? Will they be prepared for what awaits?

At VTS, the answer is a resounding “Yes!” The Seminary’s purpose is not to promote scholarship solely for scholarship’s sake, but to equip lay and ordained leaders for effective ministry in their parishes, wherever they may be called to serve—across the country or around the world.

Dean Ian Markham explains, “The Episcopal Church faces many challenges. And perhaps the hardest and most important challenge is congregational vitality. What we are offering is high quality, academically rigorous training and formation with a strong emphasis on the importance of congregational leadership.”

He adds, “Recent developments over the last ten years have stressed this emphasis. We have courses in ‘Biblical Preaching,’ ‘Discipleship,’ ‘Church Administration,’ and ‘Foundations in Christian Leadership,’ as well as ‘Habits of the Priesthood,’ ‘Pastoral Care Across Cultures,’ and ‘The Liturgy in Spanish.’”

It’s important to note that the Seminary’s faculty have plenty of experience in parish ministry themselves.

“Every professor brings out the implications for the congregational leadership in his or her classes,” says the Rev. Melody Knowles, Ph.D., vice president of academic affairs and associate professor of Old Testament. “Our curriculum constantly needs a fresh infusion of faculty members coming straight from full-time ministry positions. Congregations matter at Virginia Theological Seminary.”



The Rev. Ross Kane, Ph.D.

Three recently hired faculty members, who have come directly from congregational and diocesan leadership positions, not only share a passion for the ministry of the local parish, but provide students with a powerful and practical perspective.

**The Rev. Ross Kane, Ph.D.**, is the director of Doctoral Programs and assistant professor of Theology, Ethics, and Culture. Prior to coming to VTS, he served as senior associate rector at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Alexandria, VA for eight years—after three years overseas as a volunteer in Anglican / Episcopal churches in

The Rev. Ross Kane, Ph.D., the Rt. Rev. James Mathes '91, and the Rev. Altagracia Perez-Bullard, Ph.D.

Three recently hired faculty members, who have come directly from congregational and Diocesan leadership positions, not only share a passion for the ministry of the local parish, but provide students with a powerful and practical perspective.

East Africa. He continues to teach and preach locally, especially at his home parish, Emmanuel, Russell Road.

“To me, the parish is the heart of the church itself,” Kane says. “It’s the community where we hear God’s word read and proclaimed, where we receive the sacrament, and where we serve our neighbors in love. Thus, the vocation of theology emerges out of parish communities—theology isn’t infused into parish life as if from the outside, it’s the other way around. Parish life is the occasion for theology. So, I structure many of my classes around experiences from parish life that themselves give rise to theological questions.”

A seminary education is vital.

“The M.Div. curriculum here at VTS gives students tools that are difficult to attain later in ministry,” Kane observes. “That’s especially true of our core classes—it’s hard to take time to

learn biblical languages when you’re running a congregation!”

That said, Dr. Kane notes that even the best three-year M.Div. curriculum can’t possibly cover everything anyone would ever need for parish ministry. Instead, “The M.Div. gives students the resources to become lifelong learners, so that when they find something they haven’t encountered before in the parish, they know where to look to find an answer.”

**The Rt. Rev. James Mathes '91** concurs.

Mathes is the associate dean of Students and Director of Contextual Ministry. Previously, he served in parish ministry for ten years, then became Canon to the Ordinary, and later Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego.

“We see such tremendous growth in our students while they’re here, whether in their sermons or forum discussions or in the classroom,” says Mathes. “But we also know that what we do here is just the beginning! God has got multiple lessons for all of us,



The Rt. Rev. James Mathes '91 (r) with the Rev. William “Pete” Burgess '19.

every day from now until forever. We want students to be inquisitive, to have that sort of ‘What’s next?’ attitude toward learning—and at our best, we inspire that.”

**The Rev. Canon Altagracia Perez-Bullard, Ph.D.**, is assistant professor of Practical Theology. She has worked for The Episcopal Church in various capacities since 1985. She spent nine years as rector of St. Philip the Evangelist, in Los Angeles, and 11 years as rector of Holy Faith Church, Inglewood. She accepted the position at VTS while serving as Canon for Congregational Vitality in the Diocese of New York.

She, too, emphasizes the importance of being equipped by seminary experiences to continue a lifetime of learning in the parish and beyond.

“Although knowledge and skills are essential for competent leadership, learning *how* to learn, how to assess capacities—one’s own and those of others—staying grounded in God and spiritually healthy, with practices that strengthen and sustain a minister for hard work that is often more than anyone can do—these things are essential for ministry in our changed and changing contexts,” she says.

“It is the only way that ministerial leaders can remain nimble, creative, and emotionally intelligent to guide God’s people through challenging times. The Gospel message is faithful and true, yet the ways we must engage within the church’s walls and the wider parish context requires a resilience and a willingness to experiment and learn from the various ways, people and communities we engage and offer Good News.”

Mathes points out, “I think sometimes we come out of an environment like seminary, all supercharged and

ready to go, and we forget how [comparatively] little we know. I suggest to students that they not try every new thing that they learned in school on their congregation in the first six weeks! I encourage them to practice patience and let the members of their congregation be their real-life professors. We have a lot we want to share, but our congregation has much to teach us as well.”

In his classes, Mathes passes on hard-earned wisdom from his own pastoral ministry. He often tells a story about a time when he was so intent on

all of those ways, all the time. Instead I spent a bulk of my time teaching good management, clarifying and building budgets that spoke to our Christian values (just salaries, good stewardship), repairing old buildings (I can solve lots of toilet problems, 30 years in!), and helping people learn how to lead the church together, with their differences and their fears. This, too, was about sharing Jesus all the time, just not in the ways I expected.”

Kane wants seminarians to learn to take the long view when it comes to parish ministry.



The Rev. Canon Altagracia Perez-Bullard, Ph.D. (r) with Donna Arrendell '22.

presenting important information to a congregation in crisis that he missed how deeply they were hurting.

“I gave them procedure and policy and practice, when they needed me to hear their pain. Do the people thing first,” he urges his students. “The policies and procedures are to serve the community, not the community to serve the policies and procedures.”

Perez-Bullard tells her students that she had no idea how much of her time as a rector would be spent in administration and organizational health and development.

“When I entered seminary, I was young and naïve, and anticipated spending all of my time in evangelism, Bible study, preaching and pastoral care. It was going to be about sharing Jesus in

“Some priests get burned out in their early ministry amid their eagerness to change the world,” he says. “Keep the eagerness, yes, but know that the simple, steady task of walking with congregations as they seek the face of God is a long one. Parish priesthood is one of the most rewarding vocations there is, so build habits that will sustain that vocation over the long term!”

Dean Markham concludes, “As Anglicans, we strive to create leaders of congregations who are thoughtful and intellectually committed. Our goal is to continue what we have always done—produce the rectors, the bishops, the faithful pastors of small-town churches, and leaders in theological education and beyond in other provinces around the Anglican Communion.”



# THE GIFTS OF Stacy Williams-Duncan

*By the Rev. Melody Knowles, Ph.D.,  
Vice President for Academic Affairs*

In 2014, the Rev. Stacy Williams-Duncan came to Virginia Theological Seminary as a part-time consultant in educational technology. An Episcopal priest and a doctoral student in education at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education, she was a wise counselor as we explored how VTS could incorporate more digital technology into our teaching and learning.

"Thanks to her vision and hard work, VTS secured two ATS grants, one for online teaching faculty development and one for research on digital literacies for ministry," said Lisa Kimball, Ph.D., associate dean of Lifelong Learning. "As a result, VTS faculty are more confident in their use of educational technologies. Most impressive is the Digital Literacy Toolkit that Stacy created with tools to equip 21st-century church leaders to be fluent in new media in order to navigate digital and hybrid spaces."

In 2016, Williams-Duncan was appointed interim director of Educational Technology and Trotter Visiting Professor. Over the next three years, she led progress on several significant projects.

Registrar Rachel Holm says, "She was instrumental in the successful implementation of our new Learning Management System in the fall of 2018. I feel lucky to have worked alongside her in that process and the year that followed; I am certain my work as Registrar has benefited from her mentorship."

The Rev. Ross Kane, Ph.D., says her expertise in online learning proved a tremendous asset to VTS doctoral programs. "As a low-residency doctorate, online learning is vital to our students' flourishing. Stacy brought pedagogical insight that helped us strengthen our conceptual models of hybrid learning."

Just as significant has been her personal impact.

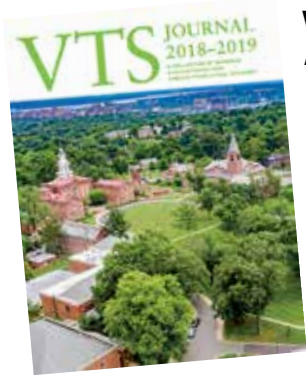
"In her time at VTS, the Rev. Williams-Duncan fully engaged the community and was a person of presence," said the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D. "In her various roles of consultant, advisor, mentor, and teacher, she has developed a deep relationship with the Seminary. I am grateful for who she is and what she has done."

After launching her own consulting business in educational technology and having secured two grants from ATS, she worked with University of Wisconsin in Madison to teach two online courses for faculty at VTS and the local Washington Theological Consortium seminaries: Fundamentals of Online Teaching for Theological Education, and Design Teach Online for Theological Educators. At the same time, she also taught courses on chaplaincy and digital media for ministry, preached and presided in worship, and advised dozens of students.

Jenn Phillips Baker, of the VTS digital learning team, said. "Stacy taught me so much about creating these authentic digital environments in which students explore course material designed for a variety of learning styles and engage with their expert instructors and with each other."

Stacy leaves to serve as part-time rector at Little Fork Church in Rixeyville, VA, consult on educational technology with ATS schools, and complete her doctoral studies. I'm grateful for her expertise and hard work. She has made us stronger as we seek to educate leaders for God's church in the 21st century. And what has always come first for her is not the technology, but rather the educational goals, human values, and dedication to the mission of God in the world. We are grateful for her ministry, and we wish her every blessing as she takes this new step.

# Publications



**VTS JOURNAL 2018-2019:  
A COLLECTION OF SERMONS  
AND LECTURES FROM VIRGINIA  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

*Edited by Dorothy Pearson and  
Curtis W. Prather  
(VTS Press, 2019)*

A record of some of the conversations that were had on the Holy Hill during our 196th academic year, as told by professors and visitors

through lectures, sermons, and presentations. Included in this inaugural edition is an extraordinary collection of sermons from the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D., the Rev. Robert W. Prichard, Ph.D., the Very Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, Ph.D., the Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes '05, and the Rev. Fleming Rutledge, D.D. Lectures included are from Senator George J. Mitchell, the Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D., the Most Rev. Suheil Dawani D.D. '07, the Rev. Judy Fentress-Williams, Ph.D., Lisa Kimball, Ph.D., and the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Ph.D.

**PRAYING THE STATIONS OF  
THE CROSS: FINDING HOPE  
IN A WEARY LAND**

*Margaret Adams Parker and the Rev.  
Katherine Sonderegger, Ph.D.  
(Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,  
2019)*

Grounded in Scripture, the Stations remind readers of the overarching power of God's love for all people and our steadfast hope for redemption. This new book makes

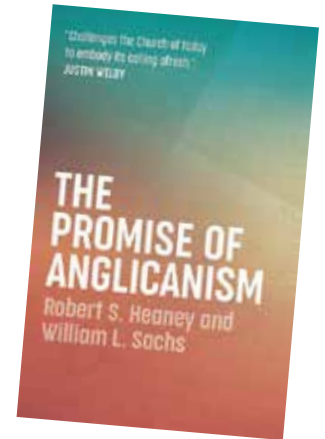
the Stations of the Cross accessible for those new to the practice and offers compelling insight to those with long familiarity. "In this creative collaborative work, Parker the artist and Sonderegger the preacher offer deeply poignant reflections on Jesus's Passion and provide helpful tools for further exploration," said the Most Rev. Michael Curry, presiding bishop and primate of The Episcopal Church. "Here the weary will indeed find refreshment, and those in need of spiritual nourishment will be amply satisfied."



