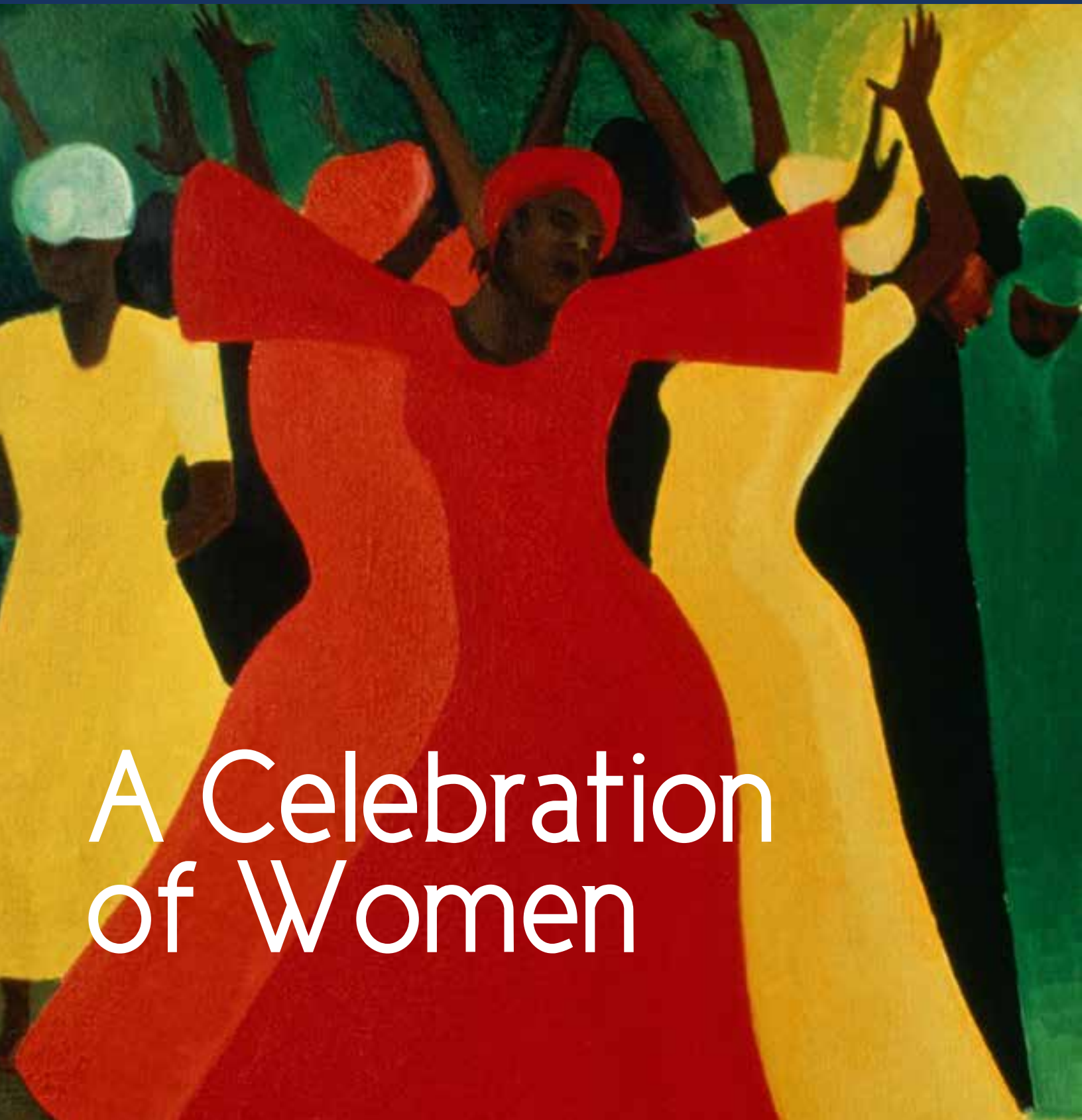


Challenge & Response

CHICAGO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Summer 2013



A Celebration
of Women

President's Welcome

Alice Hunt, President



As I write this introduction to *Challenge & Response*, three women are among the justices of the Supreme Court deliberating over challenges to discriminatory laws restricting the rights of LGBTQ persons to marry those they love. What seems entirely normal to us today would have been unimaginable to most of our predecessors at Chicago Theological Seminary just forty-five years ago. In addition to sharing exciting news from CTS, this issue of *Challenge & Response* looks at how the feminist and womanist movements have shaped CTS and how they continue to challenge the church and the wider society toward liberating responses.

Women played an important role at Chicago Theological Seminary since 1902 when Florence Fensham received the first Bachelor of Divinity degree awarded to a woman in the United States. But the beginning of the Seminary's engagement with the feminist movement came in 1970 with an issue of the *CTS Register* devoted to the experience of women in the church and to shifts in women's self-understanding and place in the world. That same year Hazel Staats-Westgrove, a CTS staff member and one of the founders of the Ecumenical Women's Center in Chicago located at CTS, and Peggy Way, a 1959 graduate of the Federated Faculty and professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School, taught the first course on feminism: "Explorations in Human Liberation: Female-Male."

Forty-five students signed up for the course, including thirty women and fifteen men. The instructors struggled to find theological books by women informed by the relatively new feminist movement. Only Mary Daly's *The Church and the Second Sex* was on the syllabus, along with

Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique*, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, and Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics*. From this beginning emerged a sustained engagement with feminist theology that has shaped the CTS curriculum along with the presence of womanist and feminist scholars on the faculty, in leadership positions as deans and presidents, and among graduates like Dr. Ruth Duck, our Distinguished Alumni awardee this spring.

It would not be long, however, before the feminist movement itself came under critique from women of color. By the 1980's, African American theologians and biblical scholars like Katie Cannon, Jacquelyn Grant, Delores Williams, Emilie Townes, and Renita Weems were bringing feminism, Black liberation theology, and the experience of African American women into creative and challenging dialogue around the multiple oppressions poor women of color have endured both in the church and in the wider society. The conversation was quickly joined by Latina scholars with their own distinctive *Mujerista* theology. Today womanist theology is formative in the teaching and scholarship at CTS in the embodied presence of JoAnne M. Terrell and Julia Speller on our faculty, in our wonderful community of womanist students, and also among our graduates in ministry and the academy.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the feminist and womanist movements at Chicago Theological Seminary and what they mean for theological education today. You will find it informative and inspiring. As always, thank you for your continued support for this bold and risk taking institution.

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Chicago Theological Seminary

1407 East 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
Phone: 773.896.2400
Fax: 773.643.1334
development@ctschicago.edu

President

Alice Hunt

**Vice President for Academic Affairs
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CTS Challenge & Response Editors

Susan Cusick
Michael Jordan

Contributing Writers

Alice Hunt
Melanie Jones
Susan Thistlewaite
Lisa Seiwert
Britt Cox
Timothy Sandoval
Hannah Klaassen
Angela Parker
Julia Speller
Joseph Burt
JoAnne M. Terrell
Ken Stone
Megan Davis-Ochi
John Thomas

Graphic Design

Angelle Juneau

Cover Image

Bernard Stanley Hoyes, "In The Spirit," oil, 1983
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THERE ARE Prophets AMONG US!

Melanie C. Jones, Student

I vividly remember being a young girl growing up in the Black Baptist church navigating the politics of an unspoken code that deemed Black women unfit for religious leadership. My community of faith, co-pastored by my mother and father, was an exception among its Baptist counterparts because we fully embraced women in leadership and ministry. The terror of exclusion, however, made an imprint on me when, visiting a neighboring church, I was forced at the age of fourteen to preach from the floor because no girls were allowed to address the congregation from the pulpit. I came to theological education wrestling with the question, "What does it mean to be a prophetic voice in a Black woman's body?" I heard prophetic voices from Black women in the academy, naming themselves "womanists" as a confessional identity that represents belonging to a Black female tradition of truth telling, justice-seeking, redemptive self-loving, and wisdom-bearing.

When novelist Alice Walker defined the term "womanist" in her book *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (1983), Black female religious scholars and leaders in the academy adopted Walker's four-part definition as a birthing ground to cultivate a theo-ethical vision toward survival and wholeness for all. While feminist scholarship rallied against patriarchy and domineering forces threatening women's experiences, some feminists, even into the 1970s, adopted a privileged blindness that ignored women's complex and contradicting identities, particularly race and class. Black liberation theology, in its initial emergence in the 1960s and 70s, even with a quest for liberation of an oppressed African American people, failed to address issues concerning gender. Bold and daring Black women searching for a critically engaged academic dwelling place in the 1980s, rather than waiting for the above-named organizing principles to open the door of inclusion, utilized their socio-cultural realities, theological proclivities, and mother's wits to build a solid foundation for a home of their own.



The womanist theological enterprise is a twenty-eight year collaborative discourse initiated by Black female theologians, ethicists, biblical scholars, historians, pastoral caregivers, religious leaders, and laity who take seriously the lived experiences of Black women in theory and praxis. The primary aim of womanist work is to transition Black women's experience from the margins to the center by confronting the quadripartite oppression facing Black women and other groups at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class while calling for critical theological re-formation and careful ethical practice that resists all forms of oppression in the classroom, church, and community. Drawing from the Black idiomatic expression, "you actin' womanish" (meaning courageous or willful), womanism is an audacious endeavor that engages Black women at its radically subjective center and involves all persons seeking justice.

