

LEADERSHIP PRESBYTERIAN FORUM

SPRING 2010



OMAHA
PRESBYTERIAN
SEMINARY
FOUNDATION

THE FOUNDATION FOR PRESBYTERIAN LEADERSHIP

“Teaching Our Story: Narrative Leadership and Pastoral Formation”

Goldman, Larry A., ed. Herndon, Virginia:
The Alban Institute, 2010 (\$15)

Larry A. Goleman is an ordained Presbyterian minister, consultant, and researcher in theological education. He coauthored *Educating Clergy: Pastoral Practices and Pastoral Imagination*, which was the Carnegie Foundation study of seminaries. He also recently directed the Narrative Leadership Project for the Alban Institute and the Ecumenical Project at Virginia Theological Seminary.

This volume is a collection of essays that focus on how congregations can become intentional story-forming communities. As such, congregations can shape the lives of millions of generative, faithful, and civic-minded adults.

The contributors to *Teaching Our Story* show how to integrate congregational stories with biblical stories, personal stories, and theological doctrines. Their work can provide you with an excellent resource to use in your own ministry.

Teaching Our Story is part of a series of books produced by Alban as their Narrative Leadership Collection. You can view information about each resource at www.alban.org.

I commend the series to you and hope that you will find new ways to intertwine your story and your congregation's narrative with the gospel.

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

“Lifelong Learning for Ministry”

We all know that our theological education does not begin or end in seminary. Most clergy are the product of families and congregations who taught them the faith as they grew up. So, when a call to ministry as a vocation set us on the road to seminary, we made that journey with some experience of the church and knowledge of the Bible along with the particular traditions in which we were raised.

Not every seminarian has that background. Many theological students come with limited experience of the church; particularly, the broader, denominational church and its varied ministries. The three or four years that they spend after college in seminary exposes them to a range of classical and practical theological disciplines. Plus there is field education, clinical pastoral education, and possibly an intern year added to the mix. Put all of that together with a personal faith journey and ordination exams and you have a Presbyterian seminary graduate readied to meet a Pastor Nominating Committee. Maybe.

What kind of theological education is available to clergy after graduation from seminary? The answer to that question is extraordinarily varied in 2010. Yes, there are books – such as the one that I recommend to you in the column next to this one – and journals, and conferences aplenty. The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation is involved in providing all of these kinds of resources for clergy and commissioned lay pastors. But there are many more options than in the recent past. Today, you can select a webinar offered by the Board of Pensions or the Alban Institute or other content providers. You also have the incredible variety of materials available through the internet including the classics of the Christian tradition. In addition, Princeton Theological Seminary, for example, is in the process of digitalizing the Speer Library collection and making it available online.

At the Foundation we recently conducted a survey of the clergy and commissioned lay pastors in our 13-state region to find out what type of theological education opportunities you most value. We found that you still want face-to-face events with outstanding scholars. We also discovered that you want a variety of delivery formats including webinars and distance education.

We are making the changes required in how we offer theological education events to you. Not only do we provide eight-day and four-day events, but we also offer one day and overnight conferences. Also, we are venturing into distance education and hope to have webinars for you soon.

We value your prayers and support for the Foundation and look forward to sharing in lifelong learning for ministry with you.

As always, blessings,

The Rev. Dr. Gary S. Eller

THE BOOBY TRAP

It was like I sprung a booby trap – the kind of trap that for a kid manifests itself in a terrible dreaded black-dotted square on the Candyland game board. I felt like other people were off in the Lollypop Forest and I was stuck in the sticky goo, watching everyone else partying it up Willy Wonka style. It was the kind of trap that lends to Indiana Jones bolting for safety while a giant boulder is nipping at his heels. Because right smack in the middle of my studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, I had a baby, and minutes later the Seminary laid off my husband who worked in the Communications Department. What a mess! I'm starting my second semester of my middle year with a battered body, raging hormones, an adorable baby, and a husband who lost his job from the very place I need to go study each day, from the very place we call home. We can see the office buildings from our living room window.