**THE PROMISE OF ANGLICANISM**

*The Rev. Robert S. Heaney, Ph.D., D.Phil., and  
the Rev. William L. Sachs, Ph.D.  
(SCM Press, 2019)*

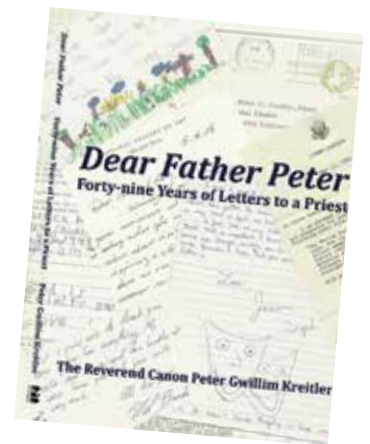
Heaney and Sachs chart the development of the Anglican tradition, arguing that it is through inter-cultural engagement that Anglicanism proper emerges. This book, both academically rigorous and accessible, provides a fresh reading of Anglican history and identifies practical measures for the tradition's flourishing future. More from Heaney about *The Promise of Anglicanism* can be found on page 38.



**DEAR FATHER PETER**

*The Reverend Canon Peter  
Gwillim Kreitler '69  
(VTS Press, 2019)*

When the Reverend Canon Peter Kreitler discovered a stack of neatly preserved letters from his grandfather to his mother, he realized how much the advice they contained had shaped his wonderful mom. The discovery also got him thinking about the letters he had saved since his ordination to the priesthood in 1970. At the heart of *Dear Father Peter* is a selection of those letters charting the many stages of Kreitler's almost five-decade career as a priest and environmental advocate. These letters and Kreitler's commentaries on them are brimming with lessons for all of us who comprise what he calls "the priesthood of all believers."



...xt from the Requiem liturgy

Adagio e legato (♩ = 58)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass



This is an abridged version of  
an article that may be found at  
[www.liturgyandmusic.com](http://www.liturgyandmusic.com).

## THE REV. WILLIAM BRADLEY ROBERTS, D.M.A.:

# Friend, Musician, Teacher, Priest

By Ellen Johnston, Director of Music, Liturgy, and the Arts



Ellen Johnston and the  
Rev. Bill Roberts.

WILLIAM BRADLEY ROBERTS AND I FIRST MET in 1984 at the Mississippi Conference on Church Music and Liturgy. It was my first time to attend this conference, an event that would become a very important part of my life. What I remember most about that first meeting with Bill is that he was so nice to this newcomer and that he had a beautiful voice. Looking back now I realize that most of what I learned about being a good church musician, I learned at the Mississippi Conference and from Bill Roberts.

Jessica Nelson, organist and choirmaster at St. Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral, Jackson, MS, tells me: "This fellow Mississippian has, with his own distinct blend of gentleness and humor, encouraged me, redirected me when indicated, and created opportunities for me. In particular, Bill's work around clergy/musician relationships was a career-changer for me, and I always keep a copy of *Music and Vital Congregations* nearby. When I think about the kind of church musician I want to be, and the kind of career I want to have, Bill is the first person that comes to mind."

Bill's decision to attend the Mississippi Conference was a natural one, since Mississippi was home for him. He was born in Greenwood, in the heart of the Mississippi Delta region. Bill's family soon moved to Jackson, MS, where he lived until leaving for Houston Baptist University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in voice and music education. From there he went to Southern Seminary, a nationally renowned Baptist seminary in Louisville, KY, where he earned a Master of Church Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees with an emphasis in

“I have been so fortunate to sing with Bill for 16 years, starting with his tenure at St. John’s. In those early days, we would sing his compositions when the ink was barely dry. Now his works are published and loved by parishes everywhere.”

—Lisa Koehler  
Choir member  
St. John’s Lafayette Square  
Washington, DC

conducting and voice. One of Bill’s colleagues at Southern Seminary was Michael Hawn, D.M.D., recently retired professor at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, who spoke about his relationship with Bill.

“As one who was in my early teaching days when Bill did his study at the Baptist seminary in Louisville, I observed that he had a winsome spirit, possessed a warm smile, and—above all—was a person of impeccable taste in all things. The warm smile was at once genuine and a way of saying, ‘Rise above it—I really do not want to enter your internecine fray.’ (Baptists love a fight!) For the sake of the church universal, I am pleased that he has maintained all of those wonderful qualities and found his way.”

Music and spirituality were deeply imbedded in one another, something that’s never changed for me.”

When Bill and I met, he was serving as the director of music at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Louisville, his first position in The Episcopal Church. One of his best-selling choral anthems, *Savior, Like a Shepherd, Lead Us*, an exceptionally touching piece for unison choir and flute or oboe, was written for that parish and dedicated to one of his choir members at St. Andrew’s. Leslie Gross, a member of the St. Andrews Choir, told me that singing in the St. Andrew’s choir “was a wonderful experience for me because of Bill. While I had done musical theater, it was as Bill’s soloist that I really learned how to be a professional musician.”



Bill met his husband, David Hoover (left), when he was director of music at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Louisville. They were married in Washington, DC, in 2014.

I asked Bill about his upbringing in the Southern Baptist Church and how it formed him as a musician and a priest. “The gifts I brought with me from my Baptist heritage were the primacy of Scripture, the importance of prayer, and the necessity of Christian community. I

was also blessed to grow up in large churches with ‘graded choir programs’, that is, choirs for people of every age. While we sang the gospel repertoire, like the hymns found in *LEVAS II [Lift Every Voice and Sing II]*, we also sang the great works of the classical music tradition, so works like Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, and Handel’s *Messiah* were important, as were standard anthems like Bach’s *Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring*.

It was during his time at St. Andrew’s, Louisville that Bill met David Hoover. David was pursuing degrees from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and the University of Louisville. They have been together ever since. They were married at The Church of the Epiphany in Washington, DC, in March 2014.

Bill was called to be director of music at St. James Episcopal Church, Newport Beach, CA, late in 1984. In 1993, he accepted the call to be director of music at St. Philip’s-in-the-Hills Episcopal Church, Tucson, AZ. As a church musician, Bill’s time at St. Philip’s was expansive, allowing him to oversee a large program of choristers and choirs, as well as a concert series.

After nine years at St. Philip’s, Bill and David headed back east where Bill was called to be the director of music at St. John’s, Lafayette Square, “the Church of the Presidents.” Lisa Koehler, a long-time choir member

at St. John's said, "I have been so fortunate to sing with Bill for 16 years, starting with his tenure at St. John's. In those early days, we would sing his compositions when the ink was barely dry. Now his works are published and loved by parishes everywhere."

Meanwhile, Bill was an important part of the life of the wider Episcopal Church. He served as chair of the Standing Commission on Church Music for The Episcopal Church (1991-94) before that body merged with the Standing Liturgical Commission. It was during his tenure as Chair that the Leadership Program for Musicians (LPM) was developed.

The Leadership Program for Musicians, a program for musicians serving small congregations, had its start at Virginia Theological Seminary. Bill was one of the founders, along with Raymond Glover, Ph.D., the Rev. Edward Kryder '53, D.D. '75, Marilyn Keiser, Marti Rideout, Carol Doran, D.M.A., and Mimi Farra. The need for LPM surfaced due to, what Doran said were "changes in our church and in our culture during the last few decades [which have] limited the availability of continuing education for church musicians."

In order to address these issues, the founders of LPM designed a curriculum consisting of seven courses covering virtually every aspect of

worship. Bill wrote the curriculum for "Voice Training for Choirs" and "The Philosophy of Church Music." He also served a term as the chair of the LPM Board.

Bill's reputation was clearly becoming more and more significant within The Episcopal Church nationally and he proved to be a significant influence to church musicians across the country. Marty Wheeler Burnett, D.Min., president of the Association of Anglican Musicians says it best: "Bill Roberts is a leader in field of church music and he has made a lasting impact on The Episcopal Church. His teaching and writing have shaped an entire generation of church musicians and liturgists."

But ministries such as LPM are not the only way that Bill has been a productive influence in The Episcopal Church and beyond. Certainly, his work as a composer brought him acclaim and affection from both choirs and people in the pews. Jessica Nelson remembers that she has "swayed along with his setting of *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* more times than I can count, buried beloved friends with *May the Angels of God Watch over You*, and sung along with all the saints in glory with his hymn tunes." In addition to a wide range of anthem literature, Bill has written many psalm settings in Anglican Chant and Simplified Anglican

Chant using hymn tunes. These are settings which appeal to choirs and congregations alike and can be sung confidently by both.

In his career, Bill has often been called upon to do the unusual and extraordinary. The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston recalled, "Given the past thirty years I've known Bill, one thing that stands out the most is his coming to the rescue for the liturgy celebrating my ordination and consecration as bishop after the person who was to serve as principal conductor chose to withdraw. What a gift Bill Roberts was, not only for me as the new bishop but also for the whole Diocese of Virginia. I'll never cease being profoundly grateful to Bill for working all of his magic on that day.

Clearly, Bill can do the "big things," but it is no less worth noting that he gets the "small touches" just perfectly as well. This is true in all phases of Bill's life and relationships—as a friend, teacher, colleague, and priest.

After serving at St. John's for six years, Bill was called into academia. He began his work at Virginia Theological Seminary in 2007, as director of Chapel Music and professor of Church Music. I asked Bill what made him want to leave music ministry in the parish and teach at a seminary. He told me that "earning a doctorate in music early in life was intended as preparation for teaching in higher education. Then God showed me another plan—parish music. The truth is that I was doing both at various parts along the way, but I spent several decades as a full-time parish musician. Of course, teaching is required of a parish musician, and I always relished that part of the vocation. Moving to the vocation of seminary professor was a natural progression, and the years

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**"Bill Roberts is a leader in the field of church music and he has made a lasting impact on The Episcopal Church. His teaching and writing have shaped an entire generation of church musicians and liturgists."**

—Dr. Marty Wheeler Burnett  
President of the Association of Anglican Musicians



Bill Roberts (center) and performers, including then students, at his inaugural concert when he became a full professor at VTS. On becoming a professor, Bill says, “Moving to the vocation of seminary professor was a natural progression, and the years of parish work have informed my teaching.”

“Dr. Roberts cares deeply about his students, about who they are and how music can deepen their relationship with and worship of God. Dr. Roberts continues to urge our church to branch out in its musical repertoire and to embrace all genres.”

—The Rev. Margie Baker ’19

of parish work have informed my teaching.”

Bill would be the first to point out that in his time at VTS, he has been blessed with exceptionally talented teaching assistants. The Rev. Eric Mancil ’15 was effusive in his praise. “Bill is deeply spiritual, a quality I discovered not only as his TA, but also as his student. He is a passionate teacher and a devoted friend.”

The respect and affection that Bill Roberts engenders seems to begin with how he communicates about music with everyone in the community. The Rev. Stephen Tamke ’17 remembers his time with Bill. “It was a pleasure to work with, learn from, and minister with Dr. Roberts for the Seminary’s weekly Community Eucharist, and other special services. Bill’s love of music is grand, and is only matched by his love of offering music for the greater glory of God.”