The question of the moment is whether the womanist prophetic voice remains relevant for theological education today. As an emerging scholar, I enter the womanist dialogue as a daughter who continues to be intellectually nurtured and shaped by womanist scholarship. I contend that womanism jeopardizes its prophetic edge if/when it fails to translate its wisdom to Black church women desiring to subvert

multi-layered oppression in their ecclesial communities and the world at large. Womanist thought must uphold its multi-dialogical, liturgical, and didactic intentions by fostering necessary exchange between the academy, church, and broader society. Budding womanist scholars, including myself, are beckoned by our foremothers to not simply rely on the womanist legacy, but to advance the prophetic agenda in word and deed bodaciously. The unlikely presence of six Black female women studying at the highest academic level of this institution at one time challenges Chicago Theological Seminary to continue evaluating its institutional commitments with respect to Black women and other marginalized groups. Those of us who utilize a womanist paradigm in our doctoral projects here at Chicago Theological Seminary bear the blessing of striving toward a womanist prophetic vision of revolutionary socio-religious transformation.

Melanie C. Jones, M.Div., is a Ph.D. student at CTS in Theology, Ethics, and Human Sciences. She serves as a licensed Associate Minister at South Suburban Missionary Baptist Church (SSMBC) in Harvey, IL where she leads the Women's Ministry and teaches in the Christian education department. She is also an adjunct professor (online) at American Baptist College in Nashville, TN. Her doctoral work utilizes critical inquiry to explore the theological and ethical complexity of Black women's body politics.



Focusing my research on theology and the arts from a womanist perspective of sacramentality is for me the clear indicator of the relevance and importance of supporting womanist theology programs and scholarship in the academy, particularly here at CTS. My choice to attend CTS was based on the caliber of the female faculty, especially the womanist scholarship of Dr. Terrell.

~Jean Derricotte-Murphy, 1st year Ph.D, Student



“Third wave feminism employs queer theory, engages Womanism, anti-racism, women-of-color consciousness, post-colonial theory, post-modernism, ecofeminism, transgender politics, and rejects gender binaries.”

"Second Wave"

FEMINISM AT 50

Fifty years ago, on February 19, 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, a book that defined feminism in reference to "the problem that has no name" for a post-war generation of suburban, white, middle class women. Friedan, a 1942 Smith College graduate, based this book, in part, on a survey she did at a 1957 Smith reunion.

These Smith alumna were well-educated, and part of the post-war economic boom that created the white middle class.

They were, however, profoundly dissatisfied with their lives as the "June Cleaver" version of mother and homemaker so idealized in the 1950's. Friedan gave voice to these women's diffuse dissatisfactions.

My mother was one of these 1950's housewives; as far as I know, she never read Friedan, but her depression about her life and what she considered her limited roles as a housewife and mother was real. She died in 1973.

My decision to go to Smith College was based, in large part, on my desire to live a different life than that of my mother. And the Smith of the late 1960's was far different than that of the immediate post-war period. Anti-war activism gripped college campuses. I helped coordinate the strike that shut Smith College down in the spring of 1970, when President Nixon was widening the Vietnam War into Cambodia.

The second wave of feminism was part of the huge cultural changes in the late 1960's and 1970's like anti-war activism and the Civil Rights movement. "Virginia Slims" cigarettes tried to give women lung cancer rates equal to that of men by telling us, in 1968, "You've Come a Long Way, Baby." The "Baby" language should have been a tip-off to many that this was simply corporate patriarchy re-branded. For some, however, it could look like liberation. But the full equality of all women had not been achieved. It is still not achieved.

I did not read *The Feminine Mystique* until the mid-1970's. I was a doctoral student at Duke University and I was asked to teach a class at Duke Divinity School on "Women and Religion." I read Friedan's

Susan Thistlewaite, Faculty

described so accurately as a systemic problem of a particular group of women in the post-war period. I also realized that Friedan's description of the "problem with no name" was broadly influential for the "second wave" of feminism in the 1960's and 1970's (the first wave being the period of suffrage activism in the late 19th to 20th centuries).

Second wave feminism was both helped by Friedan and also limited by her work and its tendency to colonize the term "women" and assume that white, middle-class, educated, heterosexual women's experience was "women's experience." It's not, of course. It's the experience of some women. And it was a real, and sometimes tragic experience for those women, as I came to realize. But it applied to only some women.

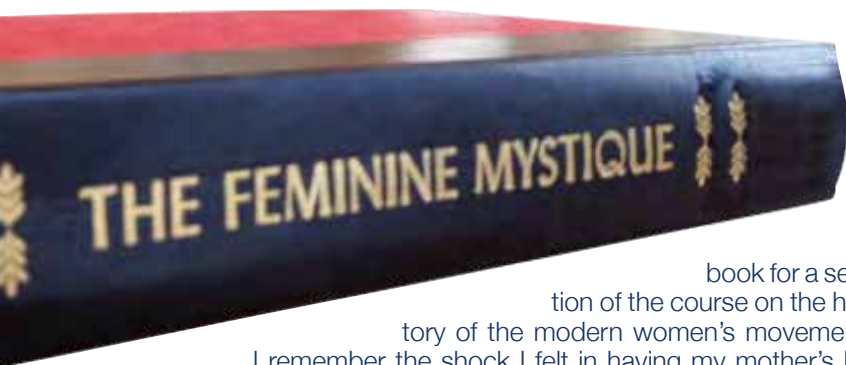
I published *Sex, Race and God: Christian Feminism in Black and White* in 1991 to address the issue of the "difference race makes" in how we approach issues of gender in theological reflection. It shocks me to realize that this book has been out for nearly 25 years and yet the significant differences among women can still be peripheral, not central, in feminist work.

Yet, what is called "third wave" feminism gives me hope. Third wave feminism employs queer theory, engages womanism, anti-racism, women-of-color consciousness, post-colonial theory, post-modernism, ecofeminism, transgender politics, and rejects gender binaries.

I continue to see, however, that far more work is needed in third wave feminism, especially on deeply engaging race, recognizing the profound divisiveness of economic and class issues, and on the "difference we have in common," that is, violence against women.

book for a section of the course on the history of the modern women's movement.

I remember the shock I felt in having my mother's life



CTS ONLINE

Timothy Sandoval, Faculty

When the first settlers arrived in the Chicago area in the 1800's, traditional theological education needed to change to meet the new and bold mindsets and new priorities of these emerging communities. CTS was founded in response to that need.

Now, a century and a half later, we are faced with another emerging need. Many would-be students, both around the US and globally, desiring bold, new, dynamic theological education, are unable to physically move to Chicago. CTS continues to respond. In 2011, CTS began exploring and expanding ideas of online progressive theological education, working to make CTS' vision and mission accessible beyond the geographical boundaries of Chicago.

Faculty continue training in cutting-edge online teaching. Staff roles have been expanded to meet online demand, to train and support students, faculty, and fellow staff around online teaching and learning and in the use of new technology tools. Moodle, CTS's online learning platform, has been enhanced for compatibility across all major computer and mobile operating systems. Enrollment has continued to steadily rise and social media increasingly provides a forum that generates dynamic conversations and creates additional support systems. Spring 2013 admits were the first with 100% participation in a fully online orientation process. We learned that online delivery can be as powerful as in-person interactions. As a



faculty member who teaches online and who coordinates online education, I've been delighted, and a bit surprised, by the level of engagement and interaction by students in my online classes. The learning and interaction that happens online—although different from what happens in face to face courses—is at least as strong as it is in face-to-face contexts. In fact, teaching online is making me rethink how I teach in the classroom.

An exciting new development in our online education is our interactive repository of all CTS-related digital artifacts: blog posts, images, external websites, videos, events, and much more. All the artifacts will be stored in one location, where everyone can access these resources and share their thoughts. I believe powerful learning can occur outside the walls of classrooms, whether they're physical or virtual. Our goal is to create a digital 'hallway' or 'water cooler' where people mingle, converse, relax a bit, but walk away with something productive and new that

they didn't previously know.

This academic year, we have continued to present new and expanded online offerings. CTS offers required M.Div. and M.A. courses online, and a mix of electives. This summer, Dr. Ken Stone, Academic Dean, is offering "Homosexuality and Biblical Interpretation." In the fall, Dr. Rachel Mikva, Dr. Susan Thistlethwaite, and Dr. Rami Nashashibi will be offering an "Introduction to Interfaith Engagement."

CTS has one learning community, with education delivered in different formats—in the classroom, online, or in combination. Our online courses appeal to a variety of audiences and deliver the same rigorous, engaged, theological education as our on campus courses. CTS online courses, like those on campus, meet the needs of students working toward a degree as well as students in non-degree options, including auditors or those seeking continuing education.

Current CTS online efforts are a modern-day, technology-enabled rendition of what we did in the 1800s. We are opening our mission and vision to future leaders of religion and social justice wherever they may be.

Learn more about CTS online classes by visiting ctschicago.edu/academics/online or contact the admissions office at admissions@ctschicago.edu.

Welcoming



Lisa Seiwert, Staff

*Director of Recruitment & Admission
lseiwert@ctsichicago.edu
773.896.2413*

At the CTS Spring Anti-Racism Colloquium, Rev. Dr. Emilie Townes, gifted preacher, teacher, womanist, theologian, and thinker left me pondering ideas of change. She pointed to the ways we often want to control change, thereby preventing ourselves from ever getting to transformation. She spoke about the very real fear of change and the ways our fear limits our potential.

Dr. Laurel Schneider, also a gifted preacher, teacher, feminist, theologian, and thinker, recently preached a sermon at Harvard Divinity School that got me thinking about change and fear of change. And the ways change can disrupt our foundational ideas about our neatly ordered lives, about God, about where we find our very grounding.

And it's springtime in the admissions world. Our incoming class for the fall is building. New students have accepted their enrollment. Others are working out the final details to allow them to do so. Others are still working on their applications. I've had the opportunity—the sacred opportunity—to accompany many of these individuals through a sometimes very scary process of change and transformation.