Adversity. I was caught. I was frozen, suspended in air, and wondering constantly these two things: "How do I get out of here?" and the other big question: "How did I get out here?"

My previous profession in the staffing and recruiting business earned me great money. Should I quit school and go back to work? Should I look for a job? What about the reality of caring for this baby? We spent ten months in the booby trap – my husband and I caught by our legs with my babe in arms. But the Holy Spirit set us free.

Today, one year after these events occurred, I look back and see a year where I had to allow the hospitality of others to work in my life. I accepted gifts of money, food, and cute, adorable baby dresses.

The Holy Spirit invites us into hospitality, and often we think that means we need to be the foot washer, that in order to be hospitable, we need to care for others. Well, sometimes we have to let others wash our feet. It took ten months, but my husband has a job now, and we met some really, great people in the process of looking for work.

Feeling more connected and feeling contentment and pure joy in my role as a mother, I am also feeling God's call to teach and preach is stronger than ever. The Holy Spirit continues to draw me up into the life of God, and I want to share that with others. Through all my questions and uncertainty and through all my feelings of fear over this past year, I am still here. Not even a booby trap could keep me from my course, my call. Through living a life with God, all things are possible. Praise God!

This article was written by an Apollos scholarship recipient, Brita Hansen. She is a senior enrolled at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

A BIT OF IMPORTANT TRIVIA

This space is usually reserved for an article from one of our seminary presidents delineating what is happening in their seminary. This time, however, it is being used to tell you some bits and pieces about the Presbyterian Theological Seminary at Omaha and the Foundation that resulted from it. But more importantly, it will tell you where we as a Foundation are going in the future.

I won't bore you with dates. Suffice it to say that the Seminary began because a group of clergy and laypersons saw a great need in the Midwest for a source of clergy to serve the churches of the frontier. They realized that it was difficult to get graduates of the Eastern seminaries to come to the "wild west" to serve small, rural communities and churches. These men (and they were at that time all men) knew that if they sent one of their own back east to school, chances were slim that they would return. It was sort of like the old WWI song that lamented, "How you gonna get 'em back on the farm, after they've seen Paree?" The Seminary struggled for many years just to make ends meet. Making payroll was always a challenge, but somehow they not only survived but also graduated a good number of ministers who served churches all over this area and beyond. What is not often known, however, is that the faculty were so dedicated to the idea that higher education was important that they started a municipal college, which evolved into one of the finest institutions in the state of Nebraska, the University of Nebraska at Omaha – formerly the Municipal University of Omaha.

When the Seminary closed, there were a number of leaders on the Board of Trustees who strongly felt the need to continue. So they set about organizing the assets through careful stewardship and incredibly wise investments to form opportunities for continuing the education of Presbyterian seminary students in the Midwest. It was eventually organized into a non-profit, educational foundation that, to this day, provides scholarships for our seminary students and continuing education opportunities of the highest quality for clergy in our churches. The assets of the Foundation continue to be carefully and prayerfully developed so that more and more programs can be carried out.

When I was President of the Foundation, the President of one of our seminaries said to me, "The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation is the best-kept secret in the Church." We are doing everything possible to change that image. You will begin to see even more examples of this in the near future.

We have some big shoes to fill when we look back at those leaders who dedicated themselves so deeply to this cause and this church. But, fill them we will, and we will continue to serve the Presbyterian Church for many years to come. Thanks be to God for the Spirit that moves in our midst.

- The Rev. Dr. Kenneth J. Bunnell, former President of OPSF and Pastor Emeritus of Peace Presbyterian Church, Elkhorn, Nebraska

OMAHA PRESBYTERIAN SEMINARY FOUNDATION EVENTS – 2010

Third Annual Heartland Lectures

For Clergy, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Church Leaders

Monday, April 12 to Tuesday, April 13, 2010

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell – “Being Faithful People in a Multi-Faith World”

President & Cyrus McCormick Professor Emeritus of Church & Ministry

McCormick Theological Seminary – Chicago

Heartland Presbyterian Retreat Center, 16965 NW Hwy. 45, Kansas City, MO 64152

This overnight begins with dinner Monday and concludes after lunch on Tuesday.