It is important to emphasize that in Bill’s teaching and ministries he is

formed by the music of the Church, but that is only to scratch the surface. The Rev. Margie Baker ’19 said, “Dr. Roberts cares deeply about his students, about who they are and how music can deepen their relationship with and worship of God. Dr. Roberts continues to urge our church to branch out in its musical repertoire and to embrace all genres.”

Bill has been blessed to work with fine organists during his tenure at VTS. Thomas Smith of Christ Church, Georgetown, and Jason Abel of Christ Church, Alexandria, have both served as organists for chapel services at the Seminary. Jason noted, “As I reflect on the last 13 years of my involvement with chapel services, I marvel at the changes that have progressed. Much more music is being sung daily at the Seminary, the music being sung is far more diverse than it was prior to his arrival, and the student body seems to sing better year after year. People show up to chapel, and they *sing!*”

In the middle of Bill’s tenure at VTS, the Chapel burned. The building, organ, and all of the music was lost. Bill was a member of the chapel planning group and was instrumental in the building of the new organ. Jason Abel commented, “The marvelous Taylor & Boody organ and the wonderful acoustics found in the new Immanuel Chapel will long be a symbol of Bill’s influence on the campus. However, his most lasting impact will be found in all of those clergy who studied with him.”

Bill’s fine qualities as a person can lead us to overlook his gifts as a professor. The Rev. Lloyd A. (Tony) Lewis, Ph.D. ’72 sent me his thoughts about Bill’s time on the faculty at VTS: “Years ago, Bill Roberts taught a group of us a hymn as part of his interview for the teaching position at Virginia Seminary.

I cannot remember what the hymn was. But I do remember watching with fascination as a gifted teacher practiced his craft. In the course of teaching the hymn he interwove the history of the hymn, the way that hymns are constructed, and why singing in church is a profound act of the worship of God. He has helped all of us to see why it is important to sing plainsong AND Anglican chant AND spirituals because they are all pigments on the same palette which constitutes divine praise.”

Lisa Kimball, Ph.D., associate dean of Lifelong Learning and the James Maxwell Professor of Lifelong Christian Formation, told me: “My first dinner in a faculty home was at the table of Bill Roberts and David Hoover. I know Bill as a friend and colleague whose gifts as musician, composer, teacher, and priest are always grounded in prayer and expressed in joy. Bill inspires people to believe in themselves and reach notes they never imagined were possible.”

“Bill’s music makes my heart sing: it seems to flow without effort and his harmonies are serious and deep, beautiful; without being trivial or conventional. But it is Bill the person who excites me even more, as a colleague and as a friend,” said the Rev. Katherine Grieb, Ph.D. ’83, Meade Professor of Biblical Interpretation and New Testament. “There is something about the way he embodies, incarnates, his great learning about the history of music and musicians, the varieties of musical styles, the subtleties of choral expression, that is absolutely remarkable and inspiring.”

After decades as a lay musician and professor, Bill discerned a calling to ordination as a priest in The Episcopal Church. He had been ordained in the Baptist Church when he was twenty-five. I asked him how ordination to the priesthood informed his vocation as a musician and teacher. He replied: “Ordination brought new expectations—baptisms, preaching,

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“I know Bill as a friend and colleague whose gifts as musician, composer, teacher, and priest are always grounded in prayer and expressed in joy. Bill inspires people to believe in themselves and reach notes they never imagined were possible.”

—Lisa Kimball, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean of Lifelong Learning  
Virginia Theological Seminary

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weddings, leading worship, hospital visitation, etc.—and, at the same time, deepened my sense of calling.” So, after following the ordination process in the Diocese of Virginia, he was ordained priest on May 22, 2016, by the Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston, the 13th Bishop of Virginia.

One of Bill’s signature accomplishments at VTS was founding the Center for Liturgy and Music (now Music, Liturgy, and the Arts, part of the Lifelong Learning program). Like the Leadership Program for Musicians, the mission of this work is to assist clergy and musicians serving in small and medium sized parishes, helping them to discover resources and to develop skills in liturgy, music, and preaching. I asked Bill about his motivation in starting this initiative. He responded, “The Center for Liturgy and Music grew directly out of Ian Markham’s charge to me, as I was interviewed in 2007. He wanted VTS to have greater visibility in liturgy and music and



Bill Roberts at the dedication of the Chapel Garden (October 9, 2013).

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“Bill is that deeply talented musician who was loved by those who wanted music at its most Anglican and most traditional and was loved by those who wanted music that engaged with cultural diversity and was more contemporary... As a colleague, he was popular. As a teacher, solid. And as a friend, a delight.”

—The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D.  
Dean and President  
Virginia Theological Seminary

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to be seen as a leader in these areas. Building upon the fine work of my predecessors, I envisioned the Center being a place to refresh and renew leaders, to help them stay abreast of materials and ideas for designing effective worship, and to inspire both professional and avocational church musicians and liturgists in their work.”

I asked Bill what he saw as his main accomplishments at VTS. He told me, with characteristic modesty, that “this is easier for someone else to address. Hymnal editor and VTS music professor, Ray Glover, of beloved memory, said repeatedly that I had raised the level of choral singing, and I was grateful for Ray’s consistent affirmation and friendship. Founding the Center for Liturgy and Music seemed to raise our profile among liturgists and musicians in the Church and the Chapel has a new Taylor and Boody organ that has drawn such a

steady stream of visitors from around the globe. More than anything I have wanted our students to see the musician as a partner in ministry and to expect and nurture that identity in their parish work.”

The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D., dean and president, sums up Bill’s time at VTS thusly: “Bill is that deeply talented musician who was loved by those who wanted music at its most Anglican and most traditional and was loved by those who wanted music that engaged with cultural diversity and was more contemporary. He is a talented composer. And the piece he composed for me to mark my ten years at the Seminary was so special. As a colleague, he was popular. As a teacher, solid. And as a friend, a delight.”

The respect and affection of friends and colleagues is obvious from the words contributed by them for this article. It is quite clear that, for Bill, faithful friendship is a theological virtue. This has been expressed in countless ways.

The Rev. Ann Gillespie ’07, senior associate rector at the Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna, Virginia, describes Bill as a trusted friend: “Bill Roberts has been like a brother to me for the last 19 years—we have enjoyed countless meals, movies, plays, anniversaries, liturgies, laughs, and tears together. I had the privilege of presiding at their marriage in DC before it was legal all over the country. I will miss them desperately, but thank God, Richmond isn’t too far away.”

I close with the blessing written by the Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston and set to music by William Bradley Roberts:

*May the angels of God watch over you. May the love of God enfold you. May all the saints, in Heaven and on earth, pray with you and for you through the Grace of Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you forever. Amen.*



Bill Roberts with the Rt. Rev. Susan Ellyn Goff, Bishop Suffragan of Virginia, at his ordination into the Sacred Order of Deacons (transitional) at Immanuel Chapel (November 21, 2015).

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

*By Jacqui Ballou, Vice President for Finance and Operations; Barney Hawkins, Executive Director of the Bicentennial Campus Projects; and Sean Regan, Construction Project Manager and Owner's Representative*

On November 12, Bicentennial Hall was dedicated (more on page 28), marking the first major completion of this season of construction. The VTS community continues to go about its daily life as campus construction has “turned upside down” life in several key buildings. People are graciously enduring the chaos for those who will come after us.

The Refectory, Scott Lounge and 1823 are all on schedule, despite unanticipated delays with a faulty roof over the kitchen and 1823. This month VTS will seek an occupancy permit from the City of Alexandria. That could take up to three weeks. So, we aim to be “in” by the first of February.



The Addison Academic Center

**Addison Academic Center** is on schedule. There have been two surprises: complications with the leaking dome roof and rusty pipes. We anticipate Addison being ready for classes in the summer of 2020.

**The Bishop Payne Library** is in the design stage. Unfortunately, so much of the \$12m budget is being eaten up with all things mechanical. The building will be state of the art.

On November 13, the Board of Trustees approved the basic design (with several suggested changes) for a renovated **Deanery**. The Dean's house is a private home but also a public space for all sorts of events. The renovation will help the house to live more fully into its dual “vocation.”

**The Welcome Center** is still under consideration. Hopefully, a plan will be given to the Board of Trustees in February 2020.

**The Master Landscaping Plan** is an ongoing effort. It includes landscaping, lighting, parking, and signage.

Elbert Ransom Jr. and Naomi Brooks



PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER

## The Dean's Cross

On Sunday, December 8, during a special service of Advent Lessons and Carols, Dean Markham and Mrs. Amy Curtis, treasurer of the VTS board of directors, conferred the Dean's Cross for Servant Leadership in Church and Society Award to Elbert Ransom Jr., D.Min. and Naomi Brooks.

Elbert “Bert” Ransom, Jr. is an ordained Baptist minister, international lecturer, author, seminary professor, and musician. An aide to the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ransom has been regularly called upon by the U.S. Department of State as an “Agent toward Social Change” to travel abroad and speak about democracy, human rights, and nonviolence.

Naomi Lewis Brooks is a native of Alexandria and a citizen of the world who has carried the message of love for family, church, and community to all she has encountered in church, in the military, and in her community. The granddaughter of James Lewis, Sr., who was employed at VTS for more than twenty-seven years, Brooks has been the role model for thousands.

The Dean's Cross award, established in 2008, recognizes outstanding leaders who embody their baptismal vows to “strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.”



THE REINICKER LECTURE



THE ZABRISKIE LECTURE

## 2019 Endowed Lectures

*By the Rev. Melody Knowles, Ph.D.  
Vice President of Academic Affairs*

*During the summer and fall of 2019, Virginia Theological Seminary was again proud to host several distinguished lectures on campus. Thanks to the generosity of those who endowed these lecture series, the faculty and students are fortunate to hear scholars speak about their most recent work. This year, the topics ranged from the Assyrian empire through Chalcedon and the contemporary church.*

Above, left to right: Bishop Rowe in a post lecture Q&A; Melody Knowles with J. Caleb Howard at the Zabriskie Lecture; Lewis Ayres with Margaret and Jay Costan; Dean Markham with Willie Jennings, key-note lecturer at Convocation 2019.

### THE REINICKER LECTURE

June 25, 2019

The 2019 Reinicker Lecture featured the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Ph.D. '00, the 8th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and a leading figure in The Episcopal Church's conversations on mission and leadership. Bishop Rowe's lecture was entitled "Easier to Bleed than Sweat: The Institutional Church in a Post-Institutional Age," and narrated the changing—and worrying—rhetoric in the church regarding its mission. As the church adapts to a dramatically shifting landscape in which its social capital seems to have decreased, powerful rhetoric has emerged that separates the ideas of mission and institution. This is often expressed as "mission is important and the institution is not." Bishop Rowe, however, saw this as a false dichotomy, for he argued that the net effect of this sentiment is a weakened institution, losing the capacity to practice the values it embraces. Instead, a strong institution with deep capacity is an essential element of God's mission in the world.

*By the generosity of the late George A. Reinicker, a lectureship was founded in October 1894, which has brought to VTS a long list of distinguished speakers for over a century.*

### THE ZABRISKIE LECTURE

August 27, 2019

In August, Virginia Theological Seminary hosted the Zabriskie lecture, in concert with a symposium on campus on *The Reliefs of Ashurnasirpal II: Architecture, Iconography, and Text*. J. Caleb Howard, Ph.D., associate at Tyndale House and St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and Visiting Professor at Virginia Theological Seminary spoke on "The Standard Inscription of Ashurnasirpal II: Substance and Essence." He noted that the so-called "Standard Inscription" that was repeated hundreds of



times on stone wall-panels in the northwest palace at the Assyrian capital of Kalhu is anything but standard. All of the versions of this text have minor differences, and some, like the inscription on the relief on display at VTS, contain significant differences. Coining the description “Peripheral Orthostatic Texts,” Dr. Howard argued that all of the versions must be considered in their unity and difference in order to understand this period and the power politics in play.