Our soon-to-be-new students come from all walks of life. They are younger and older. They have different backgrounds, experiences and stories. They have tremendous support systems and minimal support systems. They have a clear sense of call and murky, unutterable longings. And they are all risking, sacrificing, and stepping into uncharted territories as they accept their enrollment at CTS. They are all accepting the call to change, the call to be transformed. Regardless of degree program or vocational aspirations, they are all already saying yes to profound change.

I look at this new class of students—this diverse, vibrant, still-emerging group of people—and I am filled with inspiration. I admire their courage, which sometimes looks like tears. I admire their strength, which sometimes needs a hand to hold. I am filled with a sense of God's potential as I hear their expressions of the deep needs of creation and their deep calls to divine justice, to mercy, and to the creation of something that's not yet been. I imagine the ways CTS will change and grow because of these new voices and hearts and hands.

Because our possibilities for change and transformation at CTS may very well depend upon you answering your call. To paraphrase a Toni Morrison quote, if we all surrendered to the air, we could ride it. Just imagine who we could become—together--if in the face of our fears we step into the changes God is calling us to.



Looking where Others won't

Barbara Brown Zikmund on How Women are Transforming Ministry

Britt Cox, Student

As a young woman called to ordained ministry, I have grown up with the presence of women clergy in the church and female professors in academia. Yet, rarely have I been given the chance to speak with those who have pioneered the way for so many women to set their feet in the pulpit and at the lectern. Earlier this year, however, I was fortunate to have such an opportunity when I met The Rev. Dr. Barbara Brown Zikmund.

Rev. Dr. Barbara Brown Zikmund, or “BBZ” as she is fondly known, served as the first female full-time faculty member at Chicago Theological Seminary. Beginning in 1975, she taught classes on women in ministry and American Christian history. “At CTS for the first time in my life, the pieces fell into place. My zeal for history and teaching, my political and administrative talents, my commitment to women’s issues and my love for the church could exist in harmony.” While teaching at CTS plays a central role in Dr. Zikmund’s autobiography, it is in the larger picture that we see her life as a mirror for her belief that “autobiography is a unique feminist tool.” She adds, “by entering into the lives of women in this way it is possible to learn some new things about American religious history, about women, and about is-

ues which relate to ministry in today’s world.” While Dr. Zikmund shared her story with me, it was apparent she is not only passionately dedicated to women’s experience and history, but also embodies the hope she finds in changing the landscape of religious history.

As we toured CTS, she pointed out our pieces of history that had been brought over in care from the previous location and shared her perspective on how history can be an authentic representation of humanity’s full experience. “When I was working on the history of the [UCC], I realized there were so many things that were a part of these histories that no one was writing about ... there were all sorts of missing pieces ... minority stories were being lost.” Indeed, much of her life’s work dedicated to helping close these gaps. Her multiple publications, for example, include *Hidden Histories in the UCC*, *Women and Religion in America*. She was also a major contributor to *Living Theological Heritage of the UCC*. During our tour, as we walked along the glass sculpture on the north side of the building, BBZ stopped and noted many of the faces it depicts: Sojourner Truth, Mother Teresa, Mahatma Ghandi, Fredrick Douglas.



Barbara Brown Zikmund visited CTS in February, 2013, and spent time with author and CTS student, Britt Cox.

She remarked how the portraits of many “greats” are literally emblazoned in the glass, while noting the stories of “so many more” that have passed the sculpture, their reflections mingling with the etched faces, their predecessors’ legacies. I couldn’t help but notice her own silhouette reflecting, dancing through the wavy glass as she gazed and reflected upon the running list of those, named and unnamed, who have shaped us toward justice and mercy.

Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan in a family that cultivated a love for history and involvement in church, it is no wonder that both became fervent passions. Yet history had not quite caught up with her developing passion for service in the church. While Congregational churches had been ordaining women since the mid-nineteenth century, Zikmund thought the only work available to her in the church was either as a missionary or an educator. In high school, she heard about a local

woman who was to be ordained and out of curiosity, she and her friends attended the service, an event modeling for her the possibility of women in ordained ministry.

Dr. Zikmund attended Beloit college for her undergraduate studies, where she majored in philosophy, became involved in campus ministry, and met her husband Joseph Zikmund. They married and moved to North Carolina where Barbara enrolled at Duke University for graduate work, one of three women in her class. She taught history and religion at several small schools in Pennsylvania. She and Joe then moved back to Albion, Michigan to teach at Albion College and begin a family. As motherhood began, so did another life change for Zikmund: the death of her father from a stroke. "That year was a consciousness-raising experience of powerful force. Not only was I wrestling with my identity as a new mother, I was confronted with the helplessness of my mother. She did not know what to do [after the death of my father]. She did not know how to cope, how to take care of the car, how to manage her finances, how to live her life as a full human being... I became a feminist that year."

When Zikmund speaks about the role of women in history, theology and academia, she speaks from a familiar place, and is hopeful for women who walk similar paths. "Women are reinventing what it means to be clergy... [and are] transforming ministry." And, while some say that the church of the 21st century is dying, BBZ believes that it is women who are daring to follow the Holy Spirit to places where the rest of the world refuses to look. This is a deeply encouraging notion.

CTS has a long history of encouraging students toward greater justice and mercy. In 1975, in response to the demands of students who wanted the faculty to embody the seminary's progressive values and diversity, BBZ was hired as the first tenured female faculty member, teaching American church history. In addition to her teaching and administrative responsibilities, women at CTS were welcomed into BBZ's home for regular, informal gatherings. "Coffee and conversation at my home provides an opportunity for CTS women to heighten their awareness of each other as competent persons preparing for ministry," Zikmund stated in the 1978 *CTS Catalogue*. "These are not consciousness-raising sessions, but times to dialogue about issues and concerns in ministry. I believe that women need to experience each other as intellectuals and professionals as well as ministers."

In 1977, BBZ gave a keynote address at the General Synod that made her work known within the academy and UCC church. After her time at CTS, she served as Dean of the Faculty at Pacific School of Religion, served on the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. She was elected the first woman President of the Association for Theological Schools. She served for ten years as President of Hartford Seminary and, most recently, she taught at the Graduate School of American Studies at Doshisha University in Kyoto, Japan.

I asked Dr. Zikmund what she thinks may be next for the current generation of CTS students. "What's next may be what's expected. But what's next may be shocking and it may be needed. What's important is for you to get your spirit grounded in that future and then go to where attention is not yet focused." I came away from my visit with this ground-braking leader in the church and the academy with the sense that what it means to be a "Leader for the Next" is integrally connected to lived experiences like those that Barbara Brown Zikmund has undertaken. They are not only woven into who we once were, but where we are being led—to new landscapes for ministry.

Britt Cox is a 2nd year M.Div. student from Austin, TX. She is a certified candidate for Elder in the United Methodist Church and is a member of Holy Covenant United Methodist Church.

RAY OF HOPE

A profile of commencement speaker Ray Suarez

John Thomas, Visiting Faculty

Acclaimed PBS NewsHour correspondent, Ray Suarez, addressed the Chicago Theological Seminary community at its Commencement ceremony on May 18. "Do not be afraid!" was Suarez' message to the graduates, most of whom will be going to serve a church struggling to find its voice in a culture of declining religious affiliation. He acknowledged that we are challenged by those whose "spiritual but not religious" relationship to the church makes leading religious institutions daunting. But he affirmed the continuing need for a compelling religious voice that can speak to a culture desperate for community and meaning.



In addition to delivering the commencement address, Suarez was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters degree for, in the words of President Hunt, "his commitment to truth, to justice, to the dream of a world where all have a place at the table, a voice in the conversation." Dr. Timothy Sandoval, associate professor of Hebrew Bible, read the citation for Suarez, noting in particular his passion for bringing the stories of immigrant life in the United States to the wider public. Sandoval praised him for "journalistic excellence," for "acute, timely and public analysis of the intersections of U.S. politics and religion, our society and its injustices, and his vision for a common good that is truly good for all."

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Suarez is a graduate of New York University and the University of Chicago. Early in his career he was Los Angeles correspondent for CNN, a producer for ABC Radio Network in New York, a reporter for CBS Radio in Rome, and a reporter for various American and British news services in London. From 1986 he was national and international correspondent for the NBC TV affiliate in Chicago. In 1993 he became host of the NPR nationwide call-in news program, *Talk of the Nation*, and in 1999 moved to *The NewsHour* on PBS as a Washington based senior correspondent.

The producer of numerous documentaries, Suarez has also authored two books. The first, *The Old Neighborhood: What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration*, explored the impact of the great demographic shifts in the cities and the suburbs in the second half of the twentieth century. The second, *The Holy Vote: The Politics of Faith in America*, examined the growing relationship between religion and politics. This book draws not only on his journalistic skills, but also his involvement as an active layperson in The Episcopal Church in both local and national settings.

Suarez has received numerous awards for his work, including two DuPont-Columbia Silver Baton awards, the Ruben Salazar Award from the national Council of La Raza, and the Distinguished Policy Leadership Award from UCLA. The *Holy Vote* won the 2007 Latino Book Award for Best Religion Book. A life member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Suarez was a founding member of the Chicago Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Megan Davis-Ochi, VP for Advancement

Uncommon LIFE

Robb Lapp,
the CTS alum
& philanthropist
behind the Janet & Robinson
Lapp Learning Commons

It was a special day for CTS when the Board of Trustees assembled on May 2, 2013. Amid grateful reflections and hopeful prayers, the trustees, joined by faculty, staff, students and guests, dedicated the Janet and Robinson Lapp Learning Commons on the third floor of the Seminary. Robb and Janet Lapp, along with their great-granddaughter (who also happens to be their adopted daughter), Aubreyanna, participated in the celebration.