REGISTRATION SUGGESTED BY MARCH 15TH.

The 15th Annual Daniel W. Nelson Lectures

For Clergy, Commissioned Lay Pastors and Church Leaders

Tuesday, May 11, 2010

The Rev. Dr. M. Craig Barnes – “The Pastor as Minor Poet”

Robert Meneilly Professor of Leadership & Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

& Senior Pastor at Shadyside Presbyterian Church – Pittsburgh, PA

The Wm. H. & Dorothy Thompson Alumni Center at UNO

6001 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68162

REGISTRATION SUGGESTED BY APRIL 15TH.

The 54th Annual Omaha Presbyterian School for Pastors

For Clergy and Commissioned Lay Pastors

June 16-23, 2010 at Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska

The Rev. Dr. James F. Cobble, Jr. – “Navigating the Maze: Legal, Tax, & Risk Management Concerns for Churches and Clergy”

Founder and Executive Director of Christian Ministry Resources, Inc. – Matthews, NC

The Rev. Dr. Mike Graves – Worship Theme: “Journeying with Jesus”

Wm. K. McElvaney Visiting Professor of Preaching & Director of Continuing Education,

Saint Paul School of Theology – Kansas City, MO

The Rev. Dr. Bonnie Sue Lewis – “The Missional Church: Local and Global”

Associate Professor of Mission & Native American Christianity, University of Dubuque

Theological Seminary – Dubuque, IA

The Rev. Dr. Paul Allen Williams – “Islam and Christianity in Conversation”

Assistant Professor of Religion & Chair of Religious Studies, University of Nebraska – Omaha, NE

REGISTRATION SUGGESTED BY MARCH 31ST.

Register Online: www.Omaha-Sem-Found.org/education



FAREWELL

We bid a fond farewell to two faithful members of the Board of Advisors: The Rev. Mary Hansen of Villisca, Iowa, who was elected in March 2000 and served as a faithful member of the Apollos Scholarship Committee for many years, and Dr. Walter A. Bennett, Jr., Omaha, who began his term of service in March 1994.

E-FOUNDATION

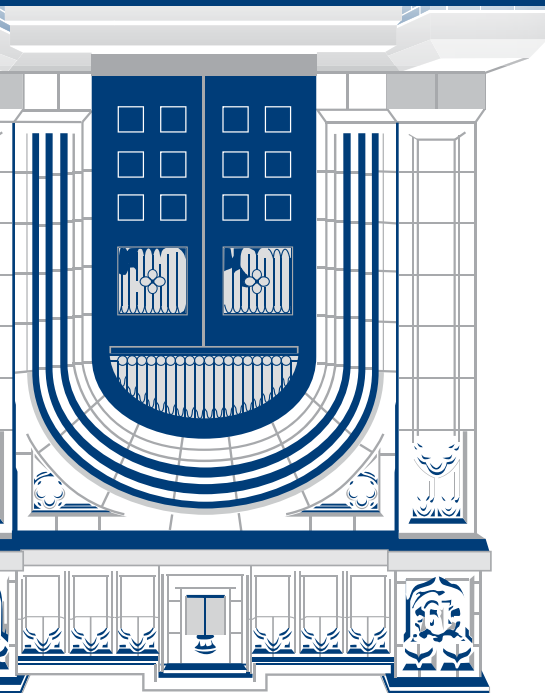
Would you prefer receiving our newsletter and event publicity via email?

If so, please take a minute and send your email address to: OPSF@Omaha-Sem-Found.org. While we will continue to mail printed brochures, you may seek event information on our website. Sending updates via email makes it easier to distribute quickly. We promise not to share your email address with anyone.

Application forms for continuing education events and Apollos Scholarships are posted on our website at: www.Omaha-Sem-Found.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation is to seek, develop and support excellence in Christian leadership through the Presbyterian Church (USA).



RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

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THE FOUNDATION FOR PRESBYTERIAN LEADERSHIP

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