*The Zabriskie Lectureship was created to honor the memory of the Rev. Alexander Zabriskie, former dean and faculty member at VTS.*

### THE COSTAN LECTURES September 17–19, 2019

In September, Lewis Ayres, D.Phil., professor of Catholic & Historical Theology at Durham University presented three lectures as a part of the annual Costan Lectures. In “I Wish They Could All Be Chalcedonian: Understanding the Gift of Patristic Theology,” Dr. Ayres examined Neo-Chalcedonian theology between 500 and 700 CE, arguing that to understand the effect of the Council of Chalcedon, we need to realize how the doctrinal conversation continued in the years following 451. While Neo-Chalcedonian theology is not a unified theological narrative, Ayres suggested that Chalcedon was made more Nicene in this period through continued engagement with the work of Cyril of Alexandria and Pope Leo I by people like Maximus the Confessor, and others. It is only through Neo-Chalcedonian theology that we can understand the outworkings of Chalcedon at all, as it is in this period that the doctrinal decisions from Chalcedon are clarified and made applicable. Ultimately, he concluded that God uses the history of the church to educate Christians, speaking to the importance of interdisciplinary historical work as a necessary way to understand the development of doctrine. In wondering whether God really changes in a way that is so distinct

as to disregard history itself, he suggested that the key to reading our doctrinal tradition is through this expansive, interdisciplinary approach.

*The Costan Lectures are an annual three-day series established in 2014 through the generosity of Jay and Margaret Costan.*

### THE SPRIGG LECTURE October 8, 2019

In October, the Rev. Willie Jennings, Ph.D., associate professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale Divinity School, gave the annual D. Francis Sprigg lecture during Virginia Theological Seminary’s convocation. His lecture began with the basic premise that Christian social imagination is distorted, and this distortion turns even faithful people towards hopelessness. How can this imagination be renewed? Dr. Jennings argued that the three virtues of whiteness—control, mastery, and possession—give us a warped vision of maturity, which refuses to allow indigenous ways of becoming to inform Christianity, and refuses to enter into a place without destroying others. In order for Christians to own the Gentile story of becoming in Acts, where the Gentiles are invited into the Jewish story, we must overcome the disease of whiteness. Renewing the social imagination by overcoming whiteness requires entering the life of Jesus as learners rather than teachers, recognizing whiteness as an abnormality in the way it requires subjugation of others for affirmation, and refusing to allow whiteness to control a norm by segregating space. Jennings concluded by urging Christians to reform the word “Christian”—in order to reconstruct and renew our social imagination, we must cast aside the whiteness which distorts the Christian imagination.

*These lectures were established by Mrs. Irma Marchant Morgan in 1964 to honor her uncle, the Rev. D. Francis Sprigg, VTS class of 1846.*

# Convocation 2019



PHOTO: PAUL EVANS '22

Academic Convocation Evensong sermon by AAEC president, the Rev. Canon Loren Lasch.

PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER



1

**1** Enjoying their 10th Reunion are members of the Class of 2009 (from left to right): The Very Rev. Troy Mendez; The Rev. Robert Black; Tyler Black; The Rev. Christopher Richardson; The Rev. Jennifer Andrews-Weckerly; The Rev. Tim Backus; The Rev. George Roberts; The Rev. Chad Martin; The Rev. Valerie Hayes; and the Rev. Beth O'Callaghan. **2** Gathered to celebrate the Class of 1989's 30th Class Reunion (left to right): The Rev. Brad Ingalls '04; Jayne Jackson; The Rev. Brad Jackson; The Rev. Anne West; The Rev. Grace Cangialosi; The Rev. Meg Ingalls; The Rev. Canon Bill Parnell; The Rev. Cameron Fish and Paulette Fish. **3** Our guests of honor at the Reunion Dinner – the Class of 1969 celebrating their 50th Class Reunion. Pictured from left to right: The Rev. Curtis Cowell; Elinor Cowell; The Rev. Dr. Les Smith; Lois Smith; The Rev. Len Freeman; The Rev. Lindsey Freeman; The Rev. Canon Peter Kreitler; Nan Covert; The Rev. Ed Covert; The Rev. Sid Breese; The Rev. Mid Wootten, Jo Ann Wootten; The Rev. Dr. Thom Blair '70; Ellen Sell and the Rev. Jim Sell.

PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER



2

PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER



3

# Honorary Degree Recipients 2019

In 2019, VTS awarded a total of seven Honorary Degrees: Four during Commencement on May 15, and three during the Academic Convocation on October 8.

**JOAN R. GUNDERSEN, PH.D.** received the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. She is the immediate past president of the Episcopal Women's History Project, the past president and treasurer of Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh, and a founding member of Via Media USA. She has published extensively on the history of the church in Virginia, collaborating with Edward Bond on a history of the Diocese of Virginia, *The Episcopal Church in Virginia, 1607–2007*.

**THE RT. REV. CARLYE J. HUGHES '05** received the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. An alumna of VTS, she described the most important element of her ministry as teaching people to cherish their relationship to everyone around them. In May 2018, she was elected the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Newark, becoming the first woman and African American to hold the position.

**THE REV. WILLIE JAMES JENNINGS, PH.D.**, associate professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale Divinity School, received the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. Dr. Jennings is known for his contributions on liberation theologies, cultural identities, and theological anthropology. An ordained Baptist minister, his book, *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race* has already become a classic.

**THE REV. GORDON LATHROP, PH.D.** was honored with the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. Lathrop's teachings focus on the Bible, liturgy, liturgical theology, and liturgy

and ecumenism. In 2006, he joined Yale Divinity School as a visiting professor of Liturgical Studies and Sacred Music. He has written several books including *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*; *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology*; *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*.

**THE RT. REV. JUNE OSBORNE**, the Bishop of Llandaff, Church of Wales, received the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. A ground-breaking figure in the Church of England, Osborne was the first female to be appointed Dean to a medieval cathedral—Salisbury Cathedral—having served as its Canon Treasurer for nearly ten years. One of the first women to be ordained as a priest in England in 1994, she served for many years on General Synod's Standing Committee, including sitting on the Panel of Chairs.

**GAIL RAMSHAW PH.D.**, received of the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. Ramshaw is a scholar of liturgical language and a retired professor at La Salle University. Her many publications include *A Three-Year Banquet: The Lectionary for the Assembly and Treasures Old and New: Images in the Lectionary*. Dr. Ramshaw has lectured at theological seminaries, divinity schools, and universities around the world.

**THE REV. CANON CHARLES K. ROBERTSON '93** received the Doctor of Divinity, honoris causa. He was appointed canon to Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori in 2007, and now serves under the Most Rev. Michael Curry. Canon Robertson is a fellow of the Episcopal Foundation. He has authored several books including *Conflict in Corinth: Redefining the System*; *Religion as Entertainment*; and *Barnabas: A Model for Holistic Stewardship*.



From left: The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes '05, Gail Ramshaw, Ph.D., the Rev. Gordon Lathrop, Th.D., and the Rev. Canon Charles Kevin "C.K." Robertson, Ph.D. '93 • The Rt. Rev. June Osborne, Willie Jennings, Ph.D., and Joan Gundersen, Ph.D.

# CONVOCCATION 2019

**1** Class Stewards from the Class of 2008: The Rev. Sven vanBaars and the Rev. Laurie Lewis. **2** Class Stewards from left to right: The Rev. Hannah Hooker '16; The Rev. Andrew Rutledge '19; and the Rev. Elizabeth Henry-McKeever '19. **3** The Rev. Dr. Les Smith '69 is joined by classmate, the Rev. Peter Kreitler '69. **4** The Rev. Christopher Richardson '09 and the Rev. Valerie Hayes '09 enjoying their 10 year Class Reunion Dinner.



**9** Members of the Class of 1994 gather to celebrate their 25th Class Reunion (left to right): The Rev. Sally Franklin '94; The Rev. Bruce O'Neil '94; and The Rev. Kathleen Price '94. **10** The Rev. Mark Pennypacker '86 (left) and the Rev. Jeff Murph '86 enjoy their "off-year" 33rd Reunion. **11** Sue and Perry Scruggs '79 enjoying a stroll through campus. **12** Awaiting the keynote address by Willie Jennings are (left to right): AAEC members Dr. Marianne Ryan '11 and the Rev. Dr. Annie Cooper '04, '11; and Trustee member, the Rev. Dr. Susan A. Lukens '11



# CONVOCATION 2019

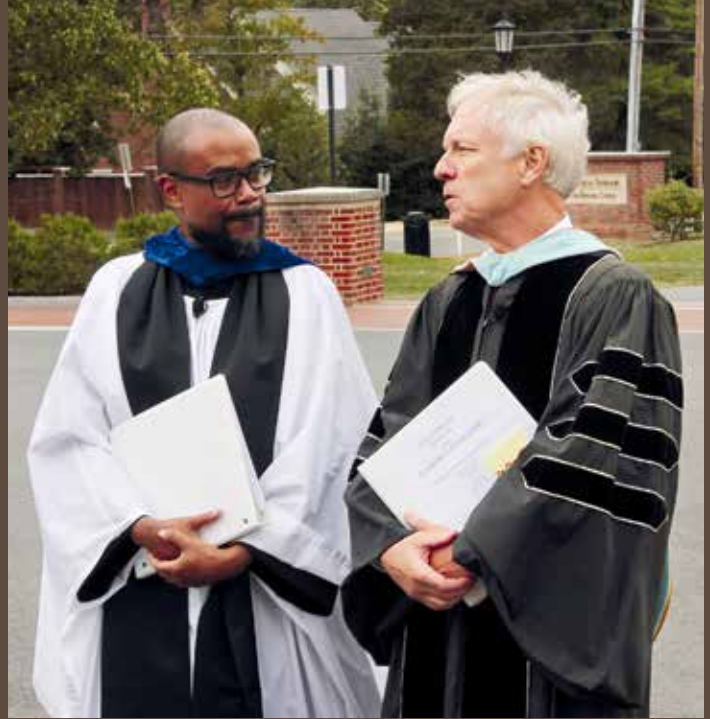


**5** Mr. Riley K. Temple '14 enjoying his five year Class Reunion; **6** Celebrating their 40th Reunion (from left to right): Sue Scruggs; The Rev. Perry Scruggs '79; The Rev. Bruce Boss '79; and Virginia Boss; **7** Enjoying their 15th Reunion (from left to right): The Rt. Rev. Jeff Fisher '04; the Rev. Brad Ingalls '04; and The Rev. Blake Rider '04; **8** The Rev. Lloyd "Tony" Lewis '72 with the Rev. Judy Fentress-Williams, Ph.D.



**13** The Rev. Canon Nan Peete; The Rev. Dr. Lisa Barrowclough '09; AAEC President, the Rev. Canon Loren V. Lasch '08; and Academic Vice President, the Rev. Melody Knowles, Ph.D. gather to congratulate Loren Lasch on her Convocation Evensong sermon. **14** Class Steward, the Rev. Catherine Hicks '10 enjoying the Class Reunions and Class Reunion reception and dinner. **15** Class Stewards enjoying a chance to catch up at the Class Reunion and Class Stewards dinner (left to right): The Rev. Marcea Paul '18; The Rev. Alyse Viggiano '17; and the Rev. David Goldberg '18.