Robb Lapp graduated from CTS in 1957. His generous philanthropic gift to name what many consider the heart of our learning community was driven by his love of CTS and its students, a love shaped by his own three years as a student, ten years as a Trustee, and many years since as a life trustee.

Robb's and Janet's path to this generous gift was neither smooth nor predictable, a lifetime adventure that, in its eighth decade, is far from its conclusion. Robb chose CTS by accident. He was a Methodist on his way to Boston University School of Theology and preparing to marry the daughter of a Methodist minister when he met Cushman McGiffert during a religious emphasis week at Robb's undergraduate school, Ohio Wesleyan. That chance meeting resulted in a spring visit to CTS followed by his application and acceptance. At CTS he focused on Christian education and youth ministry.

CTS seeded a major theological transition for Robb. He arrived as a "power of positive thinking" supernaturalist in the image of then prominent Norman Vincent Peale. He graduated seeking meaningful metaphors for a God who is experienced in the holy moments of ordinary living. His first call was in a Methodist church and

The Janet & Robinson
Lapp Learning Commons





“My three years at CTS connected me with the ultimate realities of life and gave me a profound awareness of the behavior of the Holy.”

then an interdenominational church in East Lansing, Michigan. It was there that his career experienced its first real surprise. Robb's refusal to obey his bishop's request to leave his parish and form a new Methodist church nearby led to the revoking of his ordination. The Congregational Christian Church gave him standing just as the Michigan Conference joined the UCC.

Robb was next called to start a new church in Arvada, Colorado. Robb is proud to say that the church continues as a significant witness for peace and justice in the world. After that, his “traditional ministry train went off the track.” Robb became the organizing executive director of a fair housing organization in Denver, integrating previously all white neighborhoods. His work was controversial both within his own denomination and for the Black and Hispanic community that questioned why a white minister should be leading a civil rights organization.

When his position ended abruptly after four years, Janet and Robb put their belongings in storage, packed up their three children and dog in the car, and moved to his childhood home in Buffalo, N.Y., where they lived for a time with his mother. For about 16 months, Robb worked to plan new communities east of Rochester where he learned first-hand that community change ministry is tough!

Through his connections with housing groups throughout the country, Robb was recruited to be the town manager for a new community called “The Woodlands” near Houston. There he established institutions of community governance, managed relationships with HUD in Washington, created a water and sewer district, the recreation and open space district, the fire and police departments, and the community government itself. Schools and hospitals soon followed. Robb obtained grants for bridges and roadways and for the construction of several low-income housing projects, guaranteeing the racial integration of the town. In his spare time Robb helped organize a new UCC congregation in The Woodlands.

But Robb still had a heart for the Rocky Mountains. At 48, eight breathless years later, having done everything he could to create a functional community infrastructure that would be just and fair to people across broad economic and ethnic spectrums, Robb resigned to return to Colorado. Even the greatest crystal ball could not have predicted the varied claims God placed on Robb's and Janet's lives in the succeeding thirty-two years. He served for twenty-three years as an officer and board member of the Rocky Mountain Conference and national boards of the UCC. He worked tirelessly in a variety of secular settings to transform communities toward greater justice and mercy, focusing in particular on creating jobs for single mothers and members of minority communities. He even built a new home for his family – literally with his own hands – in the beautiful foot hills of the Rockies northwest of Denver.

On Christmas day, 2005, their then two-year-old great granddaughter, Aubreyanna, came for dinner. Needing refuge from her troubled parents, she never left. Robb and Janet adopted her in 2008. Now excelling in fourth grade, her self-esteem, initiative and insights into how people and things work are remarkable. Robb describes this wonderful adventure in parenting through his unique theological lens: This is not “an intentional non-traditional ministry. We're simply responding to another one of God's crazy ideas!”

“What do seminary education and ordination have to do with all of this?” asks Robb. “Not much and a whole lot! Technically, I haven't needed to be ordained for most of what I've done. And if I didn't have to be ordained, I didn't need a theological degree. But the flip side is this: my three years at CTS connected me with the ultimate realities of life and gave me a profound awareness of the behavior of the Holy. It gave me a context for interpreting my own experiences and for understanding human behavior, individually and corporately.”

The next time you find yourself at CTS, visit the newly named Robinson and Janet Lapp Learning Commons. Take a moment to think about this remarkable couple, both of whom have always seemed to be able to answer diverse calls to ministry. And be grateful to Robb and Janet for responding yet again to a philanthropic call that will serve many future generations of students learning how to respond to God's crazy ideas.

IN MEMORIAM

Robert T. Clark (BD, 1947) died 10/11/12 at Denver CO. Rev. Clark was ordained as a minister in the United Church of Christ in 1948 (then the Congregational Christian Church). He served churches in Johnson, VT; St. Louis, MO and Denver, CO (Berkeley Community Church, Seventh Avenue UCC, and Ridge Road UCC). He continued playing an active role in social issues including homelessness and human rights. Bob died at age 90 of Alzheimer's. He is survived by his wife, Annabel B. Clark, four children, five grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Nancy D. Edgar (BD, 1940) died at the grand age of 107 in September, 2012.

Aleece Hampton Fulton, Friend of CTS, died March 10, 2013. She is survived by her husband, Thomas, Life Trustee and former Board Chair of Chicago Theological Seminary and son Bill Fulton, a member of the CTS Visiting Committee. Preceded in death by son, Robert.

Anthony W. Gough (DMin, 1981) died in November, 2012. He was a resident of the United Kingdom.

Richard B. Griffis (MDiv 60) who passed away in Washington, DC, December 6, 2011. He served as a Minister in the United Church of Christ for 51 years. He was among the CTS family who participated in the Selma Marches with Dr. Martin Luther King in 1965. He and his wife, Anne Hungerford Griffis, served as co-directors of Quaker Service in Nigeria, a relief and reconstruction project of the American Friends Service Committee. He was involved in a wide-variety of social outreach issues until his death. We thank his wife, Anne, for sharing this information.

Roy A. Holmes (DMin, 2002) died May 4, 2013. His pastorates include; Greater Walters AME Zion Church – Chicago, IL; Wesley Center AME Zion Church – Pittsburg, PA; Mt. Lebanon AME Zion Church – Elizabeth City, NC; St. Matthew AME Zion Church – Whitmire, SC. Bishop Holmes was elected the 92nd bishop of the AME Zion Church at the 47th General Conference, 2004.

David Leonard (BD 1967) passed away on January 28, 2013 in Binghamton, NY. He is survived by his wife, Linda Wiltz, who also attended CTS. His ministry included a number of Universal Unitarian congregations.

Grafton M. Thomas (1948) passed away on March 5, 2013 in Northport, MI. In the course of his career, he served a number on UCC Congregations. He was actively involved in social justice throughout his ministry.

Mary Louise Conrad Wakeland, who met her husband, Lewis while attending CTS, died at home in Golden Hills, CA on March 4, 2013 – one week shy of her 80th birthday. She is survived by Mr. Walkeland (BD 1956). Mrs. Wakeland dropped out of school after marriage, her last class being in 1956. The couple resided in California since the early 60s.

Stude REFLE

Micha 6:6-8

*With what shall I come before the Lord,
And bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
With calves a year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
With ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give me firstborn for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you
But to do justice, and to love kindness,
And to walk humbly with your God?*

My most significant memory of this Micah passage is that it was read at my Grandma Donna's memorial service. Grandma Donna lived a long and full life, but she did not die an easy death. For several years leading up to her passing, she suffered from a blood cancer called multiple myeloma. At first she pursued aggressive treatment, but over time she came to accept her terminal diagnosis. When the pain became too much she began receiving hospice care, which offered some relief.

Having lots of time to die gives you lots of time to plan a memorial service, and Grandma Donna did that with care and intention. She selected the hymns she wanted us to sing and the scripture she wanted us to read, and this Micah passage was one of those texts. I remember that the preacher at her service talked about how my grandmother embodied this passage, how her well-lived life was filled with doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God. The preacher cited her years as a volunteer organizer at the church and the annual Christmas open house that she hosted for all of her neighbors as examples.

I have my own examples of grandma's justice-doing. She spent most of her life as a farm wife in rural Kansas, which gives you a bit of an idea about her context and the social and political climate of such a setting. Yet, after they married she and my grandpa were the first couple at their church to sit together. In the late 1940s, they broke the gender segregation that the church had practiced up until that time.

nt CTION

Hannah Klaassen, CTS 2013 Graduate

Still, she wasn't sure what she would think of a woman leading a church. Decades later when the church hired its first woman to serve on the pastoral team, Grandma Donna's views had shifted. She offered her full support (though some at the church did not and even left the church because of this). Still, she wasn't sure about that controversial topic of homosexuality. But, when my sister came out as a lesbian my Grandma's views had shifted. Grandma never wavered in her love and encouragement, not only of my sister as a person but of my sister as a person called to ministry.

Grandma Donna's orientation toward openness helps me get at my experience of CTS. In my classes and my reading and my writing, in formal and informal conversation, in exploring my own identity and encountering others who are so different from me, I have been challenged to adopt my own orientation toward openness. When I want to build a wall around an idea or a person or an action, I have been challenged toward openness. When I want to say that my love goes this far but not farther, I have been challenged toward openness. When I want to force an outcome in a certain way or influence a project on my particular terms, I have been challenged toward openness. When I am wounded and afraid and inhibited, then, too, I have been challenged toward openness.

In the context of today's scripture readings, I find it tempting to reduce doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God to a set of behaviors or prescribed actions. I want to figure out the correct way to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. In these endeavors, too, I have been challenged toward openness, toward a more expansive vision of transformation that goes beyond what I have thus far imagined. Throughout my CTS education I have received and embraced and resisted and affirmed and been challenged by this orientation toward openness.

