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Life & Legacy of Kenneth B. Smith, Sr., Chicago Public Leader and Former President of Chicago Theological Seminary to be Honored at February Lecture

CHICAGO- February 6, 2019 - Join Chicago Theological Seminary and the CTS Center for the Study of Black Faith & Life as we honor the life and service of the legendary Chicago community leader, and former CTS President, **the late Rev. Dr. Kenneth B. Smith, Sr.**, with a lecture on **Thursday, February 21, 2019**. The evening will begin with a reception starting at 5:45 pm and will feature retrospective photography, a lecture by **Dr. Julia M. Speller**, Kenneth B. Smith Professor of Public Ministry, and associate professor of American religious history & culture, and recitations from the speeches and archived works of Rev. Dr. Smith by family and friends.

“Being the Kenneth B. Smith, Sr. Professor of Public Ministry is an honor that in many ways affirms my long-standing commitment to being a bridge that links the Academy and the Church,” said Dr. Speller. “Dr. Smith taught us how to build bridges during challenging times and in so doing has sustained and advanced many communities. This is a goal that I continue to strive for in my work and witness.”

Smith was able to successfully navigate and connect three critical sectors in the public square including the church, the academy, and the civic-business sector. He was a beloved pastor, scholar, and community builder. Rev. Dr. Smith held many roles, including pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ and Church of the Good Shepherd, both on the city’s South Side. He became president of CTS in 1984 and for the next 14 years, helped put the school on strong financial ground and attracted some of the best theological minds to join the Seminary’s academic and administrative ranks. He served on many boards, including the Chicago Board of Education and the Chicago Community Trust.

“As I interface with parishioners, community leaders, and clergy familiar with Rev. Kenneth B. Smith, I am inspired by the breadth and depth of his commitment to making the ministry of Christ evident in the community,” said **Brian E. Smith**, director of advancement and strategic partnerships. “He provides us with a blueprint of what it means to be truly committed to ministry.”

During the month of February, the presidential portraits of CTS’s first president, **Franklin Fisk**, along with **Rev. Dr. Charles Shelby Rooks** and **Rev. Dr. Susan B. Thistlethwaite** will be on display in the lobby of our building. These individuals were significant to the Seminary in many ways, most notably being the first black president and first woman president, respectively.

The presidential portrait of Rev. Dr. Smith will be unveiled during the lecture. The lecture is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Visit ctschicago.edu/kennethsmith to reserve your seat.

ABOUT CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Based on Chicago’s Southside, Chicago Theological Seminary is committed to creating leaders for the next generation at religious leadership...whatever that may be. A leader in social justice, CTS is committed to LGBTQ and gender issues, interreligious understanding, and racial justice.

CTS is an affiliated seminary of the United Church of Christ. Since its founding in 1855, CTS has pushed at the growing boundaries of the church in order to make faith more relevant and transform society towards greater justice and mercy. The student body now represents more than 40 different faith traditions, perspectives, and denominations.