The Rev. Joseph Thompson, Ph.D. '18 and David Charlton, Ed.D., chairman of the board of directors.



# VTS Announces Historic Reparations Initiative

*By the Rev. Joseph Thompson, Ph.D. '18, Director of Multicultural Ministries and Assistant Professor of Race and Ethnicity Studies*

In the history of Virginia Theological Seminary there is so much for which to be thankful—a great legacy of faithful people serving God, the world, and the Church in the name of Jesus Christ. But the past is complex and multifaceted. Alongside the many chapters illustrating the goodness of God are many chapters that manifest our human fallenness and frailty. The Seminary's use of enslaved labor, as well as its participation in Jim Crow segregation, are among the lamentable actions that warrant deep investigation and redress to this very day. The painful legacies of these eras live on in American society, and, indeed, around the globe.

With this history in mind, VTS recently announced a reparations initiative, funded by a \$1.7 million endowment. The primary emphases of the project are: To honor the memory of enslaved persons who were forced to work on campus; to honor African Americans who worked at, and lived in the vicinity of, the Seminary during the years of legal segregation—especially those from congregations and organizations with historic ties to the Seminary; to apologize to their descendants; and to provide some form of restitution. No amount of money could ever compensate for the massive injustice that was perpetrated. Nevertheless, it is important to provide a material offering for atonement of a sin with very real economic and structural consequences,

including systemic advantages to persons of European descent for generations.

Although not the main focus, the funds may also be used to support ministry projects led by African American alums, particularly those serving predominantly Black congregations and communities; to assist in raising up African American clergy in The Episcopal Church; and to support other projects promoting justice and inclusion.

The Office of Multicultural Ministries will administer the reparations initiative. One of the first steps towards implementation involves significant historical and genealogical detective work. Simply put, we need to discover more information about enslaved laborers and, later, African American employees, and their descendants. This is no easy task. Fortunately, we are in a metropolitan area with great historical and archival resources and expertise. We have been in conversation with several professional historians and genealogical researchers who, at this early stage, have already uncovered previously unknown facts that we hope will ultimately lead us to descendants. It is our prayer that God will bless this research and the larger initiative. We will provide updates on the progress.

# The Seminary Flourished on Slave Labor. Now It's Planning to Pay Reparations.

By Rachel L. Swarn

BY THE TIME PHILLIPS BROOKS arrived at the Virginia Theological Seminary in 1856, the institution was thriving. Founded more than three decades earlier in the Sunday school room of a church in Alexandria, Va., the seminary sat on a 62-acre estate with lush meadows and views of the rising Washington Monument.

School officials saw the transformation as a sign of divine blessings. But Mr. Brooks, a seminarian who would go on to become the bishop of his home state of Massachusetts, saw more than the hand of God at work.

“There are crowds of slaves about here,” wrote Mr. Brooks in one of a series of letters describing life at the school, the first Episcopal seminary in the South. “It is one of the best places to see the sad effects of slavery on the white population, degrading and unmanning them.”

Reprinted from the  
*New York Times*  
Sept. 12, 2019



This month, more than a century after the last enslaved people labored on campus, the seminary's leaders announced plans to atone for that history. They are creating a \$1.7 million reparations fund, becoming one of the first American institutions to allocate money specifically for the descendants of the enslaved. The fund will also provide financial support for black seminarians and black worshipers who experienced discrimination on campus.

“We need to come to terms with a past that has an ugly side, a wicked side,” the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, the seminary's dean and president, said in an interview.

“When you're talking about something as heinous as slavery, there's no amount really that can actually satisfy that sin,” Dean Markham said. “It's just too enormous. But we're going

it comes as some groups move beyond apologies, considering actual financial compensation to descendants.

Last year, the Catholic sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart created a reparations fund to finance scholarships for African-Americans in Grand Coteau, La., where the nuns had owned about 150 black people.

This spring, students at Georgetown University, a Jesuit institution, voted to create a fund, financed by student fees, to benefit the descendants of the 272 people who were sold in 1838 to help keep the college afloat. (The plan has yet to receive approval from Georgetown's board of trustees.)

The Jesuits, who founded and ran Georgetown and organized the 1838 slave sale, are currently in talks with descendants of the people they once owned. Those descendants are seeking

discussing the descendants' vision for a pathway forward.”

The decision by Virginia Theological Seminary moves the debate over reparations—which in recent months has bubbled up in presidential campaigns and in the halls of Congress—from the theoretical to a reality.

“It's important because the conversation about institutional obligations to the descendants of the enslaved typically gets confined to a discussion of research and fact-finding,” said Craig Steven Wilder, a historian at M.I.T. who has written extensively about universities and their ties to slavery.

“It's the religious institutions that have started to lay out a path from there toward restorative justice,” Dr. Wilder added. “It's much harder for religious institutions to be silent on the moral implications of their own history.”

Seminary officials plan to pore over archival records for the stories and the names of the enslaved men and women who toiled there.

The fund at the Virginia Theological Seminary will be administered by the Rev. Joseph Thompson, the director of the Office of Multicultural Ministries.

The institution plans to spend about \$70,000 each year.

The seminary hopes to identify descendants of the enslaved laborers who worked on campus and seminarians who experienced discrimination at the school. Officials plan to discuss their needs and to

“When you're talking about something as heinous as slavery, there's no amount really that can actually satisfy that sin. It's just too enormous. But we're going to do the hard work, recognizing that our past is full of sin and grace.”

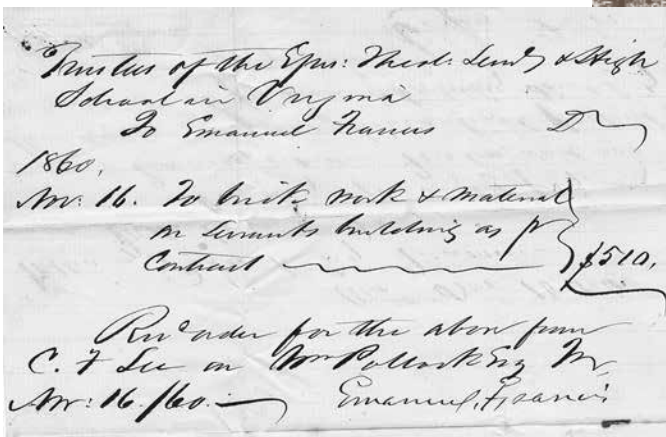
—The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Dean and President

to do the hard work, recognizing that our past is full of sin and grace.”

The move places the southern seminary at the forefront of a growing number of universities and religious institutions striving to make amends for their involvement in America's system of involuntary servitude. And

\$1 billion for a foundation that would finance educational, health, housing and other needs.

In a statement, Timothy P. Kesicki, the president of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States, said the Jesuits and Georgetown officials “have been constructively engaged in



Above: A handwritten bill for \$510 for “the brick work & material for servants building per contract.” Right: An undated image of what is believed to be the “servants” quarters mentioned in the \$510 bill.

offer financial assistance, officials said. “Everything is on the table,” Dean Markham said.

Officials also hope to support local churches with historical ties to the seminary and African-American alumni, especially black Episcopal clergy and those working in black congregations.

Dean Markham said the decision to create the fund had touched off “a lively debate” within the seminary’s community where it has been discussed by members of the board, faculty and alumni.

“People had a lot of questions to ask,” Dr. Thompson added. “There are obvious logistical challenges and obvious philosophical questions. I’m very excited to tackle those questions with the dean’s task force.”

Seminary officials plan to begin charting the way forward by digging into the past. They plan to pore over archival records to try to unearth the names and stories of the enslaved men and women who toiled on campus. Several of the institution’s founders

were slaveholders, including Francis Scott Key, who wrote the lyrics to “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Census records indicate that at least five faculty members owned black people as well, according to the Rev. Joseph M. Constant, the author of “No Turning Back: The Black Presence at Virginia Theological Seminary.”

But most of the enslaved people on campus were rented from local plantations, including from Mount Vernon, George Washington’s estate. Enslaved laborers are believed to have built several buildings on campus, including Aspinwall Hall, which currently houses the seminary’s administrative offices, said Christopher Pote, the seminary’s archivist.

The sight of so many enslaved men and women on campus in the 1850s astonished Mr. Brooks, the young seminarian from Massachusetts.

“All the servants are slaves,” Mr. Brooks wrote to his father in 1856. And students who tried to minister to the enslaved encountered threats and resistance.

One Northern student, he wrote, held a meeting once a week for the enslaved people at the seminary, but had been told to give it up, “or he will have to suffer.”

“Another who has preached some in the neighborhood has been informed that there was tar and feather ready for him if he went far from the seminary,” Mr. Brooks continued. “And in general they have been given to understand that their tongues were tied and they were anything but free. A pretty style of life, isn’t it?”

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*Rachel L. Swarns is a journalist and author who covers race and race relations as a contributing writer for The New York Times. Her articles about Georgetown University’s roots in slavery touched off a national conversation about American universities and their ties to this painful period of history. @rachelswarns*

# The Promise of Anglicanism

By the Rev. Robert S. Heaney, Ph.D., D.Phil.  
Director of Center for Anglican Communion Studies



Along with the Center for Anglican Communion Studies' Senior Research Fellow, the Rev. William L. Sachs, Ph.D., it is a joy to share the news that our book *The Promise of Anglicanism* is now published. The book is a fresh reading of Anglican history and a proposal for the future growth of the tradition. In the book we argue that "promise" is the lens through which we should view the Episcopal-Anglican tradition. This promise is seen clearest in inter-cultural encounters. These encounters are what define Anglicanism proper and these encounters have raised fundamental questions about the content of the faith and the witness of the

church. Such questions, and the contestation they provoke, should not be seen as dysfunction. We argue that contestation is not a hindrance to future promise; it is the means to it. But how might we discern the promise amidst the contestation? The book seeks to answer just that question.

*"This book . . . challenges the Church of today to embody its calling afresh."*

The Most Rev. Justin Welby  
Archbishop of Canterbury

*"Well crafted . . . edifying . . . and timely."*

The Most. Rev. Thabo Makgoba, Ph.D.  
Archbishop of Cape Town

*"Could not be a better placed nor more challenging text for all to read."*

The Rev. Jennifer Strawbridge, D.Phil.  
University of Oxford

*"Exceptional. Intellectually stimulating, and yet admirably accessible."*

The Very Rev. Martyn Percy, Ph.D.  
Dean of Christ Church, Oxford

## RECONCILIATION IN THE MIDST OF CONFLICT: Biblical and Practical Approaches

By Canon Sarah Snyder, Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Adviser  
for Reconciliation and Founding Director, Rose Castle Foundation

We all experience disagreement, misunderstanding and division at many levels—within ourselves, our families, communities, workplaces,

institutions, and nations. While healthy disagreement contributes to innovation and change, destructive fractures undermine our individual and societal wellbeing. We need the skills, motivation, and experience to navigate conflict in ways that build resilience and contribute to the flourishing of all.

I was pleased to lead a January term class at VTS that offered practical tools and theological motivations in each of these areas. The course was built on many years' experience in some of the most challenging conflict zones of the world, drawing on live examples from home and

overseas to navigate a path through deep divides. Developed through my work with the Rose Castle Foundation, a center for reconciliation in the north of England, we offer trainings internationally to both Christian and inter-faith audiences.