The first line of the Micah text asks, with what shall I come before the Lord? As I reflect on my time as a student at CTS, as I reflect on some of the many things that I take with me as I go, I think that I shall come before the Lord wide open.



The Original “GIRL ON FIRE”

Dr. Terrell on Proto-Womanist Harriet Tubman

Angela Parker, Student

On Sunday, March 10, The Harriet Tubman Home, Inc. paid tribute to Harriet Tubman, American Underground Railroad leader, abolitionist, humanitarian, Civil War nurse and Union Spy. March 10th marked the 100th anniversary of her passing, on March 10, 1913. Our own Rev. Dr. JoAnne Marie Terrell, Associate Professor of Ethics and Theology, gave the Harriet Tubman 100th Commemorative Address in Auburn, New York at the Thompson Memorial AME Zion Church – which has an extended history of abolitionism and has been the long-standing guardian of the Tubman home. As a Ph.D. student striving to formulate my own womanist biblical interpretative paradigm, I was blessed to witness renowned womanist scholar Dr. Terrell employ biblical exposition to highlight Harriet Tubman as a proto-womanist, who Terrell calls the original “Girl on Fire” (alluding to the 2012 album and single recorded by American singer-songwriter Alicia Keys).

Citing *Romans 12:9*, Dr. Terrell preached that Tubman accomplished what was fitting through love. Her act of changing her name from Arminta Ross to Harriet shines forth as an example of radical subjectivity, her love of freedom and her own self. This love, and the love of Divine within her, called Tubman to acknowledge freedom as her birthright and the birthright of all human beings, including those born into slavery like herself. Her self-naming represents this birthright.

Terrell pointed out that, for Tubman, justice for the “least” and the “despised” has to be shown through love, but she also believed that love has to evidence justice. Her willingness to go back and forth into a

dangerous South in order to help lead others out of slavery demonstrated the “fires of love and freedom” burning in her heart. This love was further crowned with a sense of her agency as a woman. Tubman “passed” on the Victorian norms of womanhood in order to choose agency, adventure, and uprightness of character. God, as a consuming fire, gave her this purpose. Love also allowed Tubman to claim a moral and natural unalienable right to be useful, according to Terrell. She found her usefulness in offering righteousness to the world.

Tubman’s legacy is a foundation for contemporary civil rights, women’s rights, and elder rights issues. Her ideas about love, justice, and usefulness deserve to be revisited, as Terrell did on the 100th anniversary of Tubman’s death. Tubman is a national treasure, and as Terrell powerfully articulated, the original “Girl on Fire” and a proto-womanist, whose bequest lives on and who has paved the way for Black women leaders such as Ida B. Wells Barnett, Michelle Obama, and Venus and Serena Williams. Tubman is a guiding light for womanist scholars, including myself.



Angela N. Parker is a third year Ph.D. student at Chicago Theological Seminary in Bible, Culture & Hermeneutics with a New Testament focus. Parker attempts to read the sacred texts through a Womanist/Postcolonial lens in order to provide liberating translations.

IRE"

et Tubman

"You gave us Tubman to go before us, to be an example of love in action ... You gave us each other ... to do your work in the world — the work of loving the world into wholeness."

— Dr. Terrell



Harriet Tubman Commemorative Address



Angela Parker

THE ART OF QUILTING

AND WOMANIST THOUGHT

Julia M. Speller, Faculty

By definition, quilting is the process of arranging two layers of fabric, usually with a soft, thick substance placed between them for insulation, and adding stitches through the entire thickness to keep the stuffing evenly distributed. This technique has been used in many parts of the world for millennia for both practical and artistic purposes. The idea of quilting in our early national history conjures up images of women sitting around wooden frames creating bedcoverings that provided warmth and carried precious legacies. Much of the fabric came from scraps of dresses, work pants, and other clothing and the used materials were repurposed, to assume a new form and function. In many ways the beauty of those quilts was found in the creative surprises that resulted when different and unlikely fabrics entered relationship with each other. Whether the purpose was decorative

or practical, the finished products carried the unique style and signature of the quilters and symbolized the sacredness of community.

Several years ago the movie, “How To Make An American Quilt,” portrayed a contemporary version of this ancient art form, as a group of women gathered weekly to work on a wedding quilt for one of their granddaughters. The formula was simple; each woman created a square using her own fabric to visually depict her experiences of life and love. The magic of the process was that the quilt acquired a voice and became a kind of fabric “griot” that intertwined the testimonies of hope, fear, loss, and gain of the women who made it. Through their different and often divergent stories and skills emerged a quilt that was bound together by the love and commitment shared by the women. It provided a tangible example of what

it means to be in relationship with another while maintaining one’s individual voice.

Womanist thought has much in common with the art form of quilting, for each emerged out of the experiences of women, in their effort to live their lives fully and creatively. Inspired by the writings of Alice Walker, womanist scholars identify four tenets that frame the epistemological task of their work: radical subjectivity, traditional communalism, redemptive self-love, and critical engagement. Each principle points to life-sustaining movements within womanist thought and suggests its own aesthetic value, but traditional communalism has a particular connection with the art of quilting. From a womanist perspective, this tenet affirms loving connections and relational bonds that



“Womanist thought has a lot in common with the art form of quilting, for each emerged out of the experiences of women, in their effort to live their lives fully and creatively.”

emerge from the “... life-giving norms embedded in black women’s moral practices,” and that stress the importance of “living in solidarity with and in support of those with whom they share a common heritage and contextual language.” These bonds do not presuppose a monolithic black community based on uniformity of thought, expression, physical appearance or location, but a larger and deeper understanding of solidarity that transcends time, space, and all manner of difference.

The process of creating a quilt clearly shares the essence of traditional communalism, which takes multiple experiences from everyday life, “stitches” and “binds” them together with life-affirming threads that produce new expressions of harmony and cohesion, without denying the gift of particularity. In many ways, the partnering of womanist thought and the art of quilting suggests and encourages a deeper level of creativity for our life as an institution. Through the variety of gifts, experiences, and perspectives that we bring to our work and witness, we display the different colors, shapes, and textures of God’s calling in the quilt called Chicago Theological Seminary. Each of us, despite our differences, is bound together by the skill and precision of the Master quilt-maker and each stitch comes from the thread of divine love that connects us one to another, just the way we are. Although there is a level of simplicity in our individual stories, together they yield a depth and richness that reveals surprising resonance with others, just as the pieces of a quilt create surprising harmonies between different colors,

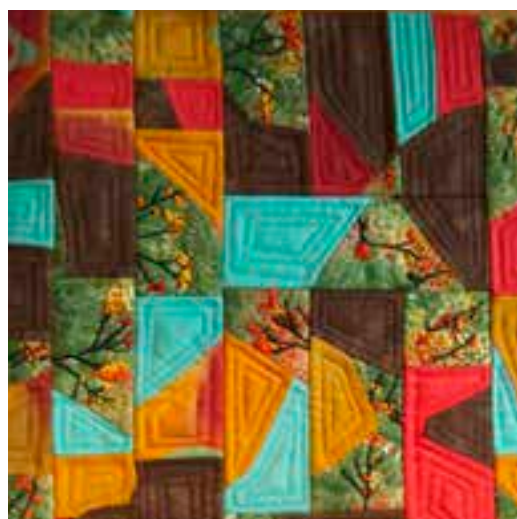
textures, and patterns. To the untrained eye, the quilt that is Chicago Theological Seminary may seem like a messy mixture of unrelated and even opposing perspectives and experiences. Through the bi-focal lenses of womanist thought and traditional communalism, however, the capacity to nurture, protect, and sustain unites with radical inclusivity tempered with justice to make a bland and boring quilt into a colorful and magnificent masterpiece.

Yes, quilts can be functional or ornamental, but those who participate in this ancient art form know that there is a level of mystery in the process. They will testify that regardless of the fabrics selected and the stitches used, the finished quilt speaks its own truth to those who are willing to listen. Similarly, womanist thought, in its fullness, brings together commitments to ethical responsibility with the wisdom of generations of Black women, producing a mandate for transformation and wholeness for all who dare to act.

Dr. Julia M. Speller, is the Director of the D. Min program. The quilts pictured here hang in her CTS office.



Dr. Julia M. Speller



COMMENCE



Graduates await their diplomas.



1963 & 1983 Alumni with Dr. Dow Edgerton



Graduate Merlyn Lawrence, offering a prayer



Procession into graduation ceremony



*Academic Dean
Dr. Ken Stone*



*Dr. Tom Wake receiving
honorary degree*



Ray Suarez receiving honorary degree

EMENT 2013



2013 CTS Graduating Class



President Alice Hunt
greeting the graduates



Katelyn Keller, Ruo Yu Xu
& Sun Ok Lee



Recessional of Graduates



Celestial Ministries Drumline



Don Clark, Tom Wake, Dr. Dow Edgerton,
Dr. Laurel Schneider, & Dr. JoAnn Terrell



Students, family and President Alice Hunt
at the commencement reception

Woman Vora

WITH A
WAY W

Joseph Burt, Alumni/ae Manager



Ruth Duck wrote her first song as a part of earning a badge for Girl Scouts. “Arise, Your Light is Come” was one of her first published hymns. That was over 160 hymns ago. “Hymn writing” is something of a passion with this great lady from Washington, DC.

She once thought she wanted to be a pianist. She also wanted to be a missionary after an inspirational talk she heard in elementary school. She considered social activism. She was a church minister for 15 years. Incorporating all to become one of the most recognized names in Christian Worship today.