Such training explores competing narratives of the past, encourages curiosity about those different from ourselves, and helps us to model what it means to step into somebody else's shoes for a little while, particularly those on the other side of our metaphorical (and real) walls. We discover what it means to live a life behind walls and dig deep within our respective scriptural traditions to find resources for reconciliation, learning how to open and hold spaces for disagreeing well. We discover afresh the challenges of forgiveness and apology and consider what all this means for our own particular divides, whether in the home, church or beyond. Every Christian is called to be an Ambassador of Christ and a Minister of Reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:17-20).

# God Wills Fellowship: The Communion's Ecumenical Vocation

By Hannah Matis, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Church History

On October 2 and 3, a group of scholars, seminarians, and representatives from across the Anglican Communion met at Lambeth Palace for a two-day conference: *God Wills Fellowship: Lambeth Conference 1920 and the Ecumenical Vocation of Anglicanism*. The purpose of the conference was to meditate upon the extraordinary “Appeal for Christian Unity” that resulted from the 1920 Lambeth Conference and to ask what resonance or relevance it has for us, a century on.

Several delegates, keynote speaker Ephraim Radner among them, noted the general mood of penitence that formed the immediate backdrop for the Appeal to Christian Unity. The church felt deeply responsible for not being able to prevent the catastrophe of World War One and, perhaps, sensed already the reverberating social changes that would be caused by its aftermath. At the same time, Lambeth 1920 was only ten years after Edinburgh 1910, the great gathering of missionaries from across the world, and the concern for Christian unity could also be said to have grown up as a natural response to the challenges of international mission and the desire to present a united front abroad. It cannot be coincidental, then, that the main partners in ecumenical dialogue envisioned by Lambeth 1920 were low-church or congregationalist rather than Catholic, precisely in those areas where it was felt that denominational factionalism was harming missionary efforts.

Those present at Lambeth for *God Wills Fellowship* were soberly aware of the barriers to Christian unity present among us but were also worried that a communion reduced to formal agreements would be at best “thin” communion rather than “thicker” forms of dialogue and coexistence. I came away from the conference persuaded that the people most passionately invested in continued ecumenical dialogue and initiative were the representatives from the Global South, who face persecution, religious strife, and



an escalating refugee crisis exacerbated by climate change. By contrast, according to Michael Root, ecumenism as a movement in the Global North may be said in the present time to have entered a more settled phase, in which few large-scale agreements may be expected, and doctrinal distinctions and a diversity of ecclesiastical polities remain likely to continue. I was particularly charmed by Root’s description of the “dead mouse gift” of ecumenism, in which a denomination hopefully offers to another a component of its own identity, which the recipients may not always greet with joy. That sort of wry humility seems necessary today for anyone working in Anglican Communion relations, if ecumenical dialogue is to be truly free. In that spirit, honoring why our differences exist seems a necessary component to building “thicker,” warmer relations across the Communion.



Anglican ecumenist, Nedine Manyemba, visited VTS in September 2019. Manyemba, from Zimbabwe, was on campus as part of the Communion Sabbaticals program hosted by the Center for Anglican Communion Studies (CACS). Manyemba (L), pictured with Molly O’Brien, administrative coordinator for CACS, works for the Zimbabwe Council of Churches.

## Lifelong Learning Continues Partnership with Society of Saint John the Evangelist

*By Charlotte Hand Greeson,  
Associate for Building Faith, Lifelong Learning and  
Lisa Kimball, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Lifelong Learning;  
James Maxwell Professor of Lifelong Christian Formation*

Lifelong faith formation is a process of becoming more fully who God created each of us to be. It occurs in the context of relationships that equip us to claim our baptismal promises while inheriting the richness of our Christian tradition. At her best, the church is made up of disciples making disciples who support one another in living out God's mission. Relatedly, the department of Lifelong Learning is at its best—reaching and teaching church leaders—when connected by healthy relationships to churchwide partners.

Lifelong Learning has been developing a partnership with the Brothers of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE) since 2014, when we were asked to provide feedback on their Lenten curriculum.

As our independent institutions have committed resources to reaching a new generation of seekers hungry for Christian formation, we have leaned into that relationship. SSJE offers the deep wisdom befitting a monastery. When brothers come to campus to teach or lead retreats, as they have for January Term and Quiet Days, they bring with them their Rule of Life and contemplative nature, sharing the silence and attentiveness they cultivate in the monastery. Our department, in turn, brings deep knowledge of curriculum design, learning theory, and experience in gathering groups in new ways that incorporate digital media.

This year our deepening relationship has produced the first SSJE-VTS program in which both partners have been fully involved from the beginning. Building on the centrality of worship in monastic life and our recognition of the power of symbols to communicate the mystery that is God, *Signs of Life: Why Church Matters* is a five-week video-based program for individuals, small group ministries, and larger groups in which the brothers share reflections on their experience of living our liturgies daily. With the Rev. Becky Zartman '13 onscreen interviewing the brothers, Charlotte Hand Greeson's leadership as project manager, and our



Top: SSJE Brs. Luke Ditewig and Keith Nelson answer questions at VTS during January Term 2019.

Bottom: SSJE Brs. Luke Ditewig, David Vryhof, Jonathan Maury and Nicholas Bartoli, in conversation with the Rev. Becky Zartman '13 at the Cambridge monastery.

collective contributions developing discussion guides, *Signs of Life* is designed to foster rich conversations across the church.

Our hope is that *Signs of Life* nourishes your soul and enables you to minister to those with whom you are in relationship.

What might the VTS-SSJE partnership look like in the years to come? We welcome your thoughts on formation at the intersection of monastic wisdom and lifelong learning.

## In an age of visual overload...

By Margaret (Peggy) Adams Parker, Adjunct Instructor and  
Diane Wright, Director of Continuing Education

We live in an age of visual overload, experiencing every day a surfeit of images that blunt our ability to truly see. The visual and performing arts can re-open our eyes to those everyday sights that we pass by without noticing and call our attention to those sorrows from which we instinctively avert our eyes. Art can enlarge our understanding of Scripture. And art can help us recapture the awareness that seeing is an act blessed by God in the very moments of creation.

Following last winter's on-campus production of *A Two Woman Hamlet*, VTS professor the Rev. A. Katherine Grieb, Ph.D. '83, and VTS staff member and Shakespearean actor/director Mara Sherman, MFA, administrative coordinator for Doctoral Programs, began scheming to find a way to share their passion for Shakespeare in a theological context. This was the genesis for "Theater and Theology: Shakespeare's Henry IV, Part 1 & 2," a four-week Lifelong Learning course studying these two Shakespeare plays. Through dramatic reading of scenes, discussion questions and active conversation, students examined rhetoric and power, with special focus on church and state, leadership qualities, vice and virtue, and the theology of war. The goal: to empower participants to wrestle more broadly with theological themes in Shakespeare's works and as well as in pop culture.

Another fall Lifelong Learning class, "Prayer for All Seasons: The Stations of the Cross in Advent, Lent and Across the Year," explored the intersection of art and theology. Drawing on material from their new book, *Praying the Stations of the Cross* (Eerdmans, 2019), the Rev. Kate Sonderegger, Ph.D. and Margaret (Peggy) Adams Parker examined the history of this ancient practice and its role in preaching, prayer, and theology, together with the use of sight and images. Participants gained a deeper understanding of the Stations and how to use this tradition in different liturgical seasons.

The VTS Annual Art Show has been one way that our community artists (and sometimes poets, musicians, and videographers) have shared their creativity—their particular ways of seeing—with friends and colleagues. Spring 2019 marked the 25th show. In honor of that milestone, VTS artists and musicians also created a community-wide Stations of the Cross and led a Stations service that spanned the campus, from the chapel to Aspinwall, from Scott Lounge to the library, to Addison. Those images and prayers were additional confirmation of the power and holiness found in the act of sight.

The Virginia Theological Seminary community has always cultivated space for visual and performing arts, with creative, thoughtful leaders who are rooted in the connection between their own faith and artistic work. We look forward to hosting and participating in other manifestations of our Creator's talents and expressions!

## LIFELONG LEARNING AT VTS IS FOR YOU

Continuing Education at VTS offers a variety of non-degree courses, retreats, and workshops designed to resource ministries. Offerings are made available both on campus and online.

### SPRING PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

**Evangelism Base Camp—Building Theology and Practices for the Journey**—Tricia Lyons leads a four week evening class (on campus and online).

**SACRED GROUND: Conversations on Race and Faith**—This five week program provides prospective facilitators with a taste of SACRED GROUND, a new film-based dialogue series from The Episcopal Church.

**Digital Literacies for Ministry**—Sarah Stonesifer and the Rev. Stacy Williams-Duncan lead a six week online cohort on navigating digital and hybrid cultures.

**Re-Imagining Adult Formation**—A four week online colleague cohort guided by Lisa Kimball, Ph.D. on theological and pedagogical considerations in implementing effective Christian education for adults.

**H.R. Matters: How to Manage Church Staff and Volunteers**—Kathryn Glover, M.P.A., SHRM-SCP (VP for Administration) teaches a four week evening class on human resource management of paid and unpaid church workers.

**Bonus:** VTS offers lifelong learners a 20 percent discount on overnight accommodation, so that you can spend more time in prayer, study, and fellowship.

**Learn more about our offerings and register at [www.vts.edu/ConEd](http://www.vts.edu/ConEd)**  
**For more information, contact us at [LifelongLearning@vts.edu](mailto:LifelongLearning@vts.edu).**



The Rev. Mark Jefferson, Ph.D., with VTS board member, the Right Rev. F. Neff Powell. • Calvert S. Bowie, principal-in-charge at Bowie Grindley Architects, and Richard Molinaroli, principal-in-charge and lead designer, from RAM Design Studio, LLC.

# Dedication of BICENTENNIAL HALL



By the Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D.

Co-director of the Bicentennial Campaign and the Arthur Carl Lichtenberger Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Theology

On November 12, 2019, the Dean & President, the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D., welcomed the Board of Trustees to the renovated Key Hall. That chilly evening was the dedication of Key Hall as Bicentennial Hall—to mark our pilgrimage to our historic bicentennial in 2023. The Rev. Catherine M. Campbell '88, a member of the Board of Trustees, read from the First Letter to the Corinthians. That lesson placed in context the renovation and dedication:

*According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.*

VTS has chosen “with care how to build on” the foundation of this prized 1855 building which has served in so many ways to enhance the ministry of VTS. Since December of 2018, VTS has worked daily with an amazing team of craftspeople—all truly experts in their respective fields—to transform the 1855 building.

This complicated project began because the Seminary wanted a place to honor and to appreciate our Assyrian Reliefs. So, Lifelong Learning was uprooted from their quarters in Key Hall and the Assyrian Reliefs were taken from the lower level of the Bishop Payne Library. One relief was sold at a Christie's auction on October 31, 2018. As part of the sale, Christie's provided VTS with a replica of the “Bearded Genius” which now graces Bicentennial Hall. The relief which VTS retained is in two parts (this we know because of the grain of the rock and the carvings). This remaining treasure has been restored and is now in a protective display case in Bicentennial Hall. Educational wall plaques tell the story of these world treasures which have made their way from Palace to Seminary.

At the great risk of overlooking someone, the historical record needs to include the names of those who have served VTS well in this monumental effort to restore the reliefs (replica and originals) and to renovate Bicentennial Hall. First, let me list the experts (and that is the best way to describe them!) who worked on the reliefs:

- Direct Dimensions: responsible for creation of the replica Assyrian Relief, with Harry Abramson as project manager;
- ELY, Inc.: responsible for art handling services, with Bruce Lee as principal and project manager;
- Capitol Exhibit Services, Inc.: responsible for exhibition, fabrication and installation of case with Chuck Schwieder as project executive and Daniel McGee as project manager;
- Conservation Solutions: responsible for conservation services for the archeological relief within the display case, with Kelly Caldwell as senior conservator;
- Corbett Technology Solutions, Inc. (CTSI): responsible for AV hardware system design and installation, with Scott Corbett as project manager;
- The Rev. Melody Knowles, Ph.D., VTS vice president for Academic Affairs: responsible for curation of exhibition texts and images;
- Dr. J. Caleb Howard, Ph.D., research associate at Tyndale House, Cambridge; Research Associate at St. Edmund's College, Cambridge; assisted with telling the story of the ancient reliefs and assembling an academic seminar to discuss them.

Bowie Gridley Architects designed Bicentennial Hall for its new purpose. They were responsible for architectural and engineering services for the renovation of the building. We are grateful for the work of:

- Calvert S. Bowie, principal in charge;
- Jonathan Rodvien, now retired, who was Principal;
- Heather A. Wnuk, associate, project architect;
- Robert Allen, senior associate.

Renovation of the building itself was an ongoing project as the experts worked on the reliefs. VTS joined forces with Harry Braswell of Harry Braswell, Inc. to transform the building. Early on we faced the unexpected task of replacing the rotten flooring in the 1855 building. There were other major hurdles—such as getting the glass for the display case into the building. The glass from Germany was larger than either of the exterior doors. Finally, it was decided that a window and brick would be temporarily removed. All is now well! Key construction workers included:

- Kim Carr, the project manager with Harry Braswell, Inc.
- James Fisher, the site superintendent with Harry Braswell, Inc. Jamie was masterful as he engaged all the stakeholders in this complicated undertaking.

VTS will also be eternally grateful for three people who gave so much of themselves to this effort:

First, Richard Molinaroli of RAM Design Studio, LLC was principal-in-charge and lead designer. He was responsible for interior design, exhibition, graphic design, and lighting design. Key experts working with him included:

- Harry Raab, exhibition architect;

- Christopher Stroik of Stroik Lighting Design LCC, subcontractor for lighting design;
- David Fridberg of DF Design Studio, subcontractor for graphic design;
- Sue Voss of VossWords, subcontractor for writing and editing.

Second, Sean Regan, managing director of Regan Associates, LLC represented VTS as project manager. Sean has shared his considerable knowledge and skills with grace and good humor. We are grateful that his eximious role in the renovation of Bicentennial Hall is extending to the other campus construction projects.

Third, and finally, Jacqueline Ballou, vice president for Finance and Operations and her able staff, kept an eagle eye on the renovation budget with its many line items. Jacqui kept us grounded.

The oldest academic building on campus is now renovated for our bicentennial and its future years of serving the ministry and mission of Virginia Theological Seminary. Thanks, ever thanks to God!



## BICENTENNIAL HALL TIMELINE

### 1855

Constructed with the generosity of John Bohlen, Esq., of Philadelphia, and Mrs. Sophia Jones, of Virginia

### 1855–1921

The Library, eventually the “Old Library”

### 1922–1950

Wilmer Hall, refectory

### 1950–1958

Key Hall, used as commons room in memory of the Rev. Charles W. Sheerin

### 1958–2009

Key Hall, Practice chapel and choir space. Used as chapel for at least one Spanish-speaking congregation in 1989

### 2009–2018

Key Hall, CMT

**B**icentennial Hall is the oldest academic building on the campus of Virginia Theological Seminary. It was constructed in 1855 and, as the timeline shows, it has functioned in numerous ways over the last 164 years.

As Virginia Theological Seminary prepares to mark its bicentennial in 2023, it is right and proper to name a building to remember this historic occasion. No other building on campus has served with as much versatility as Bicentennial Hall. The building has had many names as it has fed the minds, bodies, and souls of countless faculty, staff and seminarians. In each era of the Seminary’s history, Bicentennial Hall has served well as a library; a refectory; a commons room; a practice chapel and choir space; and as an actual chapel for one Spanish-speaking congregation.

With the dedication of Bicentennial Hall in 2019, the Dean and President with the Board of Trustees honors this mid-nineteenth century building as the locale for the Seminary’s Assyrian Reliefs, a replica and the originals. But Bicentennial Hall is not a museum; it will continue to be a beautiful space for classes, lectures and small events.

## CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF

Our capital campaign “kick-off” celebration will be Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Thanks to a generous campaign gift from the Diocese of Texas, in memory of H.H. “Pete” Coffield, we will gather in the newly renovated and renamed Coffield Refectory for a festive evening.

“We value the deep connection between VTS and the Diocese of Texas,” said Dean Markham. “This gift is a celebration of our 140 year partnership, for the sake of Gospel, between the Seminary and the Diocese.” Since 1879, hundreds of students from the Diocese have graduated from the Seminary. Currently over 110 alumni are serving in the Diocese of Texas.

The public kick-off will be a time to give thanks on all who support the Seminary, and to set our eyes on the goal which is before us for a successful Bicentennial Campaign. Together with God’s help we can do this for our Seminary, our Church, and our Communion



The commemorative glass from the Campaign Kick-Off.

Ian Markham, Linda Dienno, and Barney Hawkins.



PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER

## Our Bicentennial Campaign

*The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D.,  
Co-director of the Bicentennial Campaign and  
the Arthur Carl Lichtenberger Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Theology*

Since February of 2018, we have been in the “quiet phase” of the Bicentennial Campaign (BC). In the early months of 2018, we engaged Community Counseling Services (CCS) to conduct a feasibility study. CCS is a worldwide, strategic fundraising consulting firm which partners with nonprofits to raise funds to strengthen organizations for the future. VTS partnered with CCS for our “Chapel for the Ages” Campaign.

What is a feasibility study? It is a “gut-check” for a potential campaign to discern how much can be raised. For a feasibility study, organizations reach out to the most obvious stakeholders. While all gifts matter, we knew that we must raise between 50% to 70% (the industry standard) in a “quiet phase,” if the campaign is to be successful. So, VTS’ feasibility study

included thoughtful conversations with trustees, alumni, friends, staff, faculty, and students. We decided that donors from the last campaign would be a helpful template for the BC.

The Board of Trustees approved a BC at its May 2018 board meeting when we shared a preliminary campaign case which has since been carefully honed and refined. A campaign case is hopefully a persuasive document written for a time-based campaign. We set out to produce a campaign case which would help donors to understand how their gifts would make a difference for VTS’ ministry and mission in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.

During these very active months of the quiet phase, the lights have burned late in Institutional Advancement (IA).

We have:

1. drafted the “perfect” campaign case;
2. decided on a campaign prayer;
3. assembled the Campaign Executive Committee (CEC);
4. established in consultation with the Board of Trustees the campaign goal of \$45,000,000;
5. decided on seven major campaign divisions for the BC;
6. recruited 52 volunteers;
7. identified major donors/stakeholders/contributors;
8. engaged prospective donors;
9. engaged foundations which have supported us in the past;
10. developed with CCS a cohesive asking strategy for selected prospects;
11. determined when there would be a kick-off event for the BC.

The quiet phase has included considerable travel by Dean Markham and many of us in IA. At the November 2019 meeting of the Board of Trustees, it was decided, upon the recommendation of the IA Committee of the Board, that our BC goal would be \$49,000,000. As we prepare for the kick-off of our public phase, we are grateful that 95% of our goal has been reached. This successful quiet phase represents the deep and faithful support of so many for VTS, The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.



## YOUR COMPREHENSIVE GIFT. YOUR EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT

*By Jennifer Greiner, Director of the Annual Fund*

It is an extraordinary time at VTS and in The Episcopal Church. We are challenged by changing church demographics and the need to meet modern Christians where they are in ways that are meaningful to them. We serve a world that needs faithful well-formed leaders and a relevant church.

A strong Annual Fund brings together gifts of all sizes to meet this need. Together, we continue to prepare far more people for Episcopal parish ministry than any other school. We experiment with exciting new ways to do church. We provide leadership, innovation, and resources that inspire, inform, and challenge our alumni and other church leaders for exceptional ministry. We have deepened and streamlined our commitment to financial aid for students so they can answer God’s call without the burden of additional debt. Our network of 3,300 alumni are doing God’s work: feeding the hungry, caring for creation, spreading the Gospel, and ministering to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

Our vision for VTS’ third century of ministry requires an unwavering foundation of annual support. The Annual Fund plays a vital role in sustaining VTS, making this yearly fundraising effort a top priority. Your gift to the Annual Fund at VTS is a powerful force for good in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion: forming leaders, strengthening the church, touching the lives of people in need of God’s love, and providing resources for ministry around the world.

While the Annual Fund ensures daily mission and ministry, the Bicentennial Campaign will invest in program and place. The combination ensures growth and sustainability for Virginia Theological Seminary and The Episcopal Church. Please join us with a comprehensive gift to the Annual Fund and the Bicentennial Campaign during this exciting and pivotal time. For more information, contact me at (703) 461-1712 or [jgreiner@vts.edu](mailto:jgreiner@vts.edu).

**“I AM SO DELIGHTED THAT THIS ST. NICHOLAS RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES, CHURCHES, AND SCHOOLS WILL HAVE A LONG-TERM FUTURE, IT IS SUCH AN HONOR TO PARTNER WITH VTS, THE VERY BEST SOURCE FOR DIGITAL FORMATION.”**

*Carol P. Myers, Executive Director, the St. Nicholas Center*



# St. Nicholas Partnership

Virginia Theological Seminary is pleased to announce a new partnership with the St. Nicholas Center, a uniquely curated source of information and resources that tell the story of St. Nicholas and his relationship to Christian tradition.

“I am so delighted that this St. Nicholas resource for families, churches, and schools will have a long-term future,” said Carol P. Myers, executive director for the St. Nicholas Center. “It is such an honor to partner with VTS, the very best source for digital formation.”

The partnership outlines a plan for VTS to assume responsibility within five years for the website and the wealth of information there about the saint—customs from around the world, stories and activities for children, and much more—all designed to help families, churches and schools learn about and celebrate St. Nicholas. The website is currently under Myers’ supervision and responsibility for it will ultimately transfer to Lifelong Learning at VTS. The David and Carol Myers Foundation made a significant gift to endow transfer of the website that coincides with VTS’ Bicentennial Campaign priority to endow Lifelong Learning in its mission and ministry.

Dean Markham noted that it has been 17 years since the Center’s website started in 2002, and said, “We are delighted to give it a new home as part of our Bicentennial celebration. Online education is key as we approach our third century of service to the Church; adding the St. Nicholas Center’s website to our offerings makes good sense.”

With a million visits annually from at least 155 countries to the website, this is a great resource to inherit. Lisa Kimball,



Ph.D., associate dean of Lifelong Learning at VTS, is very excited about the partnership saying: “We, in Lifelong Learning, are in the business of activating baptism and equipping church leaders. We welcome the committed and the curious. Our new partnership with the St. Nicholas Center is an outward and visible sign of our mission – connecting the world’s premier collection of St. Nicholas resources and practices with lay and clergy leaders across the church. St. Nicholas, lover of the poor and patron saint of children, is an inspiration for all Christians today.”

The Center’s traveling exhibition on St. Nicholas was installed by Myers this fall in the VTS Welcome Center, where it was on display through Epiphany.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:

# The Rev. Ginny Wilder '12

*By Shelagh Casey Brown, Director of Alumni and Church Relations*

In this issue we are pleased to spotlight the Rev. Ginny Wilder '12, rector of St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Winston-Salem, NC. Ginny Wilder served on the both the Board of Trustees and the Alumni Association Executive Committee (AAEC) including one year as AAEC President, and currently serves on the Bicentennial Celebration Committee.