Dr. Duck is Professor of Worship at Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL and recipient of two degrees from Chicago Theological Seminary – Master of Divinity, 1973 and an honorary Doctor of Divinity, 1983. She was awarded the Chicago Theological Seminary 2012 Distinguished Alumni Award at a luncheon on a day when Professor Duck spoke to a rapt audience as a part of our 2013 Spring Conference: “The Language Of Worship.”

Ruth Duck has devoted her life's work to the “language of worship.” Seminaries and clergy involved in the planning of worship for their congregations are anxiously awaiting the release of her latest book – and yes, the subject is worship. In the preface of *Touch Holiness*, a book of resources for worship

(cont.)



Drummer Journey Burns and Rob Leveridge (CTS 2007) lead a workshop



Spring Worship Conference attendees



Julian DeShazier, presenter



Ayanna Garrett, Asst. Dir. of Recruitment, participates in worship



Student participants, Sun Ok Lee and Jan Remer-Osborn

(cont.)

which Ms. Duck edited along with Maren Tirabassi (United Church Press, Cleveland, OH) you find:

***Those who come to worship
bring joys, fears, doubts, and hopes.
Struggles and blessings***

***Crowd their minds, fill their hearts,
bind their spirits. In worship they long
to express their***

***Feelings, release their worries,
and experience renewal and challenge.***

Brought up in a fundamentalist, evangelical faith, she became interested in social justice. Living in Memphis at the time of the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., that event ignited her wish to become more involved despite objections by her parents. A CTS class taught by social activist and University of Chicago Divinity School Professor, Peggy Way, was a turning point for Ruth, leading to her decision

to complete the Master of Divinity and become ordained. She worked in church ministry until 1989, at which point she applied to teach at Garrett.

Ruth Duck has been in the forefront of examining and confronting the language of sexism. Initially, it meant dealing with “humanity,” and expanded, in time, to deal with God. It has not been an easy battle. Working on the group that formulated *The New Century Hymnal*, the committee decided to remove all references to “Lord” in the hymn texts. Yet, when confronted by the UCC Synod in 1993, the committee was forced to reinstate around thirty references to “Lord.” A complete language of inclusiveness would be a step-by-step process.

In my congregation, on the Sunday we have our “Blessing of The Animals,” a well-attended annual rite, we always sing the wonderful song about God caring for “the whole world.” But owing to the pioneers of inclusive language like Ruth Duck and others we sing, “God’s got the whole world, safe

WHEN ASKED ABOUT

Words for God

RUTH DUCK OFFERED A LONG
AND INVENTIVE LIST:

- Awesome God And Holy Friend
- Breath Of Every Living Being
- Breath Within Our Breath
- Bond Of Peace
- The Creator
- Creator Of All Time And Space
- Creator Of Us All
- Faithful God
- Fire Of Love
- Friend of Friends
- Friend Of Outcasts
- Giver Of Life
- Glorious Sun
- God Ever-Loving
- God Of Grace
- God Of Generations
- God Of Journey Faithful Friend
- God Of Planet Moon And Sun
- God Of Wisdom
- God The Loving Gardener

in hand.” It was a simple tweak of the text that was smooth and easily accomplished. Older generations still stumble, but the children will grow up tucking it into their memories as solidly as I tucked away, “Deep And Wide.” For other hymns, the changes have not been so easy. There have been arguments about the “purity and sanctity” of hymn-texts as literature.

When asked about “Words for God” Ruth Duck offered a long and inventive list which we have shared below. The message I receive from this list is that generally, our God is “too small.” But thanks to that young lady whose original aspirations as a pianist were thwarted by the prospect of public performance, and who at one point considered mission work, we have all been enriched because she has such a wonderful way with words. She continues, writing about ten hymns per year. We are blessed by her dedication and talent. Thank you, Ruth Duck, for your great love of worship and of the church.



Rev. Dr. Ruth Duck

- Great Spirit Of The Cosmic Whole
- Great Spirit And Source Of Birth
- Healer
- Healing Light
- Healing River Of The Spirit
- Hokmah (Hebrew for wisdom)
- Holy Fire
- Holy Gardener
- Holy Of Holies
- Holy One
- Holy Wisdom
- Lamp Of Learning
- Life's Fountain
- Light Of Every Nation
- Like A Midwife
- Listening God
- Living Bread
- Living Christ
- Living Spirit
- Loving God

- Loving Maker Of The Earth
- Majestic Creator
- The Maker
- The One
- One God
- Our God
- Parent
- Renewing Spirit
- Saving Grace
- Saving Spirit
- She
- Shepherd God
- Shepherd Of My Soul
- Sophia (biblical Greek for wisdom)
- Source Of Unity

- Spirit
- Spirit God
- Spirit-Guide
- The Spirit Of All Good
- Spirit Of Undying Life
- Spring Of Hidden Power
- Sun
- Teacher
- True Life of All
- Vine Of Truth
- Well-Spring Of The Healing Spirit
- Wisdom/Sister Wisdom



WELCOME TO OUR NEW STUDENTS

Although we welcome a few new students to CTS every February, this year our mid-year entering class was larger than normal

We welcomed 10 new students at the beginning of the term. Some of our new students are taking only face-to-face classes, a few of them are taking only online classes, and several students have a hybrid schedule that includes both face-to-face and on-line classes. Wherever you encounter them, however, I hope that you will take the opportunity to welcome these newest members of our learning community to CTS!



CONVOCATIONS AND SABBATICALS

As the Spring semester began, we were happy to welcome back from sabbatical Dr. Ted Jennings, Professor of Biblical and Constructive Theology. Jennings was the speaker at our Spring Convocation on Wednesday, February 6. The title for his address was “Pauline Politics of Salvation.” Jennings’ latest book, *Outlaw Justice: The Messianic Politics of Paul*, was published by Stanford University Press this spring.

As Dr. Jennings returned from sabbatical, two other colleagues were departing for sabbatical: Dr. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Professor of Theology, and Dr. Rachel Mikva, Rabbi Herman E. Schaalman Assistant Professor of Jewish Studies and Director of the Center for Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Studies. We trust that they are each having a productive and refreshing sabbatical this semester, along with Dr. Bo-Myung Seo, Associate Professor of Theology and Cultural Criticism, who is away from CTS for the entire academic year.

THE DEAN’S DESK

Ken Stone, Academic Dean



Greetings from just beyond the spring semester at Chicago Theological Seminary! As the Academic Dean at CTS, I would like to call your attention to a number of things that happened at CTS this term. If you have questions about any of the announcements below, or other academic matters at CTS, please do not hesitate to contact me (kstone@ctschicago.edu) or the Assistant to the Academic Dean, Ms. Emily Vogt (evogt@ctschicago.edu). If you are on campus, feel free to stop by my office in Room 134, immediately beside the President’s office.



ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

We welcomed two new staff members this semester. Rev. Ayanna Garrett (pictured above) is our new Asst. Director of Recruitment Initiatives and Emily Vogt joined us as Asst. to the Academic Dean. Ayanna earned her MS in Education from Eastern Illinois University, and her MDiv from Christian Theological Seminary. Her position allows her to live into her passions for inclusivity, racial reconciliation and justice and mercy. Emily worked as a Program Officer at the Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights. She earned a Ph.D in anthropology from the University of Chicago and brings both teaching and administrative experience. We are delighted to welcome these gifted women to our learning community.

As we welcome these new colleagues, we say goodbye to others. Two members of our full-time faculty will be departing at the end of this academic year. Dr. Laurel Schneider, Professor of Theology & Culture, has accepted a position as Professor of Religious Studies at Vanderbilt University, with secondary appointments in Gender Studies and Philosophy. The move allows her to be with her spouse, Dr. Emilie Townes, who has been with us this year as Visiting Scholar in Residence. Dr. Townes will be leaving her own position as Professor of African American Religion and Theology at Yale University to accept a new position as Dean of the Vanderbilt Divinity School. Dr. Timothy Sandoval, our Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible and Director of the Online Learning, Ph.D, M.A. and S.T.M. programs, has also accepted a new position on the faculty of Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University, where he will be rebuilding a Ph.D program in Hebrew Bible after the retirement of two senior scholars.

While we are happy for the new professional and family opportunities that these positions provide for our colleagues, we are also sorry to lose such valued co-workers and friends.



CASTAÑEDA LECTURE

On Thursday evening, April 25, CTS held the annual Gilberto Castañeda Lecture. This year's Castañeda lecturer was Noach Dzmura (pictured above), who spoke on "Dying Real: Jewish Burial Customs and Gender Variant Bodies."

Dzmura, a graduate of the Graduate Theological Union, is editor of the Lambda Literary Award-winning anthology *Balancing on the Mechitza: Transgender in Jewish Community* (2010), director of the non-profit Jewish Transitions; and an adjunct instructor for Starr King School for the Ministry (where he also serves as Director of Educational Technology and Executive Assistant to the Provost) and for the Swig Program in Jewish Studies and Social Justice at the University of San Francisco. Video footage of several of these Keynote sessions are available on the CTS YouTube Channel; simply click the YouTube icon found on the top right of our website pages.



ISRAEL/PALESTINE TRIP & ANTI-RACISM COLLOQUIUM

Immediately before starting their sabbaticals, Professors Mikva and Thistlethwaite accompanied nineteen CTS students on the second CTS Israel Palestine Study Trip and our first ever CTS Friend's Trip to this region.

On Wednesday, April 17, most of the CTS community participated in a spring colloquium focused on anti-racism. Class schedules that day were modified for the event, and all classes explored the relationship between the course content and the colloquium's focus on anti-racism; a morning plenary was delivered by Dr. Emilie Townes, who has been with us this year as Visiting Scholar in Residence and Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life Visiting Scholar; an evening plenary featured Professors Lee Butler and Laurel Schneider, who participated in a public dialogue about engaging institutional racism as allies and colleagues across differences of race, gender and sexuality; Wednesday worship and other events also contributed to the focus, as did some classes that met on other days that week; and our guest preacher was Rev. Janette Wilson from Rainbow PUSH. Video footage of several of these keynote sessions are available on the CTS YouTube Channel; simply click the YouTube icon found on the top right of our website pages.