## How did you happen to come to VTS?

I discerned my call in the Diocese of Western North Carolina and when it came time to look at seminaries, Bishop G. Porter Taylor offered two for me to choose from, with VTS being one of them. I did some research online and saw the variety of classes and professors as an asset as well as the close proximity to Washington D.C. for easy access to museums and art. I saw the rhythm of "go to chapel, go to class, go to lunch" as an invitation to linger in conversations with God, my peers, and our community and I really enjoyed that.

## What has been your path since graduation?

My wife and I have been in Winston-Salem, NC, for two years where I serve as the rector of St. Anne's Episcopal Church. Neither of us dreamed of being in North Carolina

and we are so grateful for the journey that has brought us to this amazing church and community. After Seminary I served as an associate rector at Trinity Episcopal Parish in Wilmington, DE, for a little over five years. I could not have asked for a better first call and I give thanks to the Rev. Patty Downing for her mentoring and to the congregation for their willingness to let me try new things with them as I began to figure out what my gifts are in the vocation of the priesthood.

## Who influenced you the most during your time VTS?

Students at Virginia Theological Seminary are so very fortunate to have passionate, caring, brilliant, and faithful professors and staff available to help mold us and shape us for three academic years and beyond. My memory is filled with many jewels and pearls of wisdom gathered along the way at VTS and one that I bring out often, especially when I am working on a challenging or difficult sermon, is a remark that Dr. Tim Sedgewick offered during our Christian Ethics class: "If they don't hear it from you in the pulpit, where else are they going to hear a Christian leader's perspective?" This has become my mantra, my prayer, when talking about hard subjects in light of the gospel and our baptism.



I feel that it is important, especially as I write this on the eve of the ninth anniversary of the VTS chapel burning, to mention that the whole experience of being a wandering community trying to figure out how to be the church without a permanent location also added greatly to my formation as a priest. The pain and grief of loss, the hope of dreaming a future building, the worry of present day and the changes that came that first year, the struggle to create a vision and a building that took into account the importance of space and community,—we learned quite a bit in the weeks, months and even years during that journey.

**Would you share a favorite memory?**

Some of my favorite memories that I hold dear are ones that happened on Wednesday nights in the Moore Hall Common Room. Whine/Wine on Wednesdays was created as a midweek stress reliever where we would gather together, laugh, wonder, sing, and just exhale for a bit before pushing ahead into the rest of the busy week. The importance of establishing and maintaining relationships where we can just be together, be silly, be encouraging of one another, share our joys and our sorrows—I am just so appreciative of that holy time and the relationships that were formed on those most ordinary of evenings.

**What do you think was the most important thing you learned or the most important take away from your VTS experience?**

Seminary is just the beginning of a life-long discovery process of growth and failures in figuring out how and where God is calling me to serve. I thought I would graduate knowing all the answers and, of course, that is not the case. That being said, I have been given the gift of friendships and relationships with the staff, the professors,

my field ed parish (the Rev. Sheila McJilton, D.Min. '99, '13 and St. Philip's in Laurel, Maryland), and colleagues to draw from which is a constant reminder that we don't enter into this work alone and that God shows up in the relationships and kindred spirits of our fellow companions. That has been the most important take away in my VTS experience and one I give my deepest thanks and gratitude for.

**Advice on staying connected with VTS?**

Staying connected to VTS is important to me and I have had the honor of serving on the AAEC, Board of Trustees, and currently on the Bicentennial Celebration Committee. I encourage others to find ways of staying connected, whether it be through returning for Convocation or taking advantage lifelong learning opportunities, attending regional chapters, giving to the annual fund, or just stopping by for a visit in your travels. Time on the Holy Hill is time spent in good company.



**1** The Rev. Ginny Wilder serving communion to her St. Anne's congregation. **2** Wilder (c) with the Rev. Chris Cole and the Rev. Matthew Wright at their 2012 graduation. **3** Wilder performing at the VTS Rock Concert in 2013. **4** Wilder joins Bishop Bud Shand and Dean Ian Markham in the dedicatory service of the Interim Chapel following the 2010 fire of the 1881 Chapel.



# Notes from the Alumni Office

by Shelagh Casey Brown, Director of Alumni and Church Relations

## Staying Connected

### www.vts.edu

The official website for Virginia Theological Seminary.

### Virginia Theological Seminary Magazine

The Seminary's magazine for supporters of VTS. Published three times a year: January, May, and September.

### The Annual Report

The Seminary's annual report is published once per year for alumni and friends. Published each December.

### The eNews

Monthly updates about happenings at VTS. The first day of each month.

### The Dean's Commentary

Daily updates from Dean Markham and/or guest contributors. Daily, Monday-Friday.

### Online Resources

- www.buildfaith.org
- www.eformationvts.org
- www.trytank.org
- www.baptizedforlife.org
- www.deepcallstodeep.org
- www.vts.edu/thriving

You can also find us on:



## CONVOCATION

The 2019 Convocation featured an outstanding and thought-provoking Sprigg Lecture address by Willie Jennings, Ph.D., associate professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale Divinity School. He spoke on "Renewing the Christian Imagination" and the video of his address is available on the VTS website.

This year's Class Reunion and Class Stewards Dinner was enjoyed at Grace Episcopal Church in Alexandria, VA, due to campus construction. Well over 100 alumni enjoyed a time of reconnecting with classmates and heard from Dean Ian Markham and Dr. Barney Hawkins about the upcoming Bicentennial campaign.

## BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION ACTIVITIES

A reminder to VTS alumni about opportunities to celebrate VTS' Bicentennial:

**Share special memorabilia from your time in Seminary.** Perhaps it is a paper graded by Charlie Price with handwritten comments, or a letter from your sending rector that came at just the right moment in your seminary life, or a treasured photo of classmates now dispersed across the country. Please consider sharing these cherished items with VTS for our Bicentennial celebration, and send copies to the attention of the Alumni Office.

**Photo opportunity:** Gather a group of alumni and have your photo taken on the steps of Aspinwall Hall in the pose of the early missionary alumni in the photo [above]. We want to exhibit these photos during our time of Bicentennial celebration. We anticipate the exhibit will show the changing nature of leaders in the Church through the decades and will be a rich addition to our celebration of VTS alumni.

**Guest Preacher Mark Jefferson:** Homiletics Professor Mark Jefferson will preach 200 sermons leading up to the Bicentennial. Many alumni have already enjoyed hosting Dr. Jefferson at their parishes over the last year. If you are interested please contact alumni@vts.edu

As always, this comes with prayers and blessings from all of us on the Holy Hill!

PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER



Class Stewards gather for their annual photo, following their fall meeting at which they discussed ways to increase connections among their classmates and between their classes and the Seminary.

## VTS RENEWS COMMITMENT WITH ST. GEORGE'S COLLEGE JERUSALEM

This past summer Virginia Theological Seminary and St. George's College Jerusalem signed a renewed partnership agreement stating that both institutions recommit to holding each other up in prayer, to working together to promote a positive vision of the Anglican Communion worldwide, and to actively seek collaboration on mutual learning experiences, such as cross-cultural education programs. In June 2019, VTS alumni participated in the Building Dialogue and Community across Conflict project, hosted at St. George's College and sponsored by VTS's Center for Anglican Communion Studies. The eight-day conference brought together participants from VTS, Msalato Theological Seminary, Tanzania, Cuttington University, Liberia, and St. George's College Jerusalem.

PHOTO: CURTIS PRATHER



(L-R) The Rev. Jon Musser '17, the Rev. Wadie Farr '17, the Rev. Dr. Susan Lukens '11, the Rev. Dr. Annie Cooper '04, '11, Valerie Mayo '19, the Rev. Ernest Godwin Ndahani '16, and Fr. Jamil Monir Khadir.

## Alumni on the Move

**1984**

**The Rev. Jane M. Hague** ▶ Interim Associate Rector for St. John's Church, Lafayette Square, Washington, DC

**1990**

**The Rev. Canon John R. Johanssen** ▶ Priest-in-Charge for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Columbus, OH

**1998**

**The Rev. Irving T. Cutter IV** ▶ Rector for St. Luke's Episcopal Church, San Antonio, TX

**1999**

**The Rev. Lisa DiNunno Hahneman** ▶ Interim Priest-in-Charge for St. James Episcopal Church, Danbury, CT

**2005**

**The Rev. Jessica K. Hitchcock** ▶ Rector for St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Bethesda, MD

**The Rev. Lauren Kuratko** ▶ Rector for Grace Episcopal Church, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

**2007**

**The Rev. Peter K. Ackerman** ▶ Rector for St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church, Lodi, CA

**2010**

**The Rev. Gillian R. Barr** ▶ Rector for Calvary Episcopal Church, Stonington, CT

**2011**

**The Rev. Barbara Steward** ▶ Priest-in-Charge for Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Harrisonburg, VA

**2013**

**The Rev. Margaret Peel** ▶ Interim Rector for St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Woodbridge, VA

2016

The Rev. Mary Lynn Coulson ▶ Rector for St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Pacific Beach, CA

The Rev. Christine Johnson ▶ Rector for St. Mary's by the Sea, Pacific Grove, CA

The Rev. Jacqueline (Jackie) Pippin, 1st LT, USAF ▶ 52nd Mission Support Group Chaplain for Spangdahlem Air Force Base, Spangdahlem, Germany

The Rev. Kristen Tossell Pitts ▶ Chaplain for Washington Episcopal School, Bethesda, MD

The Rev. Kate Harmon Siberine ▶ Rector for Grace Episcopal Church, Concord, NH, and Missioner and Church Planter, Franklin, NH

2017

The Rev. Raphiell Ashford ▶ Rector for St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Columbia, SC

The Rev. Robin Denney ▶ Rector for St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Napa, CA

The Rev. Jason Roberson ▶ Associate Rector for Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria, VA

PLEASE SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Write 3737 Seminary Rd. Alexandria, VA 22304  
Email alumni@vts.edu  
Call (703) 461-1711  
Fax (703) 370-0138

Send address changes to:  
djacobsen@vts.edu

Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord; And let light perpetual shine upon them.

1940s

The Rev. Vernon A. Jones '48  
11/14/2015

1950s

The Rev. Charles H. Clark '52  
3/11/2019

The Rev. Dr. Peyton G. Craighill '54  
6/4/2019

The Rev. Thomas Tucker Diggs '59  
3/31/2019

Mr. C. Ruel Ewing '59  
6/30/2016

The Rev. William P. Parrish '59  
5/12/2019

1960s

The Rev. John A. Fesq '67  
4/30/2019

The Rev. Charles L. Johnson '65  
6/11/2019

The Rev. Kenneth E. Schomaker '60  
3/1/2019

The Rev. Arnold G. Taylor '68  
3/20/2019

1990s

The Rev. Howard B. Purvis '99  
11/18/2018

PHOTO: JOSH PAGET '21



Alumni Peter Kreitler '69 signs copies of his recent publication, *Dear Father Peter: Forty-nine years of Letters to a Priest*, for Bruce Boss '69 and Virginia Boss.



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The Rev. Canon Loren V. Lasch '08

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The Rev. Kate Sonderegger, Ph.D.



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# SAVE THE DATES

- February 14–16**    **Spring Visit Weekend**
- April 2–3**        **Services to Commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**
- May 13**            **Service for the Mission of the Church**
- May 14**            **Commencement**
- October 12**        **Class Reunion Dinner**
- October 13–14**    **Alumni Convocation**