A LOVE SUP

I approach this sermon as a black, womanist, Christian, eclectic theologian, which is to say that although the Bible is the central text from which I derive my religious identity it is not the only sacred text I uphold. Moreover, the unavoidable fact is that my individual and collective experiences – as a black person and as a woman (and I am both simultaneously!) – as a person descended from slaves and having roots in the poor and working classes of North America, these intersecting realities of my existence give me a particular set of lenses by which I interpret the Bible, firstly, as a devotee of Jesus Christ and the God of liberation, justice, truth, and grace that his story signifies; and secondly, as a preacher called to speak liberation, justice, truth, and grace into the current contexts, times, and predicaments that we are traversing. These particularities raise the question of not whether my subjective use of these lenses of experience is valid, but rather, what are the particular lenses of experience by which you interpret the Bible and/or other sacred texts?

I do not believe that there is a “plain sense” or other “objective” lens by which to read the Bible, nor do I believe that with the right tools we can derive the true meaning of texts. Rather, I contend that there is more and more meaning to be derived from pondering texts, which for me and for many are sacred, when read in their own historical, social, cultural, and political contexts, from the perspective of the several audiences who might have heard them as a memorial record of events, namely, embodied, relational, subjective experience, which is not exactly history. And because it is subjective, if we ascribe love as a hallmark of the relational character of Jesus as we interpret his recorded and ascribed words and deeds, then we have to use our devoted, sanctified imaginations in order to glimpse the quality and measure of the love that Jesus not only gave but also inspired.

The tools of historical criticism, contextual criticism, rhetorical criticism and so forth can indeed help us get at what was being signified in the texts. (Signify contains the word “sign,” and a sign is something that points to something other than and greater than itself). Yet, as the canonical processes of many religions reveal, what becomes sacred text in a particular culture is based on the effectiveness of proclamation – the telling and re-telling of stories, initially based on oral traditions – of the encounter and experience that particular people had with the peculiar “something Greater” that we

call God, or Divine Reality. Thus, as an eclectic theologian, I appreciate the sacred texts of people of other faiths that are forged out of their experience, out of their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual circumambulation (literally, “walking around”) of the idea of God. I am deeply informed by the wisdom traditions that come out of particular, non-Christian peoples’ understanding of and walk with God, while I steadfastly maintain my Christian identity. I do this, in part, to resist unfairly appropriating or even colonizing other people’s faiths; in part, to minimize the risk of misrepresenting their religious claims; and in part, to avoid misunderstanding their claims altogether.

So as a black, womanist, Christian, eclectic theologian and preacher, when I encounter a text like *John 14:6* (“I Am the way, the truth, and the life”) and other like texts (such as the hymn of praise in *Philippians 2*) that are used to show how Christians may think of themselves in relationship to people of other faiths, as superseding their prior claims and as excluding from fellowship, and even relegating them to the fires of hell and/or political marginalization, I am compelled to use the interpretive tools at my disposal. The Johannine corpus, written late in the first century or early in the second, reflects an emergent Church, emergent from Judaism, emergent from Roman occupation (though that will take a while longer to undo), but an emergent community nonetheless, that is a generation or two removed from the principle people in the central story. Rhetorically, Way, Truth, Life are by no means the private province of any culture, faith, or historical era, but this language pointing to Divine Reality precedes and supersedes the gospel writer’s ascription to Jesus of these attributes in disparate cultures in disparate locales, all over the world. So even more telling than these ascriptions about the gospel writer’s intention is the first part of the statement, in Greek, the words “ego emi,” “I AM,” more fully attempts to equate the historical person of Jesus with God. The “ego emi” statements, found only in the fourth gospel, are several: ego emi the Door; ego emi the Good Shepherd; ego emi the Bread of Life; ego emi the Way, the Truth, the Life. As a committed Christian of the postmodern era, I am compelled to understand the tectonic emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, and political paradigm shift that Jesus brought about for the first Christian communities. But as a citizen of the world, as a theologian convinced of God’s good intentions for the whole world, I am equally compelled to explore the nature

of this posture of exclusion that seems to be a product of the gospel about Jesus, rather than the gospel of Jesus, a distinction that Christian ethicist (and ultimately Christian martyr) Dietrich Bonhoeffer proffered.

The gospel of Jesus begins, after his temptation in the wilderness, with his proclamation, “Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Thereafter, he goes about as a wandering, charismatic prophet, teaching, healing, and bringing people formerly excluded by customary interpretations of religious law, political circumstances, and cultural codes into community and into relationship. After his suffering and death at about age 30 at the hands of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, the gospel about Jesus begins in earnest. There is a perceived and real need among first century Christians to tell his story and articulate for themselves the answer to the question, “What just happened to us?” in their encounters with Jesus, what was the significance of their encounters with him as a sublime presence, who, restored to many a sense of their utter beauty, dignity and worth to God. Theoretical speculation takes place about his divine significance, and a process of codification into doctrine takes place over the next several centuries, from the period of the Roman suppression of both Christianity and Judaism in the years immediately following the crucifixion of Jesus, through the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, through the rise of the cult of Christian and Jewish martyrs, through the ascension of Constantine and his imperial patronage of the Church, through the Christological controversies over the “two natures” of Jesus (divine and human), through the Ecumenical Councils, through the rise and influence of the monastic communities on the general Church, through the influence of great prolific theologians such as St. Jerome, St. Augustine (whose significance on the once and future church looms nearly as large as St. Paul’s), and St. Thomas Aquinas, through the Crusades, through the exorciation of Judaism, the religion on which Christians themselves staked their Messianic claims, through the suppression of Islam, through the silencing of Christian dissenters in the Inquisition; through the Reformation, through the age of exploration, Empire, and enslavement, through the heyday of lynchings, physical and political, while humankind has had and is still having its experience of “demonarchy,” the Church has encountered the “no” and the “yes” of its existence, has engaged in evil and missed a lot of opportunity to do good in the process.

REME



Sermon given
on March 6, 2013
by Rev. JoAnne M.
Terrell, PhD

The creation of doctrine was as much a part of the canonical process as what actually went into the canon. Thus the gospel, God's spiel, a good news doctrine about an interactive Jesus, interactive by means of affirming salvation history and by asserting an unfolding destiny for Christians, exerts an a priori control over our hermeneutical lenses, over the way scripture is supposed to be read and understood. Without consciousness of history and these processes, this imposition certainly can and does dilute the spiritual impact of any word of truth the Bible mediates, potentially and actually.

The creation of doctrine is a process over which the Roman Catholic Church has maintained a rigorous interest. The Vatican Library is one of the oldest in the world, holding more than 75,000 historical codices collected throughout its history. The Church has held its priests everywhere they live and serve throughout the world, from Latin America to North America, from Africa, to Europe, and Asia, to a high standard of public accountability for the content of doctrine as it has been handed down for centuries.

But this is not less true of the largely Protestant churches in the North American context. For while there are significant theological differences among the various denominations, and even from congregation to congregation within the same denomination, in the evangelical and Biblicalist ethos that underlies American civil religion and that frames public religious discourse, in the media, for example, there remains the presumed need for doctrinal precision concerning the meaning of Jesus' life and death and ongoing significance. Thus, the April 12, 2004 Time Magazine had on its cover the question, "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?" There are all manner of doctrinal assumptions hidden in the very framing of the question.

Clearly, I don't want to be Christo-fascist. At the same time, I don't want to be a Christ-denier. I maintain that the most fascinating and perhaps useful thing about the confession of faith in Jesus is not the precision with which questions about him can be answered but the contemplation of the artistic, even melodramatic means by which many Christian individuals and communities have tried to answer them for over two millennia, in order to articulate our central concerns to honor God, to honor Jesus, to honor the first Christians, to honor ourselves, and to live in just, ecclesial communion. Precision can be useful but it can also be deadly to any art form, and especially harmful to our

attempts to understand a relational, embodied, and loving Jesus, "the man for others," harmful to our attempts to understand the communities the Apostles left behind, harmful to our attempts to understand and support ourselves. But we are not without help.

Lovers of jazz will recognize *A Love Supreme*, as the title of one of the most beautiful, enduring, and influential musical works of art by the great saxophonist, John Coltrane. *A Love Supreme* combines elements of hard bop and free style jazz. Hard bop is an extension of bebop, or fast moving, complex jazz based on harmonic structure and melody that became popular among jazz musicians in the 1940s. The difference between bebop and hard bop is that hard bop, which came along in the 1950s, incorporates influences from R&B, gospel music, and the blues. Free style jazz, another part of Coltrane's mix, is an experimental approach to music that resists the formulaic conventions of the jazz scene of the 1950s and 60s, in which musicians "attempted to alter, extend, break down" or even "discard, the hitherto invariable features of jazz, such as fixed chord changes or tempos," in which "the role of improvisation is correspondingly increased." Improvisation can be defined as managing, inventing, creating, and "making do" with what one has, or, to use a contemporary turn of phrase, letting a thing, a story, a musical piece "do what it do." John Coltrane adopted and elevated free style jazz in composing and performing this album with his Classic Quartet, which at this point in his short but illustrious career and life, included pianist McCoy Tyner, bassist Jimmie Garrison, and drummer Elvin Jones. Recorded in one session in December 1964, *A Love Supreme* is a four-part suite divided into tracks: "Acknowledgment," "Resolution," "Pursuance," and "Psalm," and resolves into a vocal chant, a love supreme...a love supreme...a love supreme...a love supreme." The National Museum of American History has designated the manuscript of this album one of its "Treasures of American History," and it is housed at the Smithsonian Institution.

But that is what *A Love Supreme* IS. What the album "do" is, it transports the receiver of this highly spiritual gift – and not everyone who hears can receive Coltrane's gift, nor what I am about to say – but *A Love Supreme* transports the receiver into the experience of the Presence of beauty, joy, peace, love – in short, it ushers one into the presence of God – and to realms of worship, to recollections of redemption, to

dimensions of gratitude, and to unutterable praise. This is what great art of any medium "do," when it is mediated or delivered to the artist by the Spirit and received by the hearer, the beholder, the experienter in the Spirit – and whether the artistic experience involves hearing, seeing, touching, tasting, smelling, one is catapulted into a gnosis, or a "knowledge that saves," literally and figuratively.

"Spirit" by every understanding thereof cannot be circumscribed by time, or context, and Coltrane expresses this universalistic, religiously inspired impulse in his music of this period through the end of his life in 1967, when he died at the age of 40.

I lift up Coltrane's spiritual opus, *A Love Supreme* because, as a womanist, I affirm creative self-expression as a governing norm to ensure the survival and wholeness of African Americans, generative of what Cornel West calls "subversive joy." I also affirm the womanist tenets that "black women are concerned with the survival and wholeness of entire peoples, male and female," and "a womanist is not a separatist, except for health." But I also raise it in order to affirm that what Jesus gave to and inspired in those early Christians, our enslaved fore-parents, our parents, our siblings, and ourselves was no ordinary love; it was in truth, a love supreme. Unexplored Christian exclusivism and doctrinal precision are hallmarks of the insecure cultural foundations on which we stand and are navigating, no, fighting, for agency where there was none and remains little; for worth when there was and is no worth ascribed to us; for joy in joyless circumstances, for art among the heartless controllers of public images, discourses, and resources, for our very lives. But the deeper truth is, we love Jesus because he first loved us, enough to identify with us in every way: from his birth to a single mother, to his ever, always taking the way with the despised, to his loving, artful encounters, to his empirical innocence, betrayal, persecution, execution, resurrection and intercession. "In this is love: not that we loved God but that God loved us, and sent the son Jesus to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins." "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: for as he is, so are we in this world." In Jesus, the man for others, we have found a complete redeemer. In Jesus, we have found no ordinary love. In Jesus, we have found a love supreme.

Alumn NOTES

Joseph Burt, Alumni/ae Relations

Hee An Choi, Katheryn Cook-Biekman and Carolyn Roncolato have all pursued diverse paths since earning their degrees from CTS. Their voices are united in their commitment to serve others and make this world a place of greater justice and mercy. The following conversations share their insights and visions. CTS is honored to have been a stop along their journey.

Hee An Choi is on the faculty of Boston University as Clinical Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Director of the Anna Howard Shaw Women's Center. She is currently conducting research on how female clergy develop and maintain their spiritual and psychological growth. She is also teaching and writing a book on how Korean immigrants change when they move to America.

Kathryn Cook-Biekman is currently involved in "end-of-life care as it relates to African Americans." She recognizes a conflict in the personal expectations of faith versus the expectations of the healthcare profession when treating this group. Kathryn is the founder and current Project Director of the Clergy End-of-Life Education Resource (CLEER) Project. The CLEER Project offers clergy the opportunity to develop skills relative to providing pastoral care at the end-of-life by developing their understanding of end-of-life issues and assisting the dying and their families. Additionally,

she is active in issues related to youth violence and restorative justice.

Carolyn Roncolato is a doctoral candidate at CTS, working on her dissertation for completion in September. Her areas of focus are feminist and womanist theologies, post-colonial theory, and process theology. Carolyn's dissertation arises from experience working with women in poverty in rural central Appalachia. Her work draws from womanist and two-thirds world feminist theologians and post-colonial feminist theorists in order to develop methods for feminist theologians to be more accountable to women living in poverty. The project is about doing scholarship that is accountable to marginalized women outside the academy, developing authentic and lasting relationship with diverse communities, and learning theology from new and different places. Carolyn earned a Master's of Arts in Religious Study from CTS in 2008 and is currently working toward her Ph.D.

Here are some of the questions we have recently posed to these alums. How do their answers compare to yours?

What brought you to Chicago Theological Seminary?

Carolyn Roncolato: I became interested in Chicago Theological Seminary when I was a senior in college and read Laurel

Schneider's book *Re-Imagining the Divine*. After reading more about CTS I was drawn to its commitment to doing theology for the real world. At the time I was doing domestic and sexual violence advocacy and knew that I wanted to continue to hold together my social and political concerns with my academic theological work. CTS allowed me to explore the relationship of theology to domestic and sexual violence, along with the theological relevance of other social and political issues. I am committed to theology because I believe it can be a force of great power and strength but can also be wielded quite dangerously. CTS clearly understood the importance of theological thought for the concrete lives of women and for that reason I came here. When I came to visit I fell in love with the school and have been here ever since. CTS has given me a really important start to my career. As part of the ACTS consortium, I have had the opportunity to study with scholars across the city in many different areas of thought. The faculty at CTS have been attentive to my questions, my struggles, and my interests. They have given me opportunities to teach, to reflect, to present, and to publish. They have encouraged me to be attentive to my social and political commitments, to rigorously read and study hard texts, and showed me how to make a name and a way for myself in the academic field. Thanks to these experiences I am ready to enter the job market next year.



the seminary's 150th year anniversary. At that time, the website was just as unique as the seminary. I felt as though CTS would prepare me to do relevant ministry for the real, complex, and wounded world. It was during my first unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), which CTS requires, that I became aware of and interested in end-of-life issues and care.

experience and to diversify my pedagogical training. In particular I am interested in exploring both service learning and civic engagement as part of higher education. These pedagogical practices invite students out of the classroom and into the communities they are studying. In the last three years I have been working with the Chicago hotel workers union, Unite Here.



Hee An Choi

Hee An Choi: Dr. Lee Butler called me in Korea and encouraged me to study at CTS. This helped me to make my decision. Without his phone call and encouragement, I would not have had the courage to start and maintain my study. What I learned from CTS makes me deeply aware of the sense of who I am in America. Our strong faculty members such as Dr. Butler, Dr. Seo, Dr. Terrell, Dr. Schneider, Dr. Stone, and Dr. Thistlethwaite greatly influenced me. They taught me how to be a scholar and a teacher. I learned the importance of critical thinking and reflection. They are great role models of what I can do. They really cared about me and supported me from their hearts. Especially Dr. Butler was an amazing mentor and a teacher. He spent many hours to teach me how to think theologically and how to write critically when I was a Ph. D. student. He was willing to struggle with me when I wrote my dissertation. He did not give up on me! He has continuously supported and mentored me for the last eleven years even after my graduation. I am very proud of him as my professor and mentor.

Kathryn Cook-Biekman: I became interested in study at Chicago Theological Seminary after viewing its website during



Kathryn Cook-Biekman

What are your future goals?

Hee An Choi: I would like to focus on how people recognize suffering and how they transform from suffering to healing in immigrant context and women's context for the next several years. I would like to develop a pastoral counseling and spiritual growth project for each ethnic group or church.

Kathryn Cook-Biekman: I would also like to include grief support and bereavement services in my area of focus in the next few years. I am especially interested in how factors such as culture, faith, gender and circumstances surrounding the loss affect the way in which persons grieve and heal.

Carolyn Roncolato: As I delve deeper in my dissertation, I am becoming increasingly aware of how much larger the project could be and how much more I want to do with the subject matter. My dissertation is methodological and constructs postures of engagement. In the next few years I hope to practice these postures in order to both test their efficacy and to develop a constructive contextual theology with women in Appalachia. I hope to get more teaching



Carolyn Roncolato

In particular I have been working with the Hyatt hotel workers in their fight for a fair contract. I understand this work as part of my commitment to feminist and womanist theologies in so far as this fight is largely about the working conditions of women of color housekeepers. Last fall, I worked with organizers at Unite Here, other students at CTS, and faculty from across the country to pass a resolution at American Academy of Religion that says we will never use a hotel with a labor dispute. I plan to continue my work with the union and would like to write on the theological relevance of union movements. It has become clear to me that people need more theological options and greater theological literacy. We are often not provided sufficient options for understanding the divine, ethics, and our place in the world. For many people, college is the time when these questions become really important and often the place where people construct new understandings of themselves and their role in the world. Theology is an important part of this. I want to help students connect what they already are passionate about with the theological because I believe that it is at these places of intersection that great things can happen.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

FALL TERM

For the course schedule visit <http://www.ctschicago.edu/academics/courses/course-schedule>.

44TH ANNUAL PRIDE PARADE

Sunday, June 30, 12 – 4pm,

Beginning at Montrose and Broadway. For more Chicago Pride Week information, <http://chicagopride.gopride.com/index.cfm>

FALL ORIENTATION

Monday, August 26

Welcome to our new face-to-face and online students. Join us for an introduction to CTS.

CTS ON-THE-ROAD: BOSTON

Thursday, September 19

CTS alumni/ae and friends will meet at Old South Church. Save the date if you're in the area.

FALL CONVOCATION

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 12pm

This worship service will be streamed live, so plan to join us!

CHARLES SHELBY ROOKS LECTURE

Thursday, October 10

This year's guest lecturer is Dr. Jonathan Walton, the Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church and Professor of Religion and Society at Harvard Divinity School. His research addresses the intersections of religion, politics, and media culture. This event will be streamed live; watch for details in the CTS E-News. Learn more about him at: <http://www.hds.harvard.edu/people/faculty/jonathan-l-walton>.



